

# THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

A self-help organization offering friendship and understanding to bereaved families

## AUGUST 2011

### Inside Valley Forge

**Meetings are on the first Thursday** of every month at 7:45PM (ending at 9:30PM). We meet at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church Fellowship Hall, Valley Forge and Henderson RDs, King of Prussia, PA. Phone **on meeting evenings only** is 610-265-0733. All other times please call Rhonda at 484-919-0820.



#### **Meeting Schedule and other TCF Events of interest Please Mark Your Calendar**

**Aug 4 General Sharing**

**Sep 1 General Sharing & Death by Suicide**

**Sep 17 Butterfly Release (see page 3)**

**We encourage newsletter writings from our members.** You may also submit articles written by others, please include the author of all articles submitted. **The cut-off date for newsletter entries is the 15th of the preceding month. ARTICLES SHOULD BE SENT TO THE NEWSLETTER EDITORS.**

There are no dues or fees to belong to The Compassionate Friends, or to receive our newsletter. Your tax deductible donations (which we call love gifts) given in memory of your loved one enables us to defray the cost of chapter expenses, particularly the newsletter, meetings, and our outreach to the newly bereaved. **Please include any special tribute you wish printed in the newsletter along with your gift.**

If you donate to **United Way** at your place of work, and wish your contribution to go to the Valley Forge Chapter of The Compassionate Friends, you may do so by entering: **The Compassionate Friends - Valley Forge Chapter United Way ID# 04-104.** on your pledge form.

**PLEASE MAKE ALL CHECKS PAYABLE TO:  
TCF VALLEY FORGE CHAPTER  
SEND TO: CHAPTER LEADER  
RHONDA GOMEZ**

### Valley Forge Chapter

#### **Chapter Leader**

Rhonda Gomez  
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**NEW FRIENDS**

**Jim & Michele Angelini** son **Danny** (36)

**Mek Wagner** daughter **Page** (35)

**Brook** sister **Page** (35)

**Bob Wagner** sister **Page** (35)

**Dan Logan** daughter (3)

We welcome our newly bereaved friends, and are sorry for the cause that brings you. Having been in the depths of despair, we know that it is difficult to share our pain and personal feelings. It is important that you attend three or four meetings before evaluating the benefit of our group to you. Our meetings offer confidentiality, unconditional love, compassion and understanding to all of you.

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**JULY REFRESHMENTS**

**Adriane & Peter DeMoerloose** for all the children & siblings.

**Rhonda & Frank Gomez** anniversary of our son **Frankie** (July 17)

Anyone wishing to donate refreshments (cheese & crackers, fruit, cakes, cookies, etc.) in memory of loved ones, please call **Rhonda Gomez (484)919-0820**, or **you may sign the refreshment chart** located on the refreshment table. Beverages are provided by the chapter.

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**LOVE GIFTS**

**Art Dorfman** in loving memory of my son **Eric Dorfman** on his birthday, Aug 22

“Love and miss you, Kid.”

**John E. Kostic Memorial Foundation, Eileen Kostic, president**, in loving

Memory of our son, **John** (20)

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**NEWSLETTER BY EMAIL**

**We are asking if possible , would you please receive your newsletter by email.**

We do not want to remove anyone from our newsletter mailing list who is benefiting from receiving it. We hope it is a help to you while going through your grief, giving you better understanding of your feelings, and letting you know **“We need not walk alone”**. A newsletter helps to keep our TCF family informed of local and national events. We consider this an important function of our program.

We are asking if you have email, would you consider receiving your newsletter in email format. You will receive your copy earlier if you opt to receive it by email. If you chose to use the email method of receiving your newsletter, you will have the option to switch back to the old method. If you wish to receive the newsletter by email please contact: **Frank Gomez fgomez@hybridpoplars.com**

**BUTTERFLY RELEASE AND PROGRAM  
VALLEY FORGE CHAPTER OF THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS  
EVERYONE IS WELCOME TO ATTEND**

**BUTTERFLIES MUST BE ORDERED BY AUGUST 19<sup>TH</sup>**

**SPRINGTON MANOR FARM  
860 Springton Road, Glenmore, PA 19343  
Phone: 610-942-2450, Option #1**

**Saturday, September 17, 2010 at 11 AM  
(This event will be held rain or shine)**

**Cost \$9 per butterfly - August 19th last day to place order.**

**There is no admission or parking fee to Springton Manor Farm. Handicap equipped.**

**The Butterfly Release will be held under a large shaded tree. (not the Butterfly House)  
Water will be provided by the chapter. Please bring folding chairs or a blanket to sit on.**

**There is a Butterfly House which is home to many different species of butterflies, both native to Pennsylvania and exotic species. The Butterfly House provides educational opportunities for all ages, learning styles and audiences. House Hosts will guide you through the butterfly habitat, sharing all sources for water, food and shelter during each of the life stages: egg, caterpillar, chrysalis/pupa and butterfly. (\$2 per person fee to tour the Butterfly House)**

A family may order one butterfly to share, or order one butterfly for each family member. You may order as many butterflies as you wish. If you are unable to attend on this date, we can release the butterfly that you have purchased in your loved one's name. The names of all loved ones will be read during the program.

**For questions, please call TCF Valley Forge 484-919-0820**

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**REGISTRATION FORM**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Name of loved one**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Your Relationship to them**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Name of loved one**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Your Relationship to them**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Name of loved one**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Your Relationship to them**

**Total number of butterflies ordered: \_\_\_\_\_ \$9.00 each - Total money (no credit cards) enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_**

**Please forward registration and check to: Rhonda Gomez, 12 Brook Circle, Glenmoore, PA 19343**

**OUR CHILDREN & SIBLINGS LOVED, SADLY MISSED AND REMEMBERED**

Each month some of us must face those special, but difficult days of birthdays and anniversaries. This Month we ask your thoughts and prayers for the parents/siblings/relatives of the following children:

**We will no longer list the birth and death years of deceased persons in our newsletter. We have concerns this information could be misused, and result in an adversity for the families.**

**Marilynn Anton**, cousin/godmother *Douglas Hofmockel* 8/27  
**Rob and Janet Beiswenger**, son *Jared* 8/17  
**Dorothy & Jack Bert**, son *Matthias* 8/16  
**Jovanna & Joseph Bevilacqua**, son *Donato Danny'Bevilacqua* 8/20  
**Richard & Jo Bewley**, son *Kevin Bewley* 8/24  
**Marvin & Wilma Bordetsky**, daughter *Noreen Bordetsky Cook* 8/29  
**Thomas & Janet Cleary**, son *Ryan* 8/21  
**Evelyn M. Corrado**, son *John A. Corrado* 8/5  
**Allison Crowder**, daughter *Amber* 8/8  
**Dorothy & G. Robert Daily, Sr.**, son *David* 8/26  
**Jim and Patty Duffy**, son *Michael Duffy* 8/8  
**Nancy & David Dykty**, brother *Jim Sutton* 8/7  
**Tom & Irene Edmunds**, son *Kyle Derek Edmunds* 8/1  
**Ron & Sue Gamza**, daughter & grandson *Rachel & Troy* 8/22  
**Rita & Thomas Gibbons**, son *Paul Gibbons* 8/13  
**Mary Lou Harrison**, son *Lance 'Scott' Harrison* 8/4  
**Danielle Hemmench Ricci**, boyfriend *Ryan* 8/21  
**Beatrice K Hildebrandt**, son *John R. Hildebrandt* 8/26  
**Marie & Ken Hofmockel**, son *Douglas Hofmockel* 8/27  
**Jan & Dan Jackson**, son *John Jackson* 8/18  
**Michael & Betsy Jarrett**, son *Michael Jarrett* 8/13  
**Joan Kingslake**, daughter *Ann Kingslake Woods* 8/3  
**Sue Lawlor**, son *Jim* 8/24  
**Kathleen & John Leeper**, son *Shaun Michael Leeper* 8/17  
**Janet Leflar**, son *Scott* 8/11  
**John & Nancy Logue**, daughter *Heather Logue* 8/16  
**Timothy & Maxine Lurowist**, daughter *Kristine* 8/24/  
**Mary MacFarland**, son *Marc* 8/4  
**Anna E Marchese**, son *Matthew Paul Marchese* 8/28  
**Diane Mazzagatti**, son *John Pirocchi, Jr.* 8/3  
**Sue McMaster**, cousin *Patty* 8/30  
**Joanne F Michini**, son *Alfred J. Michini, II* 8/2  
**Alfred J. Michini**, son *Alfred J. Michini, II* 8/2  
**Alexandra Milas**, daughter *Nicole Penelope Wiseley* 8/23  
**Andrew Miller**, daughter *Perri* 8/21  
**Kathleen Mitchel**, daughter *Danielle* 8/21

**AUGUST BIRTHDAYS continued**

**John B. & Lillian Neff**, son *Patrick Neff* 8/30  
**Sharon Ott**, daughter *Amber* 8/12  
**Joan Palumbo**, son *Michael* 8/4  
**Sharyn & Joe Pozzuolo**, son *Joey Brad Pozzuolo* 8/26  
**Joe & Marti Purifico**, son *Jeffrey* 8/3  
**Elise Rice**, son *Raymond Anthony Rice* 8/29  
**Bonnie Rosen**, son *Troy* 8/30  
**Becky Rotkowski**, brother *Brian* 8/17  
**Marie Schmeltzer**, son *Sam Sonny'Schmeltzer* 8/22  
**Pamela Schneibolk**, brother *Douglas Hofmockel* 8/27  
**Harry & Carol Schultz**, son *Brian Andrew Schultz* 8/23  
**Janet & Jonathan Schultz**, brother *Marc Ernest Stein* 8/17  
**Ray & Lorraine Spear**, daughter *Kimberly Jean Spear* 8/15  
**Elaine & Joe Stillwell**, daughter *Margaret Mary O'Connor* 8/23  
**Karen & Alan Stoner**, daughter *Holly Patricia Stoner* 8/11  
**Fred & Irene Sutton**, son *Jim Sutton* 8/7  
**Tracey Sutton-Vitabile**, brother *Jim Sutton* 8/7  
**Hellmut Theil**, son *Hellmut Theil, Jr.* 8/2  
**Thomas & Sara Thiermann**, daughter *Heather Bruce Thiermann* 8/26  
**Pat Villante**, daughter *Patty* 8/30  
**Andy & Peg Yanoviak**, daughter *Elizabeth Betsy'Hershman* 8/6  
**Pat Zimmerman**, son *Bernard Zimmerman* 8/29

**AUGUST ANNIVERSARIES**

**Maryellen & Dick Abell**, son *Brian Abell* - 8/19  
**Emily L. Alm**, son *Bryan W. Alm* - 8/23  
**Lisa Bellopede**, son *Johnny* - 8/12  
**Dorothy & Jack Bert**, son *Matthias* - 8/29  
**Bruce & Barb Campbell**, son *Greg* - 8/21  
**Joann & Gary Chavez**, son *Christopher Dale Chavez* - 8/4  
**Mary & John Chelius**, son *John J. Chelius, Jr.* - 8/24  
**Liz & Scott Conaghan**, brother *Jan* - 8/27  
**Jean & Bill Cotter**, son *Patrick Cotter* - 8/11  
**Holly & John Cross**, son *John* - 8/13  
**Carol Curtiss**, grandson *Kurt* - 8/20  
**Dorothy & G. Robert Daily, Sr.**, son *G. Robert Daily, Jr.* - 8/10  
**Antoinette & John DiDonato**, son *John Jr* - 8/17  
**Richard & Martha Fenoglio**, daughter *Judith Fenoglio Daw* - 8/6  
**Mary Field**, daughter *Lindsay Field* - 8/19  
daughter *Karolin Field* - 8/13

**AUGUST ANNIVERSARIES continued**

Lisa Foos, son *Curtis* - 8/12  
June & Tsuneo Fujita, daughter *Sharon Kimi Fujita* - 8/17  
Molly Gehring, son *Daniel* - 8/26  
Angela Giannantonio, son *Anthony* - 8/2  
Stephanie Grier, son John *JD'Grier* - 8/17  
Tom & Judy Hahn, daughter *Erica Hilley* - 8/23  
Joan Jagers, son *John Costello* - 8/18  
Greg & Anita Lewicki, son *Eric Stephen Lewicki* - 8/20  
John & Nancy Logue, daughter *Heather Logue* - 8/23  
Kathleen & Hugh Martin, Jr., son *Colin John C.J. 'Martin* - 8/16  
Jeff and Kathy McCarron, daughter *Sarah* - 8/14/  
Robert & Marjorie Meckley, son *Douglas Meckley* - 8/16  
Kathleen Mitchel, daughter *Danielle* - 8/21  
Carol & Dennis O'Connor, son *Michael O'Connor* - 8/23  
Patricia Peraino, brother *Anthony* - 8/2  
Marge Randolph, husband *Bob Fixter* - 8/18  
Thelma Rosen, son *Thomas Grisafi* - 8/24  
Susan & John Rutland, son *Justin Rutland* - 8/30  
Carol Sannella, son *David Sannella* - 8/31  
Marie Shippen, son *Michael Morgan* - 8/29  
Robert & Nell Shoemaker, daughter *Brynn Shoemaker* - 8/9  
Edie Smith, son *John Seddon Sed'Wilson* - 8/20  
Linda Sposato, daughter *Bernadette Funaro* - 8/24  
Elaine & Joe Stillwell, daughter *Margaret Mary O'Connor* - 8/2  
son *Denis E. O'Connor, III* - 8/6  
Walter & Irene Stolarczyk, daughter *Barbara Stolarczyk* - 8/10  
Juan & Casey Terrero, son *Jalen* - 8/31  
Judy & Bert Tomarelli, son *Daniel Robert Tomarelli* - 8/10  
Kevin Welde, brother *John Welde* - 8/14

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**WRITE A LETTER TO YOUR CHILD.** Pour out your feeling to your child. The anger, guilt, love, and broken heart. Keep the letter to yourself or share it with others. Keep it or toss it in the trash. Writing is good therapy. WRITE:

What I wish I said to you.  
What I wish I hadn't said to you.  
What I wish I had done.  
What I wish I had not done.

What I wish you would have done.  
What I wish you had not done.  
What I wish I could ask you.  
What I would like to tell you. etc., etc.

**Author Unknown**

SHARED THOUGHTS ON HEALING

Healing is the one gift all bereaved parents & siblings are searching for. Because our pain is so all consuming and overwhelming, it makes us feel that it would be impossible to laugh or be happy again. We and all those around us want the impossible, which is to return to the way we were before the death of our child or sibling.

The shock of our loss usually insulates us, which helps us to get through those first few weeks of grief, but unfortunately that is about as long as some of our friends and family will hang in there with us. We are grieving for our child or sibling, but most friend's primary grief is for us and the pain we are going through, their tolerance for our extended grief wears thin. They want us to hurry and feel better so that their pain will go away.

About this time even we ask ourselves, "when will I feel better?" I can remember, after Doug's death, of wondering if the pain would ever ease. Life seemed so pointless and without hope. Just to survive a day seemed so difficult and demanded every ounce of strength I had.

Gradually, (and never as soon as we would like it to come), we do feel a glimmer of hope for some small interest in life again. No matter how small our accomplishment, we need to recognize this as healing. Little by little our empty feelings diminish, even though they are not gone. Since our healing time is proportionate to our loss, the road is very long and hard.

We at Compassionate Friends, have traveled the road. We never want to forget our loved ones. Our child or sibling died, but the love lives on, and what ever we were to one another, we still are. Healing is not forgetting, it's remembering without pain.

Our deep pain blocks our objectivity, but someday this agony (and the love for our child or sibling) will bring us new meanings about life. We have to choose our own path for peace and healing.

During your grief, if you feel more compassionate toward another's loss, refine your priorities, are less judgmental, want to ease someone's pain, or can remember your loved one without intense pain. **You are healing!**

Come share, we need one another to get to the other side of grief.

God Bless, *Marie Hofmockel*, TCF Valley Forge, PA

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*Time is too slow for those who wait, Too swift for those who fear,  
Too long for those who grieve, Too short for those who rejoice,  
But, for those who Love..... Time is Eternal* *HENRY VANDYKE*

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Far beyond the clouds above  
A special garden grows with love,  
Special flowers of many blends  
Are the children of The Compassionate Friends

*Sam Rosenberg*

Grief is a long journey and at times like these the weight feels so heavy and we just want to escape and run away and have life back to normal. It can't happen.

*Sandi Sacco*, Okinawa, Japan

**THE PATH**

My world lay shattered around me. Gone were the flowers and the sun. The path ahead looked dark and threatening. I heard a voice saying, "You have to travel this path alone."

"I don't want to go down that path. I can't." I protested. "I liked the old path."

"The choice is yours," said the voice, "but you may never go back to the old path. You may stay here at the crossroads where anger and pain will keep you company and wither your spirit. Or, you may runoff into the surrounding woods and pretend you are going somewhere, but you will become disoriented and lost. The only peace is to be found at the end of the path ahead."

"If you have the courage to set forth upon the new path and keep struggling through the storms, you will discover depths in yourself that you never knew existed. If you reach out you will find those who have already traveled this difficult way and are there to support and guide you. Though it seems impossible now, your path will become beautiful again, as will your spirit. You will emerge from the desolation a stronger, wiser, and more compassionate person. Then you too can turn and extend your hand to those who are still on the way."

I made a choice. I picked up the remains of my life -- my aching heart and wounded spirit, my broken dreams and disbelief -- and wrapped them carefully in my blanket of grief. Holding them closely to me, I walked steadfastly ahead into the storm with faith in the promise of peace on the other side.

*Sharron Cordaro, Riverside, CA*

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A boy was flying his kite. He kept adding more spools of string to make it go higher. A woman walked by and said, "you have that kite flying high." And the boy agreed. The woman left and went about her business. On her way back, she looked up toward the kite and said, "I do not see your kite." The boy agreed. She asked, "Then why don't you let go of it?" The boy answered, "I can't. I can still feel it tugging."

**This is the plight of bereaved parents.**

*TCF of Tilton, GA*

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When love is strong and runs deep it pulsates with an energy that cannot be stopped, not even in death's grip.

When two souls are connected and one departs from this world, the separation may seem final, but in truth the relationship transcends time.

Love, like a river, flows eternal, and it embraces all those who swim in its streams.

**Author Unknown**

"He held me in his arms and made me share it and accept that his sorrow was as great as my own. He simply wouldn't allow my grief to divide us...push us apart, which is what happens so often where there is a loss like that.

And for as long as I live, I will respect and appreciate my husband for the strength of his understanding.

*Barbara Bush*  
**Bereaved Parent**

**1988 Republican National Convention**

**REFLECTIONS**

With the death of my sister come some painful realizations; that life isn't always fair or predictable; that sometimes even my best still isn't good enough; and that from the day of her death, the happy events in my life would always be tinged with sadness.

Despite the pain and loss, death has also left me with some valuable lessons and precious gifts. As a result of my sister's death, I have a greater appreciation of life and a greater compassion for those who hurt. I have learned to be a survivor and to have a successful career and productive life in the face of tremendous grief and loss. I have been gifted with good friends and special people to help me through the rough times. But most of all, I have been given the gift of time – time to heal and time to replace those painful memories of death with priceless memories of my sister's life.

*Cathy Schanberger*

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The breath of winter  
painted fragile stars  
on all the windows  
of my quiet house.

And there I found  
your face,  
more fragile even than  
the season's art,  
a wonder to my eyes.

How can it be  
that winter paints  
such secret things  
in white-and-silver sheen  
for those who cry alone  
at frosted windows?

*Sascha Wagner*

I wish I could tell everyone who has lost a loved one how important it is to let themselves, and their family, remember. Forget, if you can, the sickness or tragedy that took them, but give them a place in your life. My family speaks very naturally of their father and their sister. We remember the fun, the love, and the closeness... We have memories to cherish, and we shouldn't cheat ourselves by not doing that. I don't mean that we should constantly talk about them, but when something we're doing reminds us of something good that happened when we were still a whole family, we don't hesitate to say so.

*Lettie Petrie*

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**Love Lives On**

Those we love  
are never really lost to us --  
we feel them  
in so many special ways --  
through friends  
they always cared about  
and dreams they left behind,

in beauty that they added to our days ...  
in words of wisdom  
we still carry with us  
and memories that never will be gone ...  
Those we love  
are never really lost to us --  
For everywhere their special love lives on.

by *Amanda Bradley*

A FATHER'S PRAYER

"I am a man, God, and I have been taught that I should be strong and show no weakness. My wife needs me to be strong; I cannot and I must not be weak and lean on her. It is only with you that I can be honest, Lord, and even with you I am ashamed to admit it, but I want to cry. I can feel the tears securely dammed up behind eyes that want to burst. There is a voice in me that shouts, "BE STRONG!" "BE A MAN!" "SHOW NO WEAKNESS!" "SHED NO TEARS!" But, there is another voice inside that speaks softly and somehow I feel it is your voice, Father. Is it you who tells me that I am also a feeling human being who can cry if I need to? Is it your voice that tells me that maybe my wife **needs** the tenderness of my tears more than she needs the strength of my muscles? You are right, Lord, as always. My wife needs to **see** my grief, she needs to **feel** the dampness of my tears and **know** the aching in my heart. Then, just as we became one to create this life, we become **one** in our grief which mourns this death. I think I understand now, Lord, it is in **sharing** the awful pain of my grief that I become an even stronger man. It is in **sharing** my tears that I **share** my **true** strength. **"O God, help me communicate my deepest and most sensitive feelings to my wife so we may become whole together."**

*from Centering Corp Magazine - Caring Concepts Omaha, Nebraska*

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THE CHILD WHO WASN'T PERFECT

I cannot say, as I have heard other parents say, "My child has always been a joy and pleasure; never gave me a minute's trouble." I cannot say that.

I had a son who was always trouble. He was born cross and irritable; a real trial from the word "go." He seemed to be in protest at having been born, from his very first breath and outcry, through the rest of his life. His 37 years of life were one long outcry of protest, misery and unhappiness.

He expressed his tormented spirit through music, poetry and a beautiful American Indian spirituality. But in spite of the pain that was in his heart, he had a wide smile and a hearty, big laugh for everyone, that belied the torment that raged inside him. He had a strange, mysterious wild charm, to which all who met him fell victim.

He seemed to be born in the wrong time, the wrong culture, with a crippled spirit, and a body that carried a fatal flaw; the fatal flow of addiction. He put himself and his family through the agony of the damned. Step by step, he destroyed himself, as we watched with grieving hearts. He rejected every effort to save him.

Then came that fateful week.

Some mystery reached out for him. His body, his spirit defied every weapon at science's disposal to diagnose and save him - and one by one his vital functions failed - and he was GONE.

The word "forever" suddenly had a new and terrible meaning.

So, he was hard to love.

But, WE LOVED HIM EVERY STEP OF THE WAY.

We had him because we wanted him and we loved him every minute of his life.

Our grief has been no less because he was not a perfect child.

It has just been an extension of the grief we lived with all those years, as we watched him destroy himself; an extension of the agony that we were helpless against, the "MONSTER" called addiction that destroyed him.

Yesterday was his birthday. I longed for the sight and sound of him and the wild, melancholy charm that vanished a year and a half ago.

My heart stays full of tears; they are always just beneath the surface. I struggle daily to keep them out of sight of my fellow man, who does not want to share my pain.

So, I come home and sit on my porch in the dark; listened to the rain or the night sounds; stare into space.

And I cry - and I cry - and I cry -

For my CHILD WHO WASN'T PERFECT.

*Jane Miller, TCF Atlanta, GA*

**THERE IS NO BETTER FRIEND**

For over 40 years, I have had the best friend you could ever have. When I told my best friend that I was fat, she never said, "I just lost three pounds without even trying."

When we went to a sock hop together in college and she was offered a ride home, she never ditched me.

When I gave myself a home permanent and left it on too long, she was the only one to sit with me in the bathroom until it grew out.

When I told my best friend my husband gave me two snow tires for our anniversary, she never said, "You should be happy he remembered."

When I was pregnant and my stomach looked like a tray on a car door in a drive-in, she never said, "There's a glow about a pregnant woman."

When I had a miscarriage and everyone else in the world said, "There will be other babies." She cried with me over the one I lost.

When she told me she was staying home for the summer, I wouldn't have dreamed of sending her a card from Spain telling her what a great time I was having.

When her mixer broke down, I never asked her if she had sent in the warranty card so she'd be covered.

When I moved 3,000 miles away, she never once told me what I was doing to her.

When her mother died, I never said, "She had a rich, full life and she was in her 70's."

When I argued with my husband and begged her advice, she kept her mouth shut. She just listened.

When we couldn't get a sitter and had to bring the kids along to her house for dinner, she never fell apart.

When I left my first autographing party and no one showed up, she never once suggested, "They probably didn't see the ad."

When her political candidate lost and mine won, I never said, "Ha, ha, I told you so."

Every time we got together, neither of us had to say, "I'm glad to see you."

Recently, my best friend lost her child. He was her youngest and was in his 20's. I listened to her. I cried with her. I felt pain that I had never known I could feel before. But not once did I say to her, "I know how you feel."

*Erma Bombeck*

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**HUGS**

It's wondrous what a hug can do.  
A hug can cheer you when you're blue  
A hug can say, "I love you so."  
Or, "Gee, I hate to see you go."

A hug is, "Welcome back again!"  
And, "Great to see you," or  
"Where have you been?"  
A hug can soothe a small child's pain  
And bring a rainbow after the rain.

The hug! There's just no doubt about it.  
We scarcely could survive without it.  
A hug delights and warms and charms,  
It must be why God gave us arms.

Hugs are great for father and mother,  
Sweet for sisters, swell for brothers,  
And chances are some favorite aunts  
Love them more than potted plants.

Kittens crave them, Puppies love them,  
Heads of state are not above the,  
A hug can break the language barrier,  
And make the dullest day seem merrier.

No need to fret about the store of them,  
The more you give,  
The more there are of them.  
So stretch those arms with out delay  
And give someone a hug today.

*Dean Walley*