Grief and Healing with a Newsletter

My name is Jack Standeven and it is my honor to be your new newsletter editor. Bonnie has been our chapter's newsletter editor for a long time. She asked Janie for help in finding a new editor so she can focus on traveling the next path of her journey.

Bonnie’s wonderful newsletters were the gift of hope that we all turned to when we needed it most. In each one I found warm advice, a poem and even the hug I needed to keep me going. I can't thank her enough for the care and kindness she put into each edition. Thank you, Bonnie.

A newsletter is more than a collection of stories and information. It is a talk with someone else who can not be in the same room. For Compassionate Friends that conversation centers around the pain of losing a child.

Friends and family often try to help us as best they can in their efforts to comfort us in our grief. Some of it is greatly appreciated. Some of it becomes rather blunt and painful in their honest attempt to help us feel better. However, only a person who is walking the same journey of grief can really know how you feel. Only they can say, "I feel the same way." This newsletter is my attempt from me as newsletter editor and Josh’s dad to say, "I feel the same way; let me help."

Each newsletter editor has a need to put their own mark on the look and feel of a newsletter. I am not immune. Over the next several newsletters I will be trying different layouts, articles and format. If you see anything that you would like to change, add or improve, please let me know. Any change you suggest will help someone else who sees it.

This newsletter is for all of us. - Jack

---

The Compassionate Friends

The Compassionate Friends is truly about finding support in our darkest hours and being able to find healing through the unexpected gift of lifting up a fellow parent, sibling or grandparent when they need it most.

—Kim Scholler, Aaron’s room

---

TCF Monthly Meeting
February 20 and March 20
6:30 pm to 8 pm
Third Tuesday each month
Salem Hospital
939 Oak St. SE Salem
Building D, 2nd floor
Salem TCF Meets on the third Tuesday of each month. Hospital parking to east of building.
Call (503) 743-3930

GREG Group
Tue Feb 13 6:30 pm
Wed Feb 28 at Noon
Samaritan Evergreen Hospice
4600 Evergreen Place SE
Albany, Oregon
Grief Realization Education Group is for bereaved parents who have experienced the loss of a child of any age.
Call Linda (541) 829-9102

Silverton Grief Support Group
Come Join Us at the Silverton Senior Center
1st Tues of Each Month 6:30 pm
115 Westfield Street
Silverton, Oregon 97381
For further information please call
Carol Williams
(503)-873 6944

I went to a meeting the first time to cry. I went back the second time to be heard. I went back the third time to start to heal and help someone else who was there for the first time. - Jack
**WHEN WILL THE PAIN END?**

When I look back over my grief journey, I marvel at how far I have come and yet at how poignant and permanent the loss of my son will always be for me. How can this dichotomy exist within one person’s mind?

The horror of the news of my son’s death, the shock that slammed my mind into numbness, the unremembered conversations, the platitudes that followed the memorial service and the first two months of living in a complete fog of disbelief are very vivid in my mind. The horror is too real to forget. The next six months of melancholy, miserable mourning are forever locked in my mind. The pure physical pain, the piercing jolts when I momentarily thought of something beyond my child’s death and was mercilessly slammed back into the finality of death’s amputation of my son’s smile, laughter and physical presence on this earth are etched for eternity in my soul. My mind simply couldn’t accept that Todd was gone from this plane. The first anniversary of his death was a horrifying day worsened by a very bleak and foreshadowing conversation with my son’s widow. Life would be much different for my husband and me from this point forward. There were no bridges to the past. She made that clear. I was inconsolable from the impact of her wicked words.

But I made it through the first and second years with help from my Compassionate Friends Chapter. I could cry and scream about the injustice of my loss and all that followed, and each parent understood. Eventually I had told my story enough times to enough people that I subconsciously accepted Todd’s death and all the changes in my life that followed.

At some point in my second year of grief I began reaching out to others. Helping others, seeing their pain, hearing their tearful words, had become cathartic for me. The more I helped, the more I was helped.

Yes, my son is still with me in my heart and in my memories. The movies of his life play in my mind almost daily. I have made new friends. I have walked away from old acquaintances. I have learned to separate the meaningful from the meaningless. And I have learned that I will always feel the pain of my son’s death, yet I must always move forward into hope. Each day brings more hope as I accomplish another piece of my lifelong grief work. 

So the dichotomy exists within me. In my heart, mind and soul my child will live forever. The memories of the full measure of each day of his life are there to give me peace and solace. Yet, the brutal pain of my son’s death is there, too. Unlike any other love in life, a parent’s love is unconditional and transcends all. There is a peace in knowing that. The pain doesn’t end. It simply reshapes itself into a quiet, soft ache that gives us a gentle, often tearful, reminder that our child will always be with us. And perhaps that is as it should be.

Annette Mennen Baldwin
In memory of my son, Todd Mennen
TCF, Katy, TX
RECOGNIZING UNSUCCESSFUL GRIEF

All of us who have searched for healing following the death of a child, grandchild or sibling know the roller coaster of emotions that are part of our grief process. We know there is no "quick fix" that magically lets us get on with our lives, and grief can be physically exhausting. We cannot go back to what was! And time, in and of itself, does not heal.

Although there is no set schedule for grieving and there will always be a hole in our hearts, many of us in TCF have found that within a year to 18 months, we are beginning to make some progress—granted the progress may seem minute to the bereaved. Grief therapists have learned that if death is from prolonged or serious illness there is grieving during the illness. The second year of grief may be as intense or even more emotionally devastating than the first year. However, no two people have the same grief timetable. If we feel that we are not making progress, is there some way to determine whether or not we may need professional help or evaluation or at least reassurance? The following considerations may help you decide:

- Extended withdrawal from the world around you.
- Prolonged inability to accomplish normal tasks or participate in everyday activities.
- Self-imposed isolation where you do not want to be around anyone—friends, family or others.
- Becoming too scared to be alone. You must have someone around all the time.
- Anger or guilt that is out of proportion, does not fit the circumstances, extends for a long time without retreating or may be directed toward others close to you.
- Depression that is exaggerated, unremitting, prolonged years after the loss.
- Anxiety that interferes with going away from home.
- Dependence on alcohol or medications to cope or forget.
- An emotional "logjam" resulting from an accumulation of losses over the years.
- Contemplating or attempting suicide to "get away from it all" or to join your child.
- Self-caused illness or physical health problems that do not go away, or the inability to separate the real from the imagined. This kind of illness is different from the "ailments" that most of us experience during the anniversary of our loved one's death.
- Placing your child on a pedestal and forgetting his/her imperfections
- Being unable to redirect your activities so that you can honor your child in positive way.
- An absence of grief or a numbness, anxiety, sadness, or any kind of overall attitude that negatively affects others around you, including over-protectiveness of your loved ones.
- Converting all emotions into one or two favorite or "safe" emotions—like anger, boredom, or despair—which become all you are feeling, taking the place of grief.
- When talking does not seem to help or there is no one able to listen.

Libbyrose D. Clark TCF, Deep East, Texas
From information provided by Vera Baron, LPC, and Ray Johnson, CSW
# Our Children Loved and Remembered

## January Birthdays

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child</th>
<th>Parent or Family</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lane Damian Hartley</td>
<td>Mardis Hartley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sonny G. Hart</td>
<td>Yolanda T. Martinez</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zac Herigstad</td>
<td>Chris Mulligan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Martin Arnold</td>
<td>Peggy Otto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reagan Isaac Reavis</td>
<td>Renee Reavis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jesse Reesman</td>
<td>Dodi &amp; Bryn Reesman</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## February Birthdays

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child</th>
<th>Parent or Family</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bob (Robert) Coleman</td>
<td>Leroy J. Coleman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amy</td>
<td>Sally Cowell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael Todd Graves</td>
<td>Kenneth and Kathleen Graves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard Hislop</td>
<td>Walt &amp; Susan Hislop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jenni Pointer Everetts</td>
<td>James &amp; Sharon Pointer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alvin Troub</td>
<td>Mary Runyon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eric Spedale</td>
<td>Dominick &amp; Colleen Spedale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paiten Rebekah Toliver</td>
<td>Jane Toliver</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**..That their light may always shine...**

We know how important it is for your child’s name to be included on this page. We apologize if we missed anyone. We encourage you to notify us if you notice an error or if you would like us to update information.

Please contact us at info@salemmtcf.org

PO BOX 13639 Salem, OR 97309.

© 2018 The Compassionate Friends

---

*Angie Cartwright*
# Our Children Loved and Remembered

## January Anniversaries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child</th>
<th>Parent or Family</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Michael Alexander</td>
<td>Holli Beighley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lori L. Coleman</td>
<td>Leroy J. Coleman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jake French</td>
<td>Mom Irene French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sister Janie Erickson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael Todd Graves</td>
<td>Kenneth and Kathleen Graves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katrina Weter</td>
<td>Janice Hallman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lane Damian Hartley</td>
<td>Mardis Hartley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johanna Jamieson</td>
<td>Jim &amp; Shelly Jamieson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Britney</td>
<td>Marcia Johnson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christopher Allen Lindsay</td>
<td>Tom &amp; Bonnie Lindsay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kelly Lynn Nesmith</td>
<td>Carol Nesmith</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reagan Isaac Reavis</td>
<td>Renee Reavis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicholas (Nick) Snur</td>
<td>Mike &amp; Sandi Snur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eric Spedale</td>
<td>Dominick &amp; Colleen Spedale</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## February Anniversaries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child</th>
<th>Parent or Family</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amy</td>
<td>Sally Cowell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brendan C. Day</td>
<td>Patty &amp; Dan Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Javier Rivera II</td>
<td>Javier &amp; Annabelle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Darla Dunham , Diane Garcia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shane Christopher Gish</td>
<td>Drew &amp; Diane Gish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jerrid</td>
<td>Sandee Goodpaster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sean Christopher Padrick</td>
<td>Skip &amp; Mindy Padrick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryan Ring</td>
<td>Ted &amp; Dorothy Peters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eric Lee Jewell</td>
<td>Carol Williams</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Love Gifts**  
A Love Gift is a donation to Salem Compassionate Friends Chapter in memory of a child. It may also be from individuals who want to honor a friend or relative or simply a gift of support for the work of TCF. Love Gifts help us with the costs of the newsletter, meeting rooms, resource information for newly bereaved families, or expenses related to special events like the Worldwide Candle Lighting on the Capitol steps each December. If you wish to make a donation for any amount call Janie at (503) 931-1748. All gifts are welcome, and truly appreciated.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lane Damian Hartley</th>
<th>Kelly Lynn Nesmith</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Nineteen years since I’ve had a Lane hug. I miss you so much!  
Mom, Mardis Hartley | I love you, Kelly, and I walk in faith 'til we are together again.  
Love, Mom  
Carol Nesmith |

**For My Compassionate Friends**

How is it that I know you?  
How’d you get into my life?  
Sometimes when I look at you,  
It cuts me like a knife.  
I do not want to know you,  
I don’t want to cross that line.  
Let’s both go back into the past,  
When everything was fine.  
You’ve held me and you’ve hugged me,  
And dried a tear or two,  
Yet, you’re practically a stranger,  
Why do you do the things you do?  
Of course, I know the reason,  
We are in this Club we’re in,  
And why we hold on to each other  
Like we are long-lost kin.  
For us to know each other,  
We had to lose a kid,  
I wish I’d never met you,  
But, I’m so thankful that I did.

Marilyn Rollins  
TCF Lake/Porter Counties, IN

**Support Group Meetings**

Our monthly support group meetings are the heart of TCF. These gatherings provide a caring environment in which bereaved parents, adult siblings, and grandparents can talk freely about the emotions and experiences they are going through and receive the understanding support of others who have “been there.” Often, members say that the hope provided through these sharing sessions has been more helpful than other types of support in resolving grief within their family following the death of a child.

We invite you to bring photos of your child to share at meetings. It always warms the heart to share stories and pictures of our loved ones. We will have a table available to set photo frames, memory books, or other special mementos for sharing at each meeting.
**Circle of Friends**

Do you need to talk with someone who understands and has experienced a similar loss? The parents and siblings listed below have expressed their willingness to listen. If you have questions or need a more specific referral

Please Call or email us
TCF  (503) 743-3930 info@salemtcf.org

Remember, you are not alone

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Son, 25, suicide</td>
<td>Mardis Hartley 503-585-2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Son, 34, Accident</td>
<td>Janie Erickson 503-931-1748</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daughter, 5, accident</td>
<td>Jake &amp; Daphne Greer 503-623-5044</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Son, 20, accident</td>
<td>Diane Gish 503-851-7922</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Son, 5, accident</td>
<td>Jack &amp; Linda Standeven 541-745-3914</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Son, 26, accidental substance abuse overdose</td>
<td>Alana Ayriss 503-510-6053</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Footprints in the Sand**

There was a day of sunshine, when you followed after me.
Bare feet in cool sand.
Small prints skipping through swirls of foam upon the shore.
Even as we danced and laughed
The waves crashed against the rocks.
Yet when I looked behind us
Only smooth sand remained.
People have ceased to speak of you
and grow uncomfortable when I do.
But I refuse to let them, like the sea...
erase your memory.
Karen Nelson
TCF, Box Elder County, UT

---

**There’s no tragedy in life like the death of a child.
Things never get back to the way they were.**
- Dwight D. Eisenhower

Eisenhower’s 4-year-old son died from an illness

---

**ONLINE GRIEF RESOURCES www.COMPASSIONATEFRIENDS.ORG**

The national Compassionate Friends website has help for all types of loss and stages of grief. If you are a parent, sibling, grandparent or even an employer, the National TCF website has resources that can help. There are resources for the different feelings of grief from men, women, suicide, sudden infant death, drug overdose and more.

**We Need Not Walk Alone magazine** The on-line magazine ‘We Need Not Walk Alone’ is excellent. There are several articles that touch upon different types of loss. Many are written by licensed therapists who are themselves grieving parents. It is free to look at and subscribe for email delivery. Go to www.compassionatefriends.org. Select Resources then We Need Not Walk Alone on-line magazine

**Daily Chat rooms** Some people do not feel ready to go to the monthly meeting but still need someone to talk to. Others would like more frequent help. National TCF website offers free moderated chat rooms every day of the week. They work just like the regular meeting. Feel free to share or simply read as other people describe what they are going through. There are chat rooms for a variety of loss including some just for siblings and grandparents and recent loss within the last few years. Go to www.compassionatefriends.org. Select Find Support then On-line Communities. Click on On-line Support. Most of the chat rooms are active in the evening.

**Facebook groups** Social media has become a part of most peoples lives. National TCF hosts several private and moderated Facebook groups related to a variety of loss. There are groups set up for Siblings, substance abuse, suicide, men grieving, multiple loss, grandparents, sudden death, and step child loss. Go to www.compassionatefriends.org. Select Find Support then On-line Communities. Click on View Groups.

- Jack

© 2018 The Compassionate Friends
The Compassionate Friends
We offer friendship, understanding, and hope to bereaved parents and their families following the death of a child and to provide information to help others be supportive. We have no religious affiliation. The chapter has no employees; leadership roles are filled by member volunteers who work in honor of their children, siblings, or grandchildren who have died. We all have felt the way you do now. Please call us anytime for help, advice or just to talk.

(503) 743-3930
Remember, you are not alone.

Get Involved
Salem TCF is a private non-profit organization which maintains itself through the efforts of volunteers. We have a steering committee which meets on a regular basis and many volunteers who offer support in the very practical needs that arise. It is our hope that members who desire to volunteer be at a place in their grief that they believe they can be supportive to others and take care of themselves first and foremost. That being said, please feel free to contact Chapter leaders if you have a desire to offer your time and efforts to our Salem TCF Chapter. Your help is so appreciated and means a lot to so many.

© 2018 The Compassionate Friends

The Compassionate Friends of Salem, Oregon Chapter
Supporting Family After a Child Dies
1115 Madison St. NE #209
Salem, OR 97301

Dated Material
Jan - Feb 2018

© 2018 The Compassionate Friends