



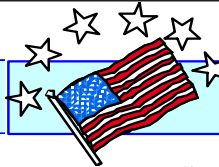
The Compassionate Friends



El Paso Chapter



June



July



August



WELCOME TO THE SUMMER MEETINGS

Date: Wednesday
June 30, 2010
July 28, 2010
August 25, 2010

Program:

Time: 7:00-9:00 p.m.

Place:

St. Paul's Lutheran Church
1000 Montana Avenue
El Paso, Texas

Board of Directors:

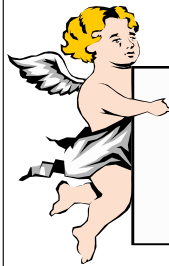
Chairperson: Susan Crews
542-0908

Sec/Treasurer: Lou Cain
Newsletter, Copies & Mailing:
The Winkelmans

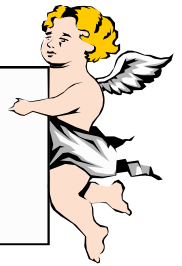
Mark Your Calendar For Future Meetings

Sept 29: Regular Meeting
Oct 3: Annual Balloon
Picnic
Oct 27: Regular Meeting
Nov 24: Regular Meeting

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS is a self help organization offering friendship and understanding to bereaved parents. The purpose of TCF is to aid parents in the positive resolution of the grief experienced upon the death of their child and to foster the physical and emotional health of bereaved parents and surviving children. The El Paso chapter meets in donated church facilities, but no religious creed or affiliation is involved. There are no dues and no one is required to talk at any meeting. Listening is okay! Please join us, together we can make it.



Editor's Notes



We want this newsletter to be *your* newsletter. To do that, we need your help. You are invited – actually, you are strongly encouraged – to contribute to this publication. If you have something to share with other bereaved parents, e-mail it to me so that it can be published in our next newsletter.

Please write and share your stories of your child or your sibling. Some of us get to know each other's children through the monthly chapter meetings. But, this newsletter also can be a forum for us to share. Writing is a form of therapy. It will help us get to know each other a little better and it will help us to heal a bit, too. We all have favorite memories that we can share – things that have helped us over the days, months or years. I hope you'll share them with us. It doesn't even have to be a full article. Sometimes, brief paragraphs of memories or thoughts are perfect.

E-mail Entries to: Eric Winkelman
ejwinkel@sbcglobal.net

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PO Box 3696
Oak Brook, IL 60522-3696
(630) 990-0010 or (877) 969-0010
www.compassionatefriends.org

A BEREAVED MOM.S THOUGHTS ON BEREAVED DAD.S & STEPDADS ON FATHER.S DAY

(Published in the St. Paul Pioneer Press.s .Bulletin Board. 2006)

Father.s Day, a day we honor those wonderful dads, for many is a day that can be bittersweet. There are two groups of fathers that fall into that category and, if I may, would like to speak up for. I know I have mentioned the bereaved moms on Mother.s Day, but I ask you to keep in mind those dads whose children have died before them.. Just as the bereaved siblings are oftentimes the forgotten mourners, the fathers can become invisible too. I know many a bereaved dad who when met on the street got the .question. - .How is your wife doing?. I suppose for the person who asks it is easier not to confront the father.s grief head on by asking about someone not present and therefore easing their own discomfort. But I am here to tell you that those dads hurt every bit as much as the moms, but, because of the .macho. burden placed on men by society, don.t always freely show it like we mothers do, and they keep it bottled up inside. Take a minute, at any time, but especially on days such as Father.s Day where the focus is on them, to tell that dad you are thinking of them? I guarantee they will appreciate it.

The other group that more often than not are overlooked are the stepfathers. I think that we have the fairy tale .Cinderella. to thank for the bum rap that many of us stepparents get! That is particularly true when that parent isn.t the .real. parent. However, I know many, many step-dads who deserve the title of .father. minus the .step. even more than the biological ones. They are dads like one I know personally, who sat up all night long after a 13-hour workday and comforted his stepdaughters who were suffering a miserable case of chicken pox; made the midnight trips to the Emergency Room, as well as delighted along with them in their triumphs and agonized in their defeats. And I know one in particular who grieved with every fiber of his being when his stepdaughter (though he never uses the term .stepdaughter. . it is always .daughter.) Nina died almost eight years ago. Along with other bereaved stepparents he didn.t deserve comments such as, .Well, at least it doesn.t hurt as much because she wasn.t your REAL daughter.. To him (just as many others I know), she is just as significant as his own flesh and blood.

I wish all the father.s, dad.s, daddy.s, stepfather.s and stepdad.s

(which is a step UP) a day filled with love, support, understanding, warm hugs, and an abundance of comforting memories. .Happy Father.s Day!.

With gentle thoughts,

FOR DADS

What I can.t understand is how we men will run to someone else to get a small splinter out of our finger but will refuse to ask directions when we are driving and will drive and swear for hours before asking for assistance.

The biggest splinter I ever had was when my daughter died. I needed help. Ministers, funeral directors, friends, fellow workers, doctors, psychologists and psychiatrists couldn.t help. they didn.t know what I was going through. One friend, whose son had been murdered said, .Go to a Compassionate Friends meeting.. He knew! I went to a TCF meeting. No one took the splinter out. No one offered any .how to.s.. No one told me .You should... No one could, or tried to take away all the pain. But they had been there. They knew, and because they knew, and I knew that they knew, it helped.

What I had gone through and will go through in my grief, someone had been there before me. This knowledge has assisted me in my travel through pain. I still have that big hole in my gut. My eyes still fill with tears at odd times. But I know that I.m not crazy. I know that I am not alone. I know that others have gone through these same things.and for some dumb reason, this helps.

- Tom Crouthamel, TCF, Sarasota, FL

FOR MY HERO

When my son died, I thought
you would hold me and comfort me
and make everything right
like you always did.
You never let me down before.
When you couldn.t fix things,
I was furious with you.
You wouldn.t even talk or cry
or throw things
like I did.
When you didn.t grieve my way,
the right way, I thought
you love him less
and said so.

Now I know you didn.t let me down.
You cried, you cared, you did the best
that any man in pain could do.

And I forgive you
for not being Superman
or me.

- Pat Dyson
TCF, Beaumont, TX

June, July and August Children Remembered

If your child's name has been left out of this section, or there is missing/incorrect information, please contact me immediately so I can update our data base.

LIKE LEAVES IN AUTUMN



HERE AND THEN GONE

BUT ALWAYS REMEMBERED

Death Date:	Age:	Child's Name:	Parents:
6/1/1993	NB	Daniel	Son of Charla McDaniel
6/4/2001	24	Ernesto Torres	Son of Connie Arce
6/6/2009	30	Ruben Lizarraga	Son of Jose and Alicia Hernandez
6/17/1991	23	David	Son of Karen Valentino
6/19/1995	35	Mark	Son of Estella Townsend
6/24/2008	16	Hector Jr.	Son of Hector and Sandra Garcia
6/26/1988	17	Peter	Son of Bonnie Winkelman
7/13/1996	9	Thomas	Son of Ann Sparkes
7/14/2007	31	Lawrence	Son of Elsie and Edward Margerum
7/29/2008	New Born	William David	Son of Jorge and Vanessa Ramirez
8/1/2008	27	Vicente David	Son of David and Debbie Costalez
8/7/1993	19	R. J.	Son of Mr. & Mrs. Joe Halow
8/24/2008	19	Ruben Soliz	Son of Ruben Navarette
8/26/1996	28	Philip	Son of Mr. & Mrs. Herb Winograd

Tony's 5th Angel Date

On July 22 of this year, our family will be facing the fifth anniversary of Tony's death.

Our lives have changed so much in the last five years. And, there are so many things that we wish Tony could have been here to experience with us - just the day-to-day aspects of living that we wish he could have taken part in with us.

My daughter and I share a beautiful faith in God. We know Tony is in sacred hands and that nothing can hurt him ever again.

We just miss him. It really is that simple. What I wouldn't give to talk with him again and to hug his neck again! What would I like you to know about Tony? He was just

17 when he died in a car accident. That's what brought us to TCF, but that's not who he was.

Tony was a smart, wonderful guy with a great sense of humor. He was a pitcher for his high school baseball team and he wanted to study architecture in college. He loved to draw and build things. And, I would have loved to see him realize all of his dreams. But, he was so much more than just that. He was a caring person. His family and friends mattered to him. And, he had such good values.

Tony: We just want you to know how much we love you .. and how proud of you we always were. You continue to be an inspiration.

COME, LET ME TAKE YOUR HAND

Come, let me take your hand. For where you must walk, I too, have walked. The road that we must walk is not one that we would choose to walk; it is a difficult road, full of many obstacles. Yes, we are still fathers. We love and remember our sons or daughters who have died. Their death has left us with a hole in our heart, an ache in our stomach, a pain in our chest and eyes that cannot see as they are filled with tears. We must grieve because we dared to love and it is through grief that we will recover. We may never have the life that we once had, but we can build another life. Our heart will heal, our pain will lessen and we will be able to talk about our son or daughter without the tears. There will come the day when we dare to laugh again.

- Paul Kinney TCF, Louisville, KY

David's Song

I rocked your cradle when you were born
And in winter we kept you warm
I wanted to pad the ground
When you took your first steps
But instead I just held my breath.
Your first words were pretty and fish
You started school when you were six
I taught you to play drums when you were nine
In time, you broke your cute nose and your thumb
I worried, and just took a deep breath.
You learned to drive in your senior year
And when you moved out, I was full of fear
But I knew you had a life of your own
And eventually I realized I had to let you move on.
I worried; deep breath and my heart skipped a
beat.
One day I got that dreaded call
That day the sun didn't shine at all
The days were dark for months on end
You died for reasons I will never comprehend

And my heart really skipped some beats.
We both still live but the steps we take
Seem harder on our hearts these days
The ache and pain we feel inside
Is hard and hurt and doesn't subside
Oh, how our hearts skip beats when we think of
you.
People, cherish your children each day of your life
Every husband and each and every wife
Our hearts are broken and his tomorrows are gone
Missing his smile, his laugh and Ma this is your son.
I guess I won't know why he had to die
Until I have taken my last breath
And my heart just stops.
Written by Lydia R. Burns in memory of David on his fifth
angel date (July 2). Lydia says, "When David died, I was
working in Atlanta and that Friday I was at the airport
when I found out. This year, I will be leaving Nashville to
come home after working there for almost two weeks on
that date. It just shatters my whole being to have to be
on
the road thinking of that horrible day."

IN THE MORNING

From wherever you are
You smile at me.
.Find life for both of us.
you say.
.Find peace for both of us.

you say.
.Find strength and love and hope
for both of us.
Because you are
My mother..
- Sascha Wagner, Wintersun

CREATE A MEMORY GARDEN

The physical activity of working and tending to a garden can give comfort and quiet time to remember the special memories that you once shared. Creating a memory garden will help you feel closer to those you lost and create a tribute to the one you loved for the rest of his/her friends and family members to heal. To begin a memory garden, find a private place or choose a location that has meaning. Remember to plant from your heart. Choose plants that evoke memory, fond regards and celebration of life.

Things to Consider When Creating Your Garden:

- 1 Start simple. Plant a few things each year.
- 2 Plant their favorite flowers or choose flowers that you loved or has special significance
- 3 and plant those.
- 4 Plant during their favorite season and choose flowers, plants or trees that are in
- 5 season at that time. For example, if they loved spring, plant bulbs.
- 6 Plant the flower of their birth month, namesake plants, or plants that represent their initials. Select flowers in colors that he/she loved.
- 7 Choose flowers with their favorite fragrances or certain scents they loved. For example, if they loved the smell of lavender, include a lavender plant in the garden.
- 8 Select flowers and plants with special meanings. For example, pink carnations mean .I.ll never forget you. and yellow roses represent friendship. Roses have names that might describe your loved one.
- 9 Include statues and remembrance gifts throughout the garden. If they loved dogs, include a small statue of their favorite breed.
- 10 Add a small plaque describing what is in the garden and its significance, or simply put their favorite phrase or poem.
- 11 If possible, try and include a bench in the area. This way, friends and family have a place to sit and reflect on special times that were shared.
- 12 Your memory garden project can involve the whole family. Not only could the best "memory flowers" be chosen, but once in bloom, flowers could be pressed as mementos for the family album or scrapbook.

SOURCES: www.1800flowers.com Tarkio Enterprises 660-623-9015 (from TCF/Omaha, NE)

On the beach, cool breezes blow across the water, but the sun.s rays feel warm upon my face. The ocean laps gently at the shore. I see one golden haired lad with shovel and pail filling the moat around his carefully constructed sandcastle. I remember another golden haired boy of years long past, wearing his bright red swimsuit, busy at his task and oblivious to all around him. Carefully, patiently, he fills and empties his pail again and again, molding and shaping the sand until he has it just right, until his perfect castle is completed. He runs to me, eyes aglow with pride, his dimpled smile stretched from ear to ear. He dances around me. .Mommy, come see! It.s finished! It.s perfect!. We stand and admire it together. One bucket of sand turned upside down, a tiny trench encircling it. To us, it is a perfect castle. But then it happens. A wave, much bigger than the rest, washes away his labor of love. His green eyes fill, his lip quivers momentarily and then he squares his shoulders and announces, .Oh well, I.ll begin again tomorrow.. And now recalling that other sunny summer day, my own eyes brimming with tears, my own lip quivers until I remember that I, too, can square my shoulders and .begin again tomorrow..

- Betty Stevens

TCF, Baltimore, MD

REMEMBRANCE

I see your smile in the brightness of the summer sun.

A gentle breeze is the touch of your hand on mine.

A wave breaks softly on the shore and I hear you whisper,

.Remember me..

A winged bird begins its flight into the distant sky.

The sound of children.s laughter fills the air.

The evening stars become your eyes, and I reply .

.You are ever near..

- Priscilla Kenney, TCF, Kennebunk, ME

Love Gifts

A LOVE GIFT is a gift of money or service to The Compassionate Friends. It is usually in honor of a child who has died but it can also be a gift to help in the work of the El Paso Chapter of TCF. Your gifts are tax deductible and are our Chapter's only monetary support. Your donation will help us pay for postage and labels for sending our newsletter each month.

LOVE GIFT

Name of Person to be Remembered _____

Special Occasion of Person _____

Given By _____

Send To: Mary Lou Cain
5664 Beth View
El Paso, TX 79932

Love Gifts For Summer

Gordon Mahon Jr, In Loving Memory of His Son Samael, 9/5/2006, Age 28

INDEPENDENCE DAY

The Fourth of July, Independence Day, Our Nation's Birthday. Whatever you call it, we celebrate America's independence from England on July 4th each year. As a nation, we have endured for 200+ years to become a significant, independent, and powerful force in the world. We were founded on the principles of equality and religious tolerance, of equity and opportunity, and of rights and responsibilities. Several generations of men and women have defended our precious freedom with their lives. As we celebrate this year, let's take a moment to remember those who paid the ultimate price for freedom— and to remember their families. It is sometimes easy to think only of the glory of their sacrifices, and to overlook the sacrifice of their families. War is never glorious, no matter how romantic the notion created by Hollywood. War has casualties that go farther and deeper into the fabric of our nation than we may realize. Those who died are buried with fanfare, as befits nation's fallen valliants. Their families learn to go on, just as we have, in spite of their loss.

But think for a moment of those who were declared missing in action, or who were prisoners of war. Their families must endure, often for years, and sometimes without an end to their pain and loss. Remember all of our nation's fallen when you celebrate this year. Remember those ceremoniously laid to rest; remember those who were captured, imprisoned, even tortured; remember those whose fate remains unknown. And remember, too, the families of all of them. Death, no matter how noble, is never easy for those left behind. We send our thanks to the veterans— living, dead, and missing— and their families.

- Tom and Sondra Wright

TCF Tucker, GA

LIVING THE LOSS ON FATHER.S DAY

The dogs were barking strangely one early morning in July of 1970; I was 15 years old. I knew someone had probably driven up our driveway and were taking their time to come to the door which was driving the dogs nuts. I was up early to get ready to bring my dog to the County fair as a 4-H project and was eager for the day. I went to the window and peered out to see who could be there this early in the morning. I then spy my Mom walking up with two neighbors close by her side, arms around her, covering in an obvious shawl of compassion and they were whispering. The dogs barking; a harbinger of despair.

My Dad had died. A few days prior he had gone in to hospital for a relatively new operation for the clogged arteries to the heart and although in this century is now done routinely it was then a very risky operation. My father had complications following surgery and later died. Our neighbors brought my Mother home to support her in breaking the news to myself and my sisters. My mother reached out to me and embracing each shoulder with her shaking hands she said: you are the man of the family now son, you need to take care of yours sisters, and the farm.your father has died.

I hugged her without a tear, without fear and just said.Okay. I love you Mom. I never really did grieve or publicly lament my fathers passing. I was the kid whose old man kicked the bucket over summer break. I was embarrassed by the quiet looks of consternation and thusly became the clown, to laugh it off preemptively and avoid the glares. I put away the grief, the pain, and did not lament, or mourn my loss. It seemed almost too easy to pack away. My mother soon remarried, then feeling somewhat abandoned, compounded with the strong feelings to stretch my own wings, I moved away from home.

Now years pass by, I get married and have a child, our firstborn, our only son. Soon we were blessed with the birth of his darling sister, life seemed again be joyful and the fulfillment of a dream. Soon the dark clouds returned with death of my only son, nothing could have ever prepared me for the depth of pain that one experiences in losing a child. Nothing! The world stopped and everything I ever knew had now changed forever. I was lost in hopeless pain for many years. Father.s Day mocked my existence, for fate had slapped me in the face. Both my past and my future in fatal swoops were whisked away and I was left here in the present alone in so much pain. Why me?

I lost my father, then my son, it felt so violated, so cheated, earmarked by God for misfortune, It felt like I was playing a role in some Thomas Hardy tragedy novel where I played the main character whose life was built on misfortune. I soon cracked under its weight, it broke my spirit, and I felt hapless, hopeless, innocuous and miserable, I wanted to die. I had my daughter to care for and my wife who spoons my soul, but I had no zest for life, no passion, no feeling, no goal. I struggled hard to free myself from the web of self pity, and I dug deep into my inner soul; from attic to basement I looked within myself to find a way out.

In my head with angels help, I went back to the day my father died. I literally went back and relived the moment, I screamed and I cried. I finally lamented for my father and let out the buried angst hidden for so long. When that dam burst I could then make room for the lamenting of my son. Only then did my road to acceptance begin. Acceptance is not selling out, or letting go of their love, it is just accepting that they are dead and giving our selves permission to rebuild our lives the best that we can.

I finally grieved for my father and I am still grieving for my son. Accepting their death is not forgetting them, it is merely accepting the reality of life. You cannot have one without achieving the other. Accepting their death is not the end of the bereavement journey it.s only the beginning. We shall continue to grieve for associated losses from their deaths the rest of our life. Father and son banquets, hunting trips with the boys, working on cars together, sharing a beer or two, having a pair of strong shoulders to hug, so many potential moments that we shall grieve forever. No grandchildren, or great grandchildren, no retirement party, birthday parties or graduation celebration, no parties of any sort. We are always reminded that their lives were cut short and we grieve anew for what should have been.

Through the loss of my son and many family members I have learned much on the journey. I found that I love deeper, I smell flowers longer, and I savor the sunsets more. I feel the best when helping others and I thank God for my every breath. These are all good things to have come to me in the midst and aftermath of horrific pain. How sad it would be if we were not compensated in some way for our tragic loss, for life would then truly seem meaningless would it not?

Through the loss of my father and my son I discovered the randomness of death. That death can hit anyone, anytime regardless of genes, the environment, or the best of efforts to stave off the sting of its reality. There is nothing we can do that can adequately prepare us for a loss of our loved one. Nothing.

Do I feel sad on Father.s day? You bet I do. Do I celebrate it? Yes I do. I am proud to have been a son for 15 years and proud to have been a father to my son for 9 years. I am proud to be a Father for my surviving daughter for 26 years. I am proud to be a grandfather. Everyday is Father.s day when you find yourself surrounded in love from this world and from the next.

Feel the sadness of your Father.s day; feel the pain, feel, the joy, feel the love that alone makes it possible to feel the pain.

- Mitch Carmody/Hastings, MN

YES, GRANDPARENTS DO GRIEVE!

Thank God, someone stepped up and said, .Hey! This child was and is my grandchild! And I hurt too!. Not looking for sympathy, but wanting the world to know that yes, the mother and father are hurting from the loss of their little angels, but Granny and Grandpa loved these children with their hearts and souls. Totally unconditionally! I read these letters that are sent to me, every day. My heart hurts for these parents for the loss of their children. But, please, let us not forget any of the grandparents whose loss is twofold. One for their child who is hurting so badly and for the loss of their grandchildren. I always thought my grandchildren would outlive me. At least that.s the way it.s supposed to be. It doesn.t always work out that way. So yes, my heart also hurts for the grandparents too.

- Wanda Bryant
TCF, Vidalia, GA

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS. WHAT WE CAN DO?

We can.t give you, the new members, much.not in comparison to what you have lost.
We can.t give you the answer to your .WHY. questions.
We can.t give you a simple philosophical statement that willgive you instant peace.
BUT. We can shake our head .yes. when you say how it hurts, because we have felt it.
We can warn you of the stumbling blocks along the way, because we have fallen.
We can come back and walk the grief path with you, because many of us have walked the whole path, and we made it!

- Oklahoma City, TCF

Self Help Organization Offering Friendship and Understanding to Bereaved Parent

Address Correction Requested



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS
ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
1000 MONTANA
EL PASO, TX 79902