



# THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS INC.

International Organization Offering Friendship and Understanding to Bereaved Parents

## MIAMI COUNTY CHAPTER NO. 1870

May 2019 NEWSLETTER Vol. 29 No.4

Facebook page "The Compassionate Friends of Miami County Ohio Chapter 1870".  
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National Office - THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS, INC. - P.O. Box 3696 - Oak Brook, IL 60522-3696 - Ph. (630) 990-0010 or toll free (877) 969-0010 [www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org) - e-mail: [nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org](mailto:nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org).

### What is a Mother?

Until four years ago, my definition of a mother would have been different than it is now.

When I was still blissfully ignorant of what it's like to be the mother of a child who has died, my definition would have included kissing boo boos and rocking little ones to sleep. It would have been about loving them, no matter what. It would have been about the occasional sleepless night, about glowing with pride, the awe of feeling them grow inside you, the joy, laughter, soul searching and tears.

My definition still includes all that, but now it includes much more than I ever imagined. A mother is the person who aches to hold her child, who cries herself to sleep, who agonizes over what she should have or could have done, ...who wishes someone would mention her child's name. A mother is a person who loses part of her soul when her child dies. A mother is the person whose life is forever changed by her child's birth, and whose life is forever changed again by her child's death.

A MOTHER IS A PERSON WHO NEVER FORGETS.

For my Munchkin, Colleen  
Kathy McCormick (now Hahn\_), TCF, Lower Bucks, PA



### May Meeting – May 23rd, 2019 7:00pm

**Topic:** *What's your emoji today?*

#### **Thank you for April Refreshments**

Pam Fortener (Memory of Melissa)  
Cathy Duff (Memory of Shaun)

Meetings are held at:  
Nashville United Church of Christ  
4540 W. St. Rt. 571, West Milton, Ohio  
Meetings are held in the basement of the church. Please park in the lot on the west side of the building. Enter the building through the door facing the west parking lot.

### *Their Song of Love*

*Remembering on this Mother's Day*

*The melody your child etched*

*In your heart.*

*The sweet song of love*

*That only your Child could place there.*

*As this special day brings*

*Their song to you,*

*May the warmth of their eternal love*

*Fill your heart once again.*

*For their song is never ending.*

Patty Erdman, TCF, Lonview, WA

## A MOTHER'S TEAR

*A single tear trickles down my cheek. It tells a tale I cannot speak.  
Of days gone by that have been stilled, It tells of dreams left unfulfilled.  
It's wetness holds "what might have been."*

*Not going to the Senior prom. No more, "I love you Mom,"  
No cap and gown on graduation day, no wedding bells in the month of May.*

*No more family birthday celebrations. No voting for the leader of our nation.  
Gone, the dream of horse and farm. Never mine to hold, her babes in arm.*



*You've followed the path of my lonely tear.  
It speaks of the one that I hold most dear.  
Now, you'll hear this mother cry,  
"Why, God, did my daughter die?"*

*Karen Bell  
Lovingly lifted from the Harden County Newsletter*

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## HOPE

*When the sun sits down on the mountains  
And the clouds turn purple and pink  
And golden rays  
Send fingers out to touch me,  
I stop breathing, and inhale with my heart  
Because I know that along those glimmering  
Strands of light,*



*Lies my connection to you.  
Sandy Goodman, TCF, Wind River, Wyoming*

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## Mother's Day & Father's Day Kay Bevington, Van Wert, Ohio

Those of us with no surviving children often think and feel that we are no longer parents. This is NOT true. True, we are no longer "ACTIVE" parents as our children are no longer with us in a physical presence on this earth BUT, we will ALWAYS be our children's parents. They are "connected to us and with us forever in another dimension." Often things happen on earth that we cannot explain and I think these are Gifts from God and Our Children. It is our legacy to keep our children's memories alive by doing things to honor and commemorate them. Think of something your child had a passion for or an interest of hes/hers. Commit to doing something that your child would have done and tell yourself and others WHY you are commemorating your child in this manner. These reinvestment projects will help to give meaning to your life and at the same time preserve the memory of your child and /or "introduce" him/her to someone who never had the opportunity to know him/her. Celebrate Mother's and Father's Days this year by gifting yourself with something that your child would have given you and plan an event that will honor him/her.



National Compassionate Friends Conference  
July 19<sup>th</sup> – July 21<sup>st</sup>, 2019, Philadelphia, PA

Several members of our chapter have attended yearly conferences. They highly recommend attending these National conferences where you will be amongst other bereaved parents who are also walking this child loss journey. You have the opportunity to attend workshops of your choice with other bereaved parents and presented by bereaved parents. Workshops are another way to obtain a tool for our survival tool belt we must carry around to journey through to the other side. You'll also hear keynote speakers and share dinner with other parents.

Congratulations to Cathy Duff – the winner of the drawing for covered Conference expenses sponsored by a friend of Pam and Don Fortener. We will look forward to hearing about the conference from Cathy and others that attend.

### “Butterfly Boutique” donations needed

Our chapter members have been asked to help with donations for the “Butterfly Boutique” that will be located at the upcoming 2019 National conference. This letter is from the chairperson and co-chairperson of the Butterfly Boutique that will be located at the conference:

In order to be successful and raise money ... we need donations of items to sell. We would like to have new and gently used pre-owned items. We need anything: that you have purchased or were given that has angels, butterflies, hearts, hummingbirds, dragonflies or any other appropriate subject matter. It could be jewelry (pins earrings, rings necklace, ankle bracelet) or jewelry box ..maybe a scarf or a tote bag ...a candle or coasters ...could be a Christmas ornament or decoration ...kitchen or bath towel (new of course), framed pictures, artwork or handmade items ...Seraphim angels or Susan Lordi Willow Tree, Butterflies on anything ..a chair or lamp...a night light or magnet ..note paper, a pen, something you may have purchased at the national conference and never used ...even heart things...wallet, a watch. At the national convention they even sold items that did not have butterflies or hearts like Coach wallets and Vera Bradley items...so any and all items that can be sold would be greatly appreciated. If you'd like a donation receipt, please let them know when you send your donation. TCF is a 501(c)3 tax exempt organization.

**Donations may be sent to: Betty Valentine, 302 Llangollen Blvd., New Castle, DE 19720**



## Happy Mother's Day

Dear Mr. Hallmark,

I am writing to you from heaven, and though it must appear  
A rather strange idea, I see everything from here.

I just popped in to visit your stores to find a card,  
A card of love for my mother, as this day for her is hard.

There must be some mistake I thought, every card you could  
imagine,  
Except I could not find a card from a child who lives in heaven.

She is still a mother too, no matter where I reside;  
I had to leave, she understands, but ohoh the tears she's cried.

I thought if I wrote you, that you would come to know  
That though I live in heaven now, I still love my mother so.

She talks with me, and dreams with me; we still share laughter  
too.  
Memories our way of speaking now, would you see what you  
can do?

My mother carries me in her heart, her tears she hides from  
sight.  
She writes poems to honor me, sometimes far into the night.

She plants flowers in my garden, there my living memory  
dwells.  
She writes to other grieving parents, trying to ease their pain as  
well.

So you see Mr. Hallmark, though I no longer live on earth, I  
must find a way to remind her of her wondrous worth.

She needs to be honored, and remembered too,  
Just as the children of earth will do.

Thank you Mr. Hallmark, I know you'll do your best,  
I have done all I can do; to you I'll leave the rest.

Find a way to tell her, how much she means to me,  
Until I can do it for myself, when she joins me in eternity.

The Dear Mister Hallmark Petition to Hallmark  
Creations was created by Loss of a Child and written by Ashley Szymkowicz

## Do You Know Who I Am?

I am flesh and blood, torn mind, and broken  
heart. At times I feel like a wise old woman but  
then in the next moment like a small child. I  
admit total confusion. I look in the mirror and  
see someone I don't know. I want an answer, I  
want a solution to a problem that has neither on  
this earth.

It seems that nothing matters anymore and at  
the same time, I have learned that everything  
does matter. There are millions of people on this  
earth and when one of them dies, it matters.

I ache to a degree that only another who has  
crossed this bridge could gauge. And only they  
understand my torment.

Do you know who I am?

I am a bereaved mother - the last thing I ever  
thought I would be. My child died before me and  
that is the most unnatural thing in the world. My  
continued being seems the next most unnatural  
thing.

A portion of my heart, spirit and dreams, and all  
thoughts of total peace, are with Ryan now—  
never to be recovered to make a whole until I can  
see him again.

The tears I cry are not for me, but for the  
beautiful life that ended far too soon and the  
utter frustration of not being able to do anything  
to change that.

Deborah Wiseman, TCF, Nashville, TN

## REINVESTMENTS

*June Grady, St John, IN – Last summer we had a KYLE DAY. I had planned several activities to remember Kyle and invited friends and family. We had his favorite foods, one of which was Pepperoni Pizza. I had lanterns that were lighted that we let go. I also had a contest where everyone participated in, “Who Knows Kyle Best?” This allowed us many special memories of Kyle and lots of laughter. We also gave each person a sheet of paper where they either wrote or illustrated a page of memories that I now have in a memory book.*

*Sherri Woodruff, Broomfield, CO – I had a hand blown glass ball made in which I keep some of my daughter, SANDY's ashes. I also spread some of her ashes wherever I travel. She is with me in spirit although not in her physical form.*

*Jeff & Jackie Glawe, Tipp City, OH – JORDAN loved shoes and cared about those in need so we have donated numerous pairs of new gym shoes to shoes4theshoeless program as well as volunteer for the program throughout the year in her memory.*

*Gene and Linda Shaw, Broomfield, CO– There is a STEVEN SHAW Baseball Field in honor of our son. We were very pleased when friends and the community wanted to do this in his memory. One of his passions was to play baseball.*

*\*If you would like to share your reinvestment/memorial stories about your child email Jackie at im4song@aol.com*

## CHAPTER NEWS

### Upcoming Topics:

**May** - *What's your emoji today?*

**Jun** - *Signs – presented by Don Fortener*

**Jul** - *Memorial Picnic/Butterfly Release*



*Thank You  
for your love gifts!*

★ Ralph & Vera McLean for the Anniversary Love Gift in memory of their son, Antonio McLean 06/1972 -- 04/2003. Vera describes the day of Antonio's death as "the worst day of my life."

★ Claude & Mary Snyder for the Birthday Love Gift in memory of their son, Brent A. Snyder 05/1953 – 10/2005.

★ Kern & Pam Carpenter in memory of daughter Tasha Longyear.

*Love Gifts should be made out to: The Compassionate Friends and mailed to Barb Lawrence, 4031 Wolcott Place, Englewood, OH 45322. Please send your donation by the 15th of the month prior to the month you want your child remembered in the newsletter.*

## Memorial Day



For each grave  
where a soldier lies  
at rest

For each prayer  
that is said today  
out of love

For each sigh  
of remembering  
someone who died

Let us also give thought to  
the mothers and fathers  
the brothers and sisters  
the friends and the lovers  
whom death left behind

*From WINTERSPUN by Sascha*

# Our Children Lovingly Remembered

## May Birthdays

Child—Parent, Grandparent, Sibling

*Blaize Mansur - Stephanie Mansur*

*Brent A. Snyder - Claude & Mary Snyder*

*Erika Leigh Wetzel - Susan Wetzel-Philpot*

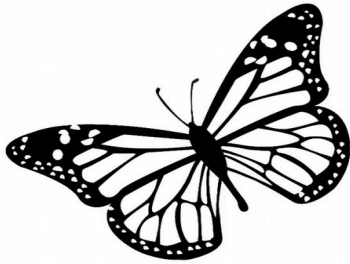
*Jacqelyn Elizabeth "Jackie" Ahlers - Bob & Peg Ahlers*

*Jared Michael Belcher - Kelly Belcher*

*Lindsay Rose Donadio - Rick & Janell Claudy*

*Michael James McGuffey - Kathy McGuffey*

*Randy Lee Hess - Kimberly A. Bundy*



## May Angel-versaries

Child—Parent, Grandparent, Sibling

*Bill Meadows - Fred & Pat Meadows*

*Blaize Mansur - Stephanie Mansur*

*Brent David Corn - Susan Hartrum*

*Brian Swartz - Lisa Swartz*

*Cody S. Pressler - Joe Miller & Tamra Pressler*

*David Allsbrooks - Brenda Slifer*

*Dominique Sims - Gina Williams*

*James C. "Jimmy" Skaggs - James & Bonnie Skaggs*

*Jeremiah Lee Bubeck - Rick & Becky Bubeck*

*Karen Kay Paschal - Linda Paschal*

*Kyle Alexander Quinn - Ken & Betty Quinn*

*Molly Murphy - Kerry & Sarah Murphy*

*Nick Koleff - Bob & Linda Dils*

*Ryan S. Thuma - Scott & Renee Thuma*

*Stephen Anthony Freeman - Tom & Kathy Freeman*

*Terry A. Baker, Jr. - Candy Ullery*

*Tony Robert Lavy - Robert E. & Sharon Lavy*

*Every effort is made to publish accurate information regarding the birth and remembrance dates. Please let me know if there is an error in the listing, in order to correct our records. If you receive this newsletter and you have not given us the name and dates for your child, but want them listed here, please contact me. - Editor*

## NOW for book review....



### “After Suicide Loss: Coping with your grief”

By Bob Baugher and Jack Jordan

This Booklet was written to help understand some of what you may experience during the several days, weeks, months and years after a suicide.

I have not personally read this book, however I checked the reviews on goodreads and one of the reviews stated it was a comprehensive overview of the unique grieving process of suicide loss survivors, written by two authors with extensive and varied experience in the area of suicide loss. All the reviewers recommended this book for those experiencing suicide in their family.

\*Both the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> editions of this book are available to borrow from our chapter library.

## The Siblings

You look at me and ask me why,  
Why your brother had to die?  
Oh, little children, I wish I knew  
For I am wondering just like you.  
But do I really want to see,  
Or, do I just want him back with me?  
In time, we'll know God's special plan.  
And perhaps, someday, we'll understand.  
But today, no words can ease your pain.  
Yet, know that I, too, hurt the same.

By Susan Erling from "A Rainbow After The Storm"



## The Old Mom

*During our meeting, one mother stated that her teenage daughter said, "You're not like the old Mom."*

*Recently, I overheard two friends who had not seen each other in a year. After a while, one said to the other, "Well, you haven't changed any."*

*Is that what is so threatening about bereaved parents? We've changed. The status quo provided predictability, stability and security. Change is a loss of predictability, a disturbance of equilibrium. Our friends, neighbors, co-workers, family and children want us back as quickly as possible. But the "old us" will never return.*

*Any major event in one's life—marriage, birth, death...brings about change, and we are never our "old selves" again. In time, our "new selves" can be better, more loving, more sensitive, more understanding, more compassionate. Adversity brings either bitterness or betterment. No major event leaves us unchanged.*

*TCF, Greater Ozarks Chapter, Springfield, MO  
Submitted by Joann Ruen in memory of her son, Andy*

## WHAT WAS HE REALLY LIKE?

After meeting a friend that I had not seen for quite some time and exchanging catch-up information, something wonderful happened to me. This beloved friend expressed the usual condolences over the loss of my brother but went on to pose the question, "What was he really like?" My eyes must have sparkled like fire. The question itself ignited an unbelievable response. Unleashing all my memories, I began immediately bursting at the seams.

Oh, he was so kind and gentle. He was so seldom angry that you remembered the exact moment when he lost his temper—because it just didn't happen that often. And he was so good at telling stories. Believe me, he could embellish a story. His left eye would wink, and he'd get a silly grin on his face as if he weren't going to tell you the ending. By then he'd spout out the ending, knowing that he had teased you once more.

And oh, he was so respectful to Mom and Dad that I wanted to slug him sometimes. He would always tell me that I wouldn't get into trouble if I'd just keep my mouth shut! And never, never could I outlast him at night. He would come in from a date at midnight and still have enough energy to watch the late movie. Brilliant—why he never had to crack one book in high school!

And I could have gone on and on. I told my friend that I didn't want to keep her and that I certainly didn't mean to get so carried away, but so few people as me that question. She told me that she would have liked to have known him. This instance may be a rarity with friends who have not experienced the death of a loved one. But may we, in Compassionate Friends, keep asking each other over and over, "What was he really like?"

*Julie Cameron, TCF, Louisville, KY  
Taken from the Winter 1993 TCF Sibling Newsletter*

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*\*If you are a sibling, know a sibling or your child that would like to share a poem or story about your loss of a sibling on this sibling page, we would love to share your story to help others on this same journey. Please email Jackie at im4song@aol.com*  
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**The  
Compassionate  
Friends**

*Miami County Chapter*  
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

2445 N Montgomery County Line Rd  
Tipp City OH 45371

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

*The Compassionate Friends is a self-help organization which offers support to families who have experienced the death of a child. Only a person who has experienced the trauma of losing a child can fully understand the pain and suffering involved.*

*We gather to listen) to share) and to support each other in the resolution of our grief. We need not walk alone. we are *The Compassionate Friends.**

**MISSION STATEMENT** ... The mission of The Compassionate Friends is to assist families toward the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child of any age and to provide information to help others be supportive.

***If you are receiving our newsletter for the 1st time,*** it is because someone told us that you might find it helpful. To find out more about The Compassionate Friends, please call our Chapter Leader, Kim Bundy (937) 573-9877. We cordially invite you to our monthly meetings held on the fourth Thursday of each month. Nothing is ever expected of you. You don't have to speak a single word. Parents who do attend, find comfort, support, friendship and understanding from others who have also lost a child. You do not have to come alone - bring a family member or friend with you.

**You need not walk alone!**



IF YOU ARE RECEIVING THIS NEWSLETTER, AND WISH TO HAVE YOUR NAME REMOVED FROM OUR MAILING LIST, PLEASE CALL (937) 478-3318 AND LEAVE A MESSAGE. Thank you.