

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS INC.

International Organization Offering Friendship and Understanding to Bereaved Parents

MIAMI COUNTY CHAPTER NO.1870

July 2024 NEWSLETTER Vol. 32 No.7

Facebook page "The Compassionate Friends of Miami County Ohio Chapter 1870".

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Mark Your Calendars & Reserve a Butterfly for Your Child!

Annual Picnic & Butterfly Release

July 25, 2024

6:00pm – picnic

7:00pm – butterfly release

Nashville UCC Picnic Grounds & Recreation Park

4755 W. State Rt. 571

West Milton, Oh 45383



Meetings are held at: Zion Lutheran Church

14 W Walnut St

Tipp City, OH 45371

(entrance by parking lot on W. Walnut St.,
handicap accessible)

No Regular Meeting due to

Annual Picnic & Butterfly Release



Come join us for a peaceful evening picnic and butterfly release. Everyone is welcome including family and friends. Look for the balloons marking the gravel drive that will take you back to the picnic area located a short distance west of the Nashville church (previous mtg location), on the north side of St. Rt. 571. We'll be using the covered shelter which has plenty of picnic tables and benches. However, feel free to bring a lawn chair to sit under the trees where it may be cooler. We provide plates, napkins, dinnerware, condiments, cups, drinks, ice and a variety of meat selections.

Please bring a salad, vegetable, fruit dish, or a dessert to share with the group and include a serving utensil.--

You are invited to bring your child's picture for the photo table. Please RSVP by July 9th if you will be attending the picnic to Kim Bundy 937-573-9877 or email kbundy.tcf@gmail.com, so enough meat & dinnerware can be provided.(Please provide your child's name, your name, phone number, and the number attending for this child.) For those that would like to continue with a traditional balloon release, you are welcome to bring your own balloon and send it up to heaven with your messages after the butterflies are released.

“The Grieving are
only time travelers.

For it takes only

One Song

One Smell

One Sound

One Moment

And we are suddenly
right back with you.”

HOPE = THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

By Marie Levine

Olivia was born still - an umbilical cord too tightly wound. Lucas was two days old when he died from complications. Greta was only two years old when she was killed by falling debris. Max was seven when he died from a brain tumor - Jasmina was only six. Jaden was ten when an asthma attack proved fatal - Donald was 16 when he suffered a similar fate. Kareem was 15 when he drowned along with his brother Kevin; Peter was 22 when his friend lost control of the car he was driving him home in; Charlie was 23 when his prescription didn't work with his social life; Mark and Karen were on their honeymoon when their bus ran off a mountain in Nepal; Kelli was 39 when she succumbed to ovarian cancer; Jimmy was 36 when a heart attack took him, and his brother Charlie followed a year later when cancer chose him. Eleanor was 41, Philip was 45, Andrew was 47, and Harvey was 59.

Sudden, unexpected deaths - walking, running, skiing, skating, driving, flying, burning, drinking, drugging, falling, swimming, shooting, stabbing, hanging, jumping; heart attacks, brain tumors, seizures, aneurisms, strokes, organ failures -so many ways to die.

No matter the age, no matter the reason - they all were children - leaving their parents and siblings here to grieve their too early, unexpected deaths. Every day children die. While the world turns for most, for so many parents the world suddenly stops. Losing a child sets survivors on a totally unanticipated life path.

This grief is different. There is so much to deal with even while disbelief is the prism through which everything else must now be seen. In a numb state of initial shock, we go through the motions necessary to shutting down a life only partially lived. At last, able to focus on our grief, we discover it is not like any grief we have ever experienced, learned about or lived through with anyone we've ever known. We try in vain to understand this mind-bending confusion while the uninitiated around us try to offer well intended but ultimately useless comfort and solace based on their own limited understanding of loss. Our inability to fathom our new reality and the loss of hope for a future creates even more pain and isolation. Only those who have lived this calamity recognize the future that newly bereaved parents face. The bereaved become aliens in a world where they no longer feel like they belong.

Losing a child is the beginning of an extraordinary grief experience. Because healing doesn't begin as expected, doubts about one's own sanity begins to creep in. We begin to think that perhaps we are losing our minds. Healing seems unattainable. We are reluctant to "let go" as others encourage us to do. Our grief is the most solid thing we have. We hang on for dear life. "Getting over it" is impossible. They say we'll never be the same; they are right. Frustrated by our inability to describe this unique grief experience, we finally find a measure of relief when we meet others who have lost a child. Without saying a word we feel safe in knowing they understand exactly what we are feeling. They've been there - and survived.

Parents who survive their children are chemically rearranged. Like a butterfly's metamorphosis, we too must confront changes in our personality, our physicality, our perspective, our health, our attitudes, our capabilities, our needs, our desires, and our understanding. Our healthy survival depends on our ability to reinvent ourselves. The future we spent a lifetime envisioning and working towards becomes a black hole; we have no idea where we're headed and we simply slide toward some unknown destination. Adjustment to this new reality can take years - the better part of a lifetime. As Jason Greene, Greta's Dad said, "Children remain dead in ways adults do not." Eventually we do get over other inevitable losses. Like a stone in our pocket, we carry this loss for always. It takes a very long time to care about anything again. But hope does live - in our world hope is The Compassionate Friends.

~Marie and Phil Levine's only child, Peter, was killed while being driven home by a college friend who had been drinking. She has been a frequent workshop presenter at TCF National Conferences and is the author of "First You Die: Learn to Live After the Death of Your Child" and "The Tincture of Time" for those further along in their grief journey.

NEED TO TALK TO SOMEONE?
A listening ear is sometimes the best medicine.

| | |
|------------------------------|----------|
| Kim Bundy (suicide) | 573-9877 |
| Pam Fortener (cancer) | 238-4075 |
| Donnie Fortener (cancer) | 760-2238 |
| Pam Fortener (siblings) | 238-4075 |
| Cathy Duff (auto accident) | 473-5533 |
| Jackie Glawe (auto accident) | 478-3318 |

Chapter website by Mica Glaser Jones:
www.thecompassionatefriendsmiamicounty.com

CHAPTER NEWS

Upcoming meetings:

| | | |
|-----|---|--------------------------|
| Jul | - | <i>Butterfly Release</i> |
| Aug | - | <i>TBA</i> |



Thank You 
for your love gifts!

47th Annual National Conference of The Compassionate Friends

July 12th – July 14th
New Orleans, LA

- ★ *Rob & Bev Gardner in memory of son, Jeff Gardner.*
- ★ *Pam & Kern Carpenter in memory of daughter, Tasha Longyear.*
- ★ *Bob Karl in memory of son, Matt Karl.*
- ★ *Cindy & Steve Glaser in memory of son, Andy Glaser.*
- ★ *Love Gifts should be made out to: The Compassionate Friends and mailed to **Cindy Glaser, 5255 Rudy Road Tipp City, Ohio 45371.** Please send your donation by the 15th of the month prior to the month you want your child remembered in the newsletter.*

TCF's National Conference is an enriching and supportive event for many newer and long-time bereaved parents, grandparents, and siblings. Attendees come and find renewed hope and support, as well as strategies for coping with grief, all while making friendships with other bereaved people who truly understand the heartbreaking loss of a child, sibling, or grandchild. Lifelong friendships are often formed and rekindled each year at TCF conferences.

Unique and cherished highlights of the conference include heartfelt Saturday evening Candle Lighting Program, Workshops, Sharing Sessions, Keynote Addresses, Healing Haven, Butterfly Boutique, Crafty Corner, and Silent Auction. Our weekend of inspiration, sharing, and learning is followed by the Walk to Remember on Sunday morning.

For more details and to register please visit:

<https://www.compassionatefriends.org/>

*We begin to remember not just
that you died, but that you
lived.
And that your life gave us
memories too beautiful to
forget.*

Our Children Lovingly Remembered

July Birthdays

Child—Parent, Grandparent, Sibling

*Cody S. Pressler - Joe Miller & Tamra Pressler
Harley Ludwig - Warren & April Hawkins
Mary Herman - Mike Herman
Kyle Jackson – Brenda Jackson
Jeff Gardner – Rob & Bev Gardner*



July Angel-versaries

Child—Parent, Grandparent, Sibling

*Josh Eversole - Steve & Valerie Thorn
Mary Herman - Mike Herman*



The definition suits the word

Bereaved – suffering the death of a loved one. From the Old English word-bereafian or bereft.

Bereft – deprived or robbed of something, lacking something needed, wanted or expected.

We all know how difficult those "Special Days" can be - birthdays and death anniversary days. Please remember these parents on their special days and let them know that they are not alone; someone cares about their pain and their grief. It means so much to be remembered!

Please let me know if I have omitted a child, misspelled a name or have published an incorrect date. I know how important it is to bereaved families to have their children remembered. 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 – Jackie Glawe/Editor, Kim Bundy/Chapter leader or Cindy Glaser/Treasurer

Surviving Siblings

~Carol Kearns, PhD
Marin County CA

I gained a greater understanding of how powerful guilt can be for surviving siblings observing my son Michel after the death of his sister, Kristen. As parents, it is our role to support, nurture, and protect. This is not the role of siblings, yet it gets twisted into their grief as well. As a result, it is common for brothers and sisters to feel that they failed in some way.

Siblings may often believe there must have been something they could have done to prevent the death. And sadly, it is not uncommon for siblings to believe they caused the death by wishing ill thoughts on their sister or brother during a disagreement or fight.

This can have unfortunate repercussions if the sibling dies. Well-intentioned people may add to the confusion by making statements like, “You need to be strong for your parents.” adding an unnecessary burden for the child to now care for us. Michel also heard, “God must have needed Krissie.” causing him to fear that God may want him too. Survival guilt is also common. Not only do parents believe they shouldn’t outlive their children, but brothers and sisters often feel guilty for being alive and enjoying life.

They may believe as well that they need to be the perfect child to make up for the loss. This is a real complication of grief. As parents, we need to be aware of this and reassure them that they don’t need to make up for anything, nor can they. We might want to tell them that the greatest gift they can give us is to be their own person and live life to the fullest. When death lands on the doorstep of our surviving children at a tender age it most likely becomes their threshold into adulthood for understanding death can demand adult sized answers. I definitely noticed this with my son who was only nine when his sister died suddenly. He became a quieter, more serious boy. The innocence of his childhood was left behind when he realized his sister, his buddy, was gone forever.

Watching our surviving children come to terms with death of this magnitude, I’ve always felt, is the double edged sword of the bereaved parent. We are wrestling with our own grief and the endless questions with answers that don’t come easily, making us, once again, feel as helpless as we did when our child died. Being open and honest with our children and their struggle and keeping the channels of communication open, can actually bring us closer to them.
We can heal together.



**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 OR TEXT (937) 478-3318 AND LEAVE A MESSAGE.

Thank you.