



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

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

JULY 2015

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

July 2 General Sharing

Aug 6 General Sharing

July 10-12 TCF National Conference, Dallas, TX

See page 3

Oct 9-11 2015 E. PA Regional Conference

See page 3 for information

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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**

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TCF Mission Statement

When a child dies, at any age, the family suffers intense pain and may feel hopeless and isolated. The Compassionate Friends provides highly personal comfort, hope, and support to every family experiencing the death of a son or a daughter, a brother or a sister, or a grandchild, and helps others better assist the grieving family.

INSIDE VALLEY FORGE CHAPTER

NEW MEMBERS

Linda Cymbala, son *Nicholas* (25)

Mary MacFarland, son *Marc* (29)

Marissa Wadsworth, son *T.J.* (21)

REFRESHMENTS

Lisa & John Russo in memory of their son, *Casey's* "Angel"versary.

Mary Lou Harrison in memory of her son, *Scott* on his anniversary.

Refreshments may be donated in memory of loved ones, please call **Rhonda (484) 919-0820**, or you may sign the **refreshment chart** located on the refreshment table.

LOVE GIFTS

Rose Marie Cote and Jamie Weaver, in loving memory of our son / brother, **Mark J. Cote** on his birthday 6/3.

Kathleen & Robert Grossi, in loving memory of our son, **James** on his birthday 6/30.

Mary Ellen & James Madden, in loving memory of our daughter, **Anne Marie "Annie" Maden** on her 16th anniversary.

Palma & Joseph Panichello, in loving memory of our beloved son, **Joseph** on his anniversary 6/7. Never forgotten - still missed - in our thoughts and prayer every day .
With love always - Forever in our hearts.

Deborah Walter in loving memory of my son, **Evan** on his anniversary 5/10.

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**

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA REGIONAL CONFERENCE

As you know a Regional Conference is being planned for October 9-11, 2015 at the Radisson Hotel in King of Prussia, PA.

We hope you will take the opportunity to share the conference weekend with us. It will be an indescribable experience with bereaved families who have "been there", and know the depth of the pain. There are no strangers, or social barriers, everyone becomes an instant friend. We share our emotional feelings with one another.

There will be seasoned bereaved families, who have proven life can be meaningful once more. They have learned to love, laugh, and live again, and know the love and memories of our children and siblings have not diminished.

If you are interested in serving on the planning committee, please join us at the next planning meeting scheduled for **2PM July, 26, 2015**. This, and all planning meetings, will be held at the Radisson Hotel, King of Prussia, PA.

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38th NATIONAL CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FORM

Is available by mail from:

PO Box 3693, Oak Brook, IL, 60522-3696

or call:

877-969-0010 or FAX 630-990-0246

On line registration available at www.compassionatefriends.org

The Compassionate Friends National Conference 2015



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.**

JULY BIRTHDAYS

Nina Ansel, daughter *Jenny* 7/27
Mary Auger, son *Eric R. Ehmann* 7/13
Charlene & Earle Bare, son *Abe Bare* 7/1
Herb and Fran Barnett, son *Andrew* 7/2
Loretta Bovell, daughter *JoAnna* 7/12
Joann & Gary Chavez, son *Christopher Dale Chavez* 7/19
Tracy & Mike Collins, daughter *Krystal Chuck* 7/19
Hazel Corbin, daughter *Dayle C Rutledge* 7/7
Tom & Judy Hahn, daughter *Erica Hilley* 7/2
Giuliana Hilend, son *Patrick Andrew Hilend* 7/9
Janet & Dave Keller, brother *Thomas A. Keller* 7/3
Al & Sue Koenig, daughter *Emily Grace Koenig* 7/8
Lisa Gie Liem, daughter *Stephanie* 7/14
Joan Lippre, son *John* 7/16
Robert McCullough, daughter *Caroline Patricia McCullough* 7/19
Cameron and Sandra Meikle, daughter *Laura* 7/4
Alexandra Milas, brother *Nicholas Stathes* 7/1
John & Mary Ann Murphy, son *Brian Michael Murphy* 7/20
Carol & Dennis O'Connor, brother *Jack Coladonato* 7/14
Gary & Patricia Otto, son *Benjamin Otto* 7/26
Betty Jane Peters - Neilson, son *Walter C. Peters* 7/4
son *Russell F. Peters, Jr.* 7/25
Vernice Quattlebaum, daughter *Gwendolyn Y. Ashe* 7/11
Donald & Freda Rhinier, son *Glenn D. Rhinier* 7/18
Kelly Rossi, brother *Kevin* 7/24
Abigail Schwartz, mother *Barbra* 7/15
Mike & Beverly Smith, son *Ryan* 7/18
Helen Smith, son *Bob Smith* 7/2
Patricia & Bertram Snead, son *James Christopher Snead* 7/15
Jen & Alex Soutos, daughter *Alexi* 7/27
Harry & Merrily Spiess, son *F. Ryan Spiess* 7/16
Lisa M Spinks, brother *Robert* 7/9
Linda Sposato, daughter *Bernadette Funaro* 7/23
Dave & Lynn Strange, son *Bradley* 7/9
Ellen & Frank Svitek, daughter *Kate Elizabeth Svitek* 7/1

JULY BIRTHDAYS continued

Anne & Charles Swann, daughter *Katherine Anne Swann* 7/12
Jean Sykora, son *Mark* 7/14
Chris & Larry Teal, son *Wade Teal* 7/30
Renee Teufel, son *Gregory* 7/28
Robert & Nancy Thompson, son *Andrew Thompson* 7/21
Brenda Timbers, daughter *Niya Raquel Timbers* 7/3
Steven Tucker, son *Patrick Ryan* 7/12
Barbara Tuller, son *Charles* 7/3
Pat Villante, daughter *Laura* 7/28
Bill & Patti Whitehead, daughter *Maria* 7/4

JULY ANNIVERSARIES

Mary Auger, son *Eric R. Ehmman* - 7/5
Charlene & Earle Bare, son *Abe Bare* - 7/27
Lori Bartholomew, brother *Matthew* - 7/14
Eleanor Brennan, grandson *Jonathan Masiak* - 7/9
Jackie & Steve Brown, son *Doug Brown* - 7/23
Ellen & James Burbano, son *Eric* - 7/4
Maureen Butler, son *Terence* - 7/23
Joanne & Tom Christman, son *Kyle R. O'Neill* - 7/20
Catherine Dardozzi, grandson *Evan Schmidt* - 7/15
Vanessa Diaz, friend's child *Samir* - 7/12
Bob & Connie Ercole, son *David* - 7/2
Sharon & Francis Gailey, daughter *Danielle Marie Gailey* - 7/14
Ron & Sue Gamza, daughter & grandson *Rachel & Troy* - 7/24
Gwen & Walt Gearhart, grandson *Jamie Rogers* - 7/12
Carolyn & Allen Gephart, son *Joseph Malec* - 7/14
Craig & Kathleen Gerland, daughter *Alexis* - 7/18
Rhonda and Frank Gomez, son *Frank Jr.* - 7/17
Danielle & Joshua Graham, brother *Jake* - 7/29
Jean & James Hayden, son *LCDR. Timothy M. Hayden* - 7/26
Beatrice K Hildebrandt, son *John R. Hildebrandt* - 7/12
Mark & Vicki Hoffman, son *Eric Daniel Hoffman* - 7/21
Dennis & Lois Ianovale, son *Dennis* - 7/6
Sally Ivory, son *Jimmy Ivory* - 7/16
Lisa Gie Liem, daughter *Stephanie* - 7/19
Maryann Lockyer, son *Keith* - 7/15
Fred & Kay Lokoff, daughter *Terry Lokoff* - 7/27
Maryellen & James Madden, daughter *Anne Marie Madden* - 7/28

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 Hofmocker*, TCF Valley Forge, PA

*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*

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

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

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

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

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*

EASTERN PA REGIONAL TCF CONFERENCE

October 9-11, 2015
Radisson Hotel Valley Forge
1160 First Avenue
King of Prussia, PA 19046

CONFERENCE REGISTRANTS

Person 1 Name _____ Circle code(s) as appropriate BP TS AS G WP CL RC First time at TCF Con. ()Yes ()No
Person 2 Name _____ BP TS AS G WP CL RC ()Yes ()No
Person 3 Name _____ BP TS AS G WP CL RC ()Yes ()No
Person 4 Name _____ BP TS AS G WP CL RC ()Yes ()No

BP-Bereaved Parent; TS=Teen Sibling (13-17); AS- Adult Sibling (18+); G-Grandparent;WP-Workshop Presenter; CL- Chapter Leader; RC- Regional Coordinator

Address: _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home phone; () _____ Cell phone: () _____

Email: _____

Please provide a separate registration form for those who are not residing at the same mailing address.

Please fill in below the name(s) of your deceased child(ren), sibling(s), or grandchild(ren), birth , angel dates, and cause of death,

Table with 4 columns: Child's Full Name, Date of Birth, Angel Date, Cause of Death. Includes sub-headers and instructions like '(Also note the first name you want on nametag)' and '(Mo/Day/Yr)'.

(If more space is needed please attach a separate page)

WORKSHOP CHOICES

Please review the list of workshops and choose the ones each person registered is considering attending.

- 1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

CONFERENCE RESISTRATION FEES

Adult Registration (18+) \$45.00 each x _____ = \$ _____
(includes siblings 18+)

Sibling Registration \$40.00 each x _____ = \$ _____
(ages 13-17)

TOTAL REGISTRATION FEES: \$ _____

CONFERENCE MEALS:

There are a total of five (5) meals for the conference. There is a special package price per person for selecting all five (5) meals.

FRIDAY FULL BUFFET DINNER (and Guest Speaker) \$35.00 each x _____ = \$ _____

SATURDAY (each meal will have a guest speaker)

Breakfast (full buffet) \$17.00 each x _____ = \$ _____

Luncheon (full buffet) \$25.00 each x _____ = \$ _____

Dinner (plated) \$35.00 each x _____ = \$ _____

Chicken _____

Vegetarian _____

SUNDAY FULL BUFFET BREAKFAST (and guest speaker plus closing ceremony) \$17.00 x _____ = \$ _____

PACKAGE PRICE FOR ALL FIVE (5) MEALS = \$110.00 each x _____ = \$ _____

TOTAL CONFERENCE MEALS: \$ _____

SPONSOR A WORKSHOP: \$100 NAME OF WORKSHOP _____

IN MEMORY OF: _____

BY: _____

TOTAL : \$ _____

SPONSOR A CENTERPEICE: \$35 IN MEMORY OF: _____

BY _____

ADDRESS IF DIFFERENT FROM REGISTRATION: **TOTAL: \$ _____**
(for thank you notes from guests who receive the centerpiece)

CONFERENCE REGISTRATION

Butterfly Release /Conference Tee Shirts ---- Price \$20 each (includes shirt and butterfly)
(registered attendee only)

(S,M,L,XL,XXL,XXXL) NO CHILDREN'S SIZES

(If there are extra shirts left over , they will be sold at the end of the conference)

NAME _____ SIZE _____

NAME _____ SIZE _____

NAME _____ SIZE _____

NAME _____ SIZE _____

SUMMARY OF CHARGES:

REGISTRATION..... \$ _____ (TOTAL)

MEALS..... \$ _____ (TOTAL)

CENTERPIECES..... \$ _____ (TOTAL)

WORKSHOP SPONSORSHIP..... \$ _____ (TOTAL)

TEE SHIRTS..... \$ _____ (TOTAL)

TOTAL..... \$ _____

PLEASE MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO: TCF REGION 12 (NO CASH ACCEPTED)

MAIL TO: BOBBI MILNE
TCF EASTERN PA REGIONAL COORDINATOR
14 MANOR LANE NORTH
YARDLEY, PA 19067

You will receive an email confirming your registration and receipt of your payment,

HOTEL AND RESERVATION INFORMATION

RADISSON HOTEL VALLEY FORGE
1160 First Avenue
King of Prussia, PA

610-354-8118 (reservations)

Individuals must call the Hotel directly for reservations. Ask for the **COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS ROOM BLOCK**, when making your reservation. In order to expedite check-in, please include the following information with your reservation:

- Arrival and departure date
- Hotel Tower (Radisson)
- Credit card type, number and expiration date to be used for payment
- Number of guests
- Current address, phone and email information

All reservations must be guaranteed with a major credit card, or guaranteed and accompanied by a first night's room deposit including sales and occupancy tax. All guaranteed reservations must be cancelled 3 days prior to arrival to avoid the billing of the first night's room and tax to their individual credit card.

There will be an early departure fee of \$75 per day for any participant wishing to check out prior to their checkout date, once they have checked into the hotel .

All reservations need to be made no later than Wednesday, September 9, 2015. At that point the hotel will release the room block and open the reservations. There will be no guarantee of a room after this date.

CHECK-IN: 3PM CHECKOUT: 11AM

ROOM RATES (until the cut-off date)

Single (1 person)	\$124.00
Double (2 people)	\$124.00
Triple (3 people)	\$134.00
Quad (4 people)	\$144.00

All guestroom rates are subject to the current sales and occupancy tax of 6% and 2% per room plus any additional taxes or fees that may be owed at the time the rooms are occupied. Tax rates are subject to change without notice.

YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR MAKING YOUR OWN HOTEL RESERVATIONS AND PAYMENT.

ANY PROBLEMS WITH THE HOTEL, SHOULD BE REPORTED TO THE HOTEL STAFF AND NOT THE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE.

LIST OF WORKSHOPS

- After Death Communication
- Death After a Long Illness
- Death by Suicide
- Death of a Troubled Child
- Freedom and Need to Believe
- Gifts/Treasures
- Grief in Fathers and Siblings
- Grief in the Workplace
- Hope in the Early Years
- How Children Grieve
- Humor in Grief
- Inside The Compassionate Friends Org.
- Is Your Grief Holding You Hostage?
- Life After Sibling Death
- Long Term Grieving
- Moving Through Grief with Music
- Now Childless
- Reinvesting in Life
- The Role of Minority Chapters
- Unexpected Death
- When do You Need Professional Help
- Workshop in Spanish for the Latino Community

There will be eight (8) workshops on Saturday for SIBLINGS ONLY.

1. Creative Remembering Your Sibling(s) – an arts and craft workshop – Tracy Milne presenter.
2. Dealing With Your Surviving Sibling(s) – Cindy Tart Bowers presenter.
3. How to Start a Sibling Group with in Your Local Chapter. – Keith Stringer presenter.
4. How's Your Mother? – Jordon Ferber presenter.
5. Issues and Tissues – Katelyn Stoskus presenter.
6. Sibling Straight Talk – Allie Simms Franklin presenter.
7. Adult Sibling Grieve Too – Lisa Cohen presenter.
8. Becoming an Only Child – Lisa Cohen presenter.

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FREE PHOTO BUTTONS

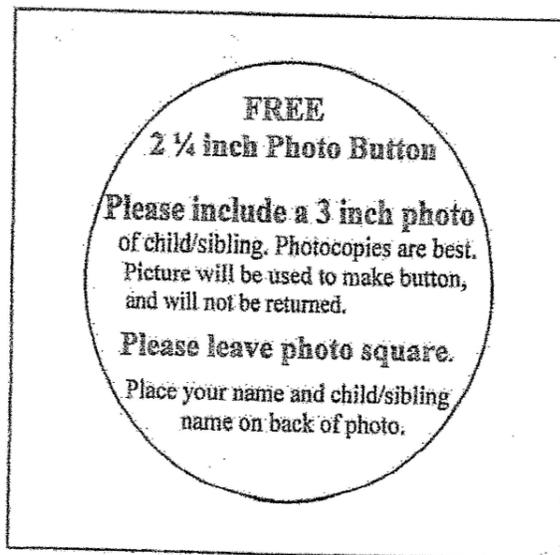
The finished button will be 2 ¼ inches in diameter; therefore the enclosed photo must be 3" in diameter.

Photocopies are best. Picture will be used to make the buttons and will not be returned.

Please leave the photo square (3x3) and place your name and child/sibling name on the back of photo.

All buttons may be picked up at the Button Table. There will be no mailing of buttons.

Enclosed photo should be 3 " in diameter



Mail your photo along with your registration form and payment to the following address;

**Bobbi Milne
TCF Eastern PA Regional Coordinator
14 Manor Lane North
Yardley, PA 19067**



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS, INC.

Valley Forge, PA Chapter
Rhonda & Frank Gomez
Chapter Leaders
12 Brook Circle
Glenmoore, PA 19343

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Regional Conference
Brochure Pgs. 10-15

...A bereavement organization
For parents, siblings & families
We offer friendship, love and understanding
We talk, we listen, we share, we care

The Compassionate Friends Credo

We need not walk alone. We are The Compassionate Friends. We reach out to each other with love, with understanding, and with hope.

The children we mourn have died at all ages and from many different causes, but our love for them unites us. Your pain becomes my pain, just as your hope becomes my hope.

We come together from all walks of life, from many different circumstances. We are a unique family because we represent many races, creeds, and relationships. We are young, and we are old. Some of us are far along in our grief, but others still feel a grief so fresh and so intensely painful that they feel helpless and see no hope.

Some of us have found our faith to be a source of strength; while some of us are struggling to find answers. Some of us are angry, filled with guilt or in deep depression; while others radiate an inner peace. But whatever pain we bring to this gathering of The Compassionate Friends, it is pain we will share, just as we share with each other our love for the children who have died.

We are all seeking and struggling to build a future for ourselves, but we are committed to building a future together. We reach out to each other in love to share the pain as well as the joy, share the anger as well as the peace, share the faith as well as the doubts, and help each other to grieve as well as to grow.

We need not walk alone. We are The Compassionate Friends. ©2007