



# THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

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

## MAY 2014

### 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

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

**June 5—General Sharing**

**July 11-13 37th Compassionate Friends  
National Conference, Chicago.**

**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.

**REFRESHMENTS**

**Rhonda & Frank Gomez**, in honor of their son ***Frankie***

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.

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**NEW MEMBERS**

**Shella & Jim Smith**, son ***Seth Richter*** (43)

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**LOVE GIFTS**

**Barbara Purtell-Frank**, in loving memory of my son ***Michael John Keller-Purtell*** on his birthday May 28th. Always in my heart.

**Lyla Poulson**, in loving memory of my daughter ***Kimberly*** on her birthday May 21st.

**Irene & Fred Sutton**, in loving memory of our son on his anniversary April 16th.

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

These two books have been purchased & donated to our library by **Carole Bailey** in memory of her son, ***Matthew J. Bailey***:

- 1.) When Your Child Dies  
Tools for Mending Parents' Broken Hearts  
By **Avril Nagel & Randie Clark, MA CCC**
- 2.) Healing a Parent's Grieving Heart  
By **Dr. Alan Wolfelt**

**TCF Facebook**

Join 22,000 people who are sharing their grief journey at The Compassionate Friends Facebook page. The page is designed to be informative and supportive. Check out the question or quote of the day. You can find the page by going to TCF's website home page at [www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org) and clicking on the Facebook icon. Or you can go to Facebook and do a search for "The Compassionate Friends/USA." Join us and contribute to the conversation.

**NEWSLETTER BY EMAIL**

The newsletter is available by email to those who wish to receive it in this form. You will receive the newsletter earlier if you opt to receive the newsletter by email. If you chose to use the email method of receiving your newsletter, and later decide you want to receive it by postal service, 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](mailto:fgomez@hybridpoplars.com)

# The Compassionate Friends National Conference



Chicago, Illinois will be the site of the 37th TCF National Conference on July 11-13, 2014. "Miles of Compassion through The Winds of Hope" is the theme of this year's event, which promises more of last year's great national conference experience. The 2014 conference will be held at the Hyatt Regency O'Hare in Rosemont, just minutes from the airport. The national website, as well as on the TCF/USA Facebook Page will keep you updated. Plan to come and be a part of this heartwarming experience.

## **CONFERENCE AND HOTEL REGISTRATION**

To obtain a conference registration form, go to The TCF National website [www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org). If you do not have internet access, contact the TCF National Office by phone at 877-969-0010 (toll free) to help you obtain a registration form.

The hotel reservation is separate from the conference registration, and must be made directly to the hotel. The Hyatt Regency O'Hare, 9300 Bryn Mawr Ave., Rosemont, IL 60018, is now accepting reservations for TCF's National Conference. Conference attendees are receiving a discounted room rate. You must identify yourself as a TCF member. Conference attendees will also receive a discounted parking rate of \$10 per day. We anticipate a large attendance for the conference, so we encourage you to make your reservation as soon as it is convenient for you. Reservations can also be made by calling the hotel directly at 888-421-1442 and please mention The Compassionate Friends when reserving your room.

Please visit Rosemont's website, [www.rosemont.com](http://www.rosemont.com), for information on local area dining and activities.

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## ***Volunteers***

Volunteers are always needed for this very special conference. If you would like to volunteer, please call the National Office at 877-969-0010 (toll free).

**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.**

**MAY BIRTHDAYS**

Donald Barber, son *Steven W. Barber* 5/19  
Laura Bedrossian, son *Teddy* 5/9  
Stephen & Barbara Billings, daughter *Laura Elizabeth Billings* 5/22  
Shirley & Lex Bono, son *Greg* 5/19  
Loretta & Ken Cericola, son *Anthony Cericola* 5/3  
Mary & John Chelius, son *John J. Chelius, Jr.* 5/2  
Joanne & Tom Christman, son *Kyle R. O'Neill* 5/23  
Joanne De Felice, son *Joseph* 5/27  
Anton & Maureen DeMaioribus, daughter *Ann DeMaioribus* 5/17  
Vanessa Diaz, friend's child *Samir* 5/16  
Danielle Evelyn, son *Samir* 5/16  
Carol Graber, son *Bobby* 5/17  
Judi Griffith, son *Steve* 5/27  
Samuel & Mary Lou Hardman, son *Samuel J.* 5/19  
Frank Harms, son *Tyler* 5/20  
Robin Hayman, son *Bradley Hayman* 5/11  
Marie & Ken Hofmockel, grandson *Steven Schneibolk* 5/7  
William & Marilyn Hudson, son *Robert Hudson* 5/11  
Brad Ingerman, son *Justin* 5/18  
Jean Jones, grandson *Bobby* 5/7  
Donna Kendall, daughter *Jennifer* 5/7  
Loretta Kline, son *Keith Edward Kline* 5/11  
Susan Lipson, nephew *Justin Ingerman* 5/18  
Maryellen & James Madden, daughter *Anne Marie Madden* 5/18  
Anne McClenachan, brother *Andy McClenachan* 5/30  
Michael & Maria McFadden, daughter *Rachel McFadden* 5/14  
Susan McKelvey, son *John* 5/20  
Willard & Patricia McLain, son *Gary J. McLain* 5/5  
Mike & Jen Meluskey, daughter *Carolyn Meluskey* 5/13  
Cheryl Mezzaroba, son *Lon Mezzaroba* 5/18  
Leonard & Thelma Miller, son *Lowell Bruce Miller* 5/14  
Ann Murray, son *Jonathan Rapoport* 5/17  
Elsie Oreski, son *Gregory T. Oreski* 5/22  
Betty & Richard Owens, Sr., son *Richard H. Owens, Jr.* 5/12  
Sam & Palma Panichello, son *Joseph Panichello* 5/21  
Barbara Purtell-Frank, son *Michael John Keller Purtell* 5/28

**MAY BIRTHDAYS continued**

Thomas & Jeri "Bubbles" Reinert, father (Bubbles) *Albert Volpe* 5/4  
Pamela Schneibolk, son *Steven* 5/7  
Ann Sherwood, son *David Foster Sherwood* 5/3  
Priscilla Shober, son *Jeffrey R. Shober* 5/27  
Melissa Smith, daughter *Ava* 5/18  
Margaret & Matthew Strickler, son *Timothy Strickler* 5/4  
Suzanne Teleha, son *Peter Teleha* 5/20  
Hans & Margaret van Naerssen, son *Eric* 5/21  
Ann VanLandingham, daughter-in-law *Rita VanLandingham* 5/17  
Lauretta Wagner, daughter *Traci Wagner* 5/23  
Patricia White, daughter *Diane Patricia White* 5/1  
Donna White, sister *Diane White* 5/1  
Muriel Wilson, son *John F. Shaffer* 5/12  
Joan & Ed Young, son *Jed Young* 5/18

**MAY ANNIVERSARIES**

Madeleine Adler, son *J. Peter Adler* - 5/30  
Donald Barber, son *Steven W. Barber* - 5/30  
Rob and Janet Beiswenger, son *Jared* - 5/18  
Gloria Bello, son *Joseph* - 5/21  
Ben Breskman, son *Brian* - 5/26  
Martha & Albert Caesar, son *Daniel Mark Caesar* - 5/13  
Joane Cooper, daughter *Katy* - 5/21  
Rose Marie Cote, husband *Paul Cote* - 5/27  
Jamie (Germaine) Cote Weaver, father *Paul* - 5/27  
Franklin & Patricia Cox, daughter *Christen Fox* - 5/26  
Jane Cox, son *Bill* - 5/24  
Bud Cunnane, son *Patrick* - 5/2  
Janie Ebersole, daughter *Ashley Sankus* - 5/16  
Justine Ellinger, daughter *Keira Ellinger* - 5/7  
Charlie & Jill Fick, son *Michael Sternberg* - 5/14  
Colleen and Dan Fledderman, daughter *Amy* - 5/25  
William & Marilyn Hudson, son *Robert Hudson* - 5/11  
Joan Kingslake, son-in-law *Guy Thornton Woods* - 5/6  
Loretta Kline, son *Keith Edward Kline* - 5/20  
Pat Kuchler, son *Michael* - 5/3  
Matthew Kuchler, son *Ethan* - 5/3  
Dan Logan, daughter *Joanie* - 5/28  
John & Nancy Logue, daughter *Kaitlyn Logue* - 5/3

**MAY ANNIVERSARIES CONTINUED**

- Tom & Charmaine Malik, son *Danny Malik* - 5/12
- Michelle & Chris Mazzio, son *Brendan Mazzio* - 5/20
- Robert McCullough, daughter *Caroline Patricia McCullough* - 5/27
- Marian Melchiorre, grandson *John Anthony Peticca, Jr* - 5/11
- Mike & Jen Meluskey, daughter *Carolyn Meluskey* - 5/22
- Mary O'Halloran, brother *Thomas M. O'Halloran* - 5/28
- Winnie & James O'Halloran, son *Thomas M. O'Halloran* - 5/28
- Anna Packer, daughter *Anna M Packer* - 5/22
- Mary & Salvatore Perna, grandson *Nathan A. Bieber* - 5/19
- Lyla T. Poulson, daughter *Kimberly Poulson* - 5/21
- Sharyn & Joe Pozzuolo, son *Joey Brad Pozzuolo* - 5/19
- Christine and Richard Purkiss, son *Adam Clark* - 5/7
- Joan & Earl Reigel, daughter *Melissa Reigel* - 5/4
- Lynn & Stephen Scartozzi, daughter *Christine Marie Scartozzi* - 5/28
- Janet & Jonathan Schultz, friend *Christopher Harvey* - 5/6
- Linda Sciarra, son *John Anthony Peticca Jr* - 5/11
- Cathy Seehuetter, daughter *Nina Seehuetter* - 5/11
- E. Pearl & Ernest Smith, son *Tony* - 5/5
- Helen Smith, son *Bob Smith* - 5/15
- Andy & Alexandra Smith, son *Charlie* - 5/30
- Karl & Sue Snepp, son *Dave Snepp* - 5/31
- John & Rose Stanley, daughter *Susan Stanley* - 5/29
- Robert & Nancy Thompson, friend *J. Peter Adler* - 5/30
- Mek Wagner, daughter *Paige* - 5/13
- Deb Walter, son *Evan* - 5/10
- Terry & Susan Weikel, daughter *Jennifer* - 5/11

**MOTHER & DAUGHTER**

It's a special bond that spans the years,  
 Through laughter , worry, smiles & tears.  
 A sense of trust that can't be broken,  
 A depth of love sometimes unspoken.  
 A lifelong friendship of sharing,  
 Hugs, kisses, warmth & caring.  
 Mother & Daughter their hearts as one,  
 A link that can never be undone.

*Author unknown*  
 submitted by Lucia Watters  
 for daughter *Luanne Zambino*

The greatest gift  
 we can give to those  
 who have left us  
 is to live fully in their place.

*Author unknown*

It is what it is...  
 But it will become  
 What you make of it.

*Author unknown*

SHARED THOUGHTS ON "MOTHER'S GUILT"

The month of May has always been an ego booster for most of us mothers, as we receive cards of praise and flattery from our children. But now that our child has died, and we are walking around with a hole in our soul, those same greeting cards can cause us guilt by not feeling worthy of the words.

We most always refine our priorities, and make new standards for ourselves after the death of our children. One of those priorities is don't put off spending time together or expressing our love. With our hindsight of knowing the child's' life was cut short, we critique our motherhood as though we could have been super-human. We measure our mothering performance as though we could have given 100% of our time to our precious child. We punish ourselves with guilt, by remembering specifics of harsh words or deeds. Most often these are very normal human things most parents do and say. We know we cannot change, or take back, any infliction we place upon our child.

When we were entrusted with the gift of our children, we were not given hindsight, or the ability to be perfect. We were expected to handle all the other responsibilities placed upon us by other family members, and many mothers dealt with jobs to provide financial support for the family. This means there was not time, nor energy, to be the perfect parent. We were even expected to make mistakes, but now guilt holds us responsible for all our parental shortcomings. I have learned if we did what we thought was right at the time, or the best we could, that was all we could do. It is unfair to measure our performance as a parent with hindsight or super-human powers that we did not possess.

I'm sure our children did not judge us nearly so harshly as we judge ourselves. You may find it very helpful to tell your deceased child how you feel, what you wish you could have done, and how much you love them. I, personally, feel they are in an all-knowing state, and can better understand our expression of love. I'm sure a lot of our guilt would subside, if our children could express their image of us as parents.

Love is the greatest gift we have ever given or received. Just the fact we hurt so badly, and our pain is so intense, tells us we had great love for our children.

The pain of losing our children can never stop totally, but we can help to ease it to the point we can live with it. We would be very angry if someone would judge us as unfairly as we judge ourselves. We must first learn to love ourselves again, so we can love others. We love our children, even with their flaws. We must respect our children enough to know they love us, even when we are not the perfect parent. Don't minimize their love by thinking they were not capable of forgiving, or understanding that we did our best, and that was good enough.

**LIFE CAN BE GOOD AGAIN**

For nearly sixteen years, his voice has been silent. It is a span now nearly equal to the time it was heard. Never did I anticipate life without the sounds that marked his presence. Learning to survive that silence once seemed an impossible task, one so overwhelming I could find no hope or expectation of ever finding life once more.

He was our son, our only child. The tempo of his growing measured the cadence, the beat, for our own living. His passing left an existence without any value that I could immediately perceive. Ultimately, I came to recognize that I was wrong.

Life still had meaning, but it had fallen to me to find it, just as it had been in the years before his coming. Indeed, even as it had been throughout the time of his living, life still demanded my active participation, my own commitment to give it purpose and resolve.

Hindsight affords an ease in stating this realization that did not exist while struggling in the depths of bereavement. The steps taken to finally seize life again seem logical and ordered while intellectualizing the process but I know that this is much easier to write than it was to experience.

I confess, with both sorrow and gladness, that I can no longer summon the full measure of those savage feelings and the unremitting pain that engulfed me in those early years. Working through them was the most demanding challenge of my life, enacting tolls in physical health perhaps even greater than the long-term effects on mind and emotion.

Today, however, I can reflect with gratitude upon a decade of mastery over the sadness. Control of my thoughts returned to me and I know freedom from the utter devastation of those early years.

Looking back reveals essential turning points on the road to healing. Some would seem to generalize easily for anyone. Others seem to respond to personal strengths and weaknesses more particular to an individual. These points included:

- \* Self forgiveness for the many deficiencies found within on the endless soul journey that is our lot in the wake of our child's death.

- \* Forgiveness of others, relatives, friends and associates, who are less affected than are we, who seem unable to help us in our time of deep trouble and need.
- \* The accepting, at lost of the finality of our loss, and that we must gradually unleash ourselves from our former lives and structure anew.

Learn to communicate value to spouses, friends, and surviving siblings, our love for whom seems shrouded behind the totality of our grief.

Find ways to give expression to our need to somehow memorialize our child, be it through writing a book, planting trees, sustaining scholarships, or any number of ways. Our need to preserve and safeguard our child's memory is real and deserving of our attention.

A time comes for many to find new homes, jobs, and purpose. These are often part and parcel of any significant change in our lives.

Surrender to time, giving ourselves space within it to do our work. Use time to foster healing within, to enable us tomorrow with hope.

No recovery will return us to life as we knew it while our child lived. That life is forever gone and, to a certain extent, we may well have to accept that, as we perceive life today. The finest days of our lives may well be a part of our past. Somehow, we must recognize that this is not unique to surviving our child's death, but is often a portion of the human condition.

Olin is dead. As much as I would wish it otherwise, it will never be. He is not forgotten. His voice, his laughter, his joy, and his shortcomings live on in me. No day passes without thinking about him. I am grateful for his touch upon my life.

Yet, joy is again mine. Pleasure is no longer a forbidden or guilt-producing element in daily living. I live, gladly and with purpose, with Olin both behind me in time, but with me internally.

Is this not our goal, to heal, to find the strength to love both yesterday and today? Our children have been the richest part of our lives and today should reflect the grace of that love in all that we are today.

*Don Hackett* - TCF, Hingham, MA

**CONCERNING SIBLINGS**

It's been said that when a child's brother or sister dies, actually three people are lost: the sibling and both parents. The sibling also loses a friend, playmate, confidant, role model, and lifelong companion. For the parents, the loss of a child is often so traumatic that they have little left to give to the surviving children. Yet the surviving sibling has fears, needs, and anxieties that must be explored and addressed if the child is to avoid negative long term consequences. Listed here are normal feelings siblings might have concerning the loss along with some suggestions on what to do to encourage their expression.

**Normal Thoughts**

- \* "Did I cause the death?"
- \* "Will the rest of my family die?"
- \* "Who will take care of me now?"
- \* "I'm all alone now."
- \* "Half of me died."
- \* "I'm different from all the other kids."
- \* "I'm not a child anymore."
- \* "I feel left out."
- \* "Things will never be the same again."
- \* "No one cares about my grief, only about my parents grief."
- \* "I can't cry because it will make my parents more upset."
- \* "I feel guilty to be happy or to laugh."
- \* "Why wasn't it me?"
- \* "Will I die young too?"
- \* "I made it happen by wishing him dead!"
- \* "If I act like my sibling, maybe my parents will feel better."
- \* "Maybe my parents would love me more if I died!"

**Normal Feelings**

- \* Impatient and angry at the world.
- \* Resentful over the attention the parents are getting.
- \* Resentful over the attention they are not getting.
- \* Fearful of having to replace the sibling.
- \* Guilt for feeling relieved over the death after a long illness.
- \* Guilt over all the "bad" thoughts, words, and fights with the deceased.

**How To Help**

- \* The bereaved parents should constantly remind themselves to be sensitive to the feelings of the surviving children.
- \* The parents should strive to maintain as much of a normal routine as possible for the survivors.
- \* The parents should encourage grieving, openness and the expression of feelings in the children by grieving openly and expressively in front of them.
- \* Reassure them that they are not going to die, too.
- \* Reassure them that they are loved, wanted and okay.
- \* Reassure them that they did not cause the death in any way.
- \* Give lots of physical reassurance in the way of touching and hugs.
- \* Contact the teacher/teachers or school counselors.
- \* Ask them what and how they would like the school to be told.
- \* Prepare them for questions and remarks they can expect at school.
- \* Encourage them to resume their normal activities at their own pace.
- \* Remember the sibling's birthday and anniversary of the death.
- \* Remember the sibling at special family gatherings and functions.
- \* Don't be afraid to talk about the child that died.
- \* Talk about all the qualities of the child that died - positive and negative.
- \* Talk about the differences between the siblings – good and bad.
- \* Don't promise them a replacement sibling with talks of having another child.
- \* Remember surviving siblings cannot become, or replace, the deceased – brother or sister.

TLC Group grants anyone the right to use this information without compensation so long as the copy is not used for profit or as training materials in a profit making activity such as workshops, lectures, and seminars, and so long as this paragraph is retained in its entirety.

Adapted From: *Helping Children Cope With Loss*  
**Buz Overbeck – Joanie Overbeck**

**WOULD THEY COME BACK ?**

We miss them so, but would they come back?

When I see the beauty of the birds soaring ecstatically in the sky, somehow claiming the beauty as their own; I watch them carefully, sometimes they are playfully cutting into the wind to forge in their direction of choice.

I think of our loved ones up in heaven, and I feel they are as happy as the birds soaring and dipping and floating with wings spread wide.

There too, however, they have important work to do: Greeting the new loved ones into the kingdom of heaven and acting as God's angels to watch.

I sense that they wouldn't come back if given a choice. It would be like a caged bird who had had his wings clipped to protect him from flying outside into an uncaring world: Walking on the floor in stoic resignation.

*Bea Kroon - TCF, Bradenton, FL*

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**A RETARDED CHILD**

Having a retarded child has its rewards as well as it heartaches. I wish I could put my feelings into words, so the whole world would know what a joy Brian was to us. He was a very handsome boy with blonde hair and large blue eyes and a very deep dimple, and his smile was like a ray of sunshine. He was very special to us (my husband, myself and our other son and daughter who just idolized him). He could not express verbally his feelings for us, but the way he grabbed and embraced us with such sincere affection for every little thing we did for him (no matter how small) was worth a thousand words. He taught us the true meaning of the word love. We visit his grave quite often, and no matter what kind of a day it is, it seems as though the sun peeks through for just a minute, a reflection of Brian's smile to let us know how grateful he is that we are there.

Since it was God's will for me to have a retarded child, the greatest thing I can say about it is that, I thank God he chose me to be Brian's mother. I feel almost as privileged as Mary must have felt to be chosen as the mother of God. In our minds and hearts, Brian will never die.

*Anita O'Connell - TCF, Delmar/Albany, NY*

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**HOW TO HELP ME GRIEVE**

**Be there for me:**

I feel alone, in pain.

I need a friend.

**Share my sorrow:**

Speak from your heart.

I have to talk about my feelings.

**Let me grieve:**

Listen to me, I need to cry.

We all grieve in our own way  
and in a different time frame.

**Keep the memory alive:**

It is always on my mind.

I have so many memories.

**I need your help:**

Help me, call me, pray for me.

Do whatever you can.

**Don't desert me:**

Don't desert me after the 1st or 2nd week.

I need you especially on holidays.

**Take care of yourself:**

I need to depend on you.

**Help me to heal:**

Involve me, listen to me months later.

I need your interest and invitations.

**Be my friend:**

Don't be afraid of me or my grief.

It's okay to cry.

Lastly, please don't criticize until you've  
walked in my shoes.

**Instead: Pray for me.**

*Vivian Sagert*

TCF, Minitonas, Manitoba, Canada

**LOST GRADUATION**

Pomp and Circumstance,  
Speeches,  
Happy faces,  
Proud parents,  
It's just not fair  
Because you're not there.

School song playing,  
Gifts,  
Celebrations,  
Laughing friends,  
We cannot share  
Because you're not there

Mortar boards flying,  
Diplomas,  
Tassels tossed,  
Teachers smiling,  
It's too much to bear  
Because you're not there.

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**A LAST MESSAGE FROM  
THE ONE WE LOVE**

Death is nothing at all. It does not count.  
I have only slipped away into the next room.  
Nothing has happened. Everything remains  
exactly at it was. I am I, and you are you,  
and the old life we lived so fondly together  
is untouched, unchanged. Whatever we were to  
each other, that we are still.  
Call me by the old familiar name.  
Speak of me in the easy way which you  
always used.  
Put no difference into your tone.  
Wear no forced air of solemnity or sorrow.  
Laugh as we always laughed at the little jokes  
that we enjoyed together.  
Play, smile, think of me, pray for me.  
Let my name be ever the household word that it  
always was. Life means all that it ever meant.  
It is the same as it ever was.  
There is absolute and unbroken continuity.  
What is this death but a negligible accident?  
Why should I be out of mind because I am out of  
sight? I am waiting for you, for an  
interval, somewhere very near, just round the  
corner. All is well. Nothing is hurt; nothing is  
lost. One brief moment and all will be as it was  
before. How we shall laugh at the trouble of  
parting when we meet again!

*Henry Scott Holland*

Submitted by Mary Lou Harrison

Forever in my heart - my beloved son ♥Scott♥

**VALLEY OF THE BUTTERFLIES**

There is a green, sun-drenched valley -  
Light with the scent of clover & lilacs -  
Where the butterflies dance.  
Leaping and swooping, they reflect colors  
Of every hue and dimension.  
There are monarchs and skippers  
Swallow tails and delicate spring azures.  
Each dances its unique pattern  
Of flits, circles and dives.  
Stretching its fragile wings toward the clouds  
Or brushing its feet on the succulent grass.

There are no roads, paths or gates  
To broach the valley's entrance.  
Yet it is visited often in thoughts and dreams.  
Every parent who has sent forth a child  
And vainly waited for their return  
Comes seeking in the valley of the butterflies  
And there finds a beautiful spirit,  
Stretching its wings to the clouds  
And brushing its feet on the grass,  
Dancing in Swoops, flits and dives,  
Drying its dewy wings  
In the warm sunshine of forever.

*Marcia F. Alig* - Highstown, NJ, TCF



**THE  
COMPASSIONATE  
FRIENDS, INC.**

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

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**...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.