

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

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

Inside Valley Forge

Meetings are on the first Thursday of every month, at 7:45 PM (ending at 9:30 PM) We meet at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Founders Hall, Valley Forge Road and Henderson Rds., King of Prussia, PA

For info call Rhonda @ (484) 919-0820

Meeting Schedule and other TCF Events of Interest.

Next Meeting - 9/2/2021

Meeting - 10/7/2021

Butterfly Release - 9/18/2021
at 3 PM, Saturday



September 2021

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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 editor.

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 the 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.

Please make all checks Payable to:
TCF VALLEY FORGE CHAPTER
Send to Rhonda Gomez

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.

NEW FRIENDS

We welcome our newly bereaved friends, sorry for the cause that brings you. We all have been in the depths of despair, and offer unconditional love and understanding to all of you, it sometimes takes several meetings to feel the full benefit of group sharing. We offer confidentiality, unconditional love and understanding to all of you.

Eileen and Tom Algeo

Rebecca (Becky) Alego

Margaret Innes

REFRESHMENTS

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.

The Chapter

LOVE GIFTS

Vern and Joyce Kaiser - In Memory Of Their Son Michael's Birthday

Going Back to School

Going back to school after the death of your brother or sister is a hard thing to go through. At first there are three groups of people to deal with: people who give you a lot of support, people who don't know what to say, and those who give you weird looks and stay away from you. This lasts for a little while. After a short time changes with each group occur. Those who did not know what to say start to speak or begin to talk. The group who kept away stop ignoring you. The people who gave you a lot of support slowly return to their own affairs. After a while everything goes back to normal, and it is over to everyone except you. This is very difficult to accept and makes you feel all the more alone. After a long while the shock for you goes away, and it is then that you need the support from your friends, peers, and teachers. This month is the first anniversary of the death of my brother. Most people will have forgotten, and everything is right with the world. But it is not! Certainly not for my mother and me.

Jordan Ely TCF, Albany/Delmar, NY

She stood straight and told me of losses received with no evident trace of her volume of grief. This woman smiled, was matter of fact, showed no visible signs of the reaper's attack. But the wounds are so deep and the pain so intense that I knew her complaisance as a well built fence. To contain her distress in a public so brutal, so misunderstanding and harsh and futile.

The measure I sought I found in her eyes where suffering shows even after tears dry. So then her composure seemed less impressive and I gave her a hug to convey a message. That hug held us together for so long then I knew the strength of sharing with others who've traveled that road too.

Shana Parsons Valley Forge, PA

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.

Anniversaries

- Courtney Aaron - Justin - brother - 9/17**
- Jeff & Donna Brown - Kenneth Bernstiel - son - 9/12**
- Suzanne Carcarey - Eddie - son - 9/21**
- Phyllis & James Casey - Jim "Jimmer" Casey - son - 9/17**
- Theresa L Cole - Christopher Michel - son - 9/10**
- Laureen Cole - Chris - brother - 9/10**
- Catherine Dardozzi - James Dardozzi - son - 9/7**
- Michelle G Doll - Justin - son - 9/4**
- Sarah Fishel - Allyson - daughter - 9/15**
- Suze Goldberg - Neal - Uncle - 9/3**
- Frank & Rhonda Gomez - Donnie - brother - 9/9**
- B Brooke Hackman - Brian - son - 9/1**
- Brittany Hackman - Brian - brother - 9/1**
- Virginia Hagen - Matthew D. Hagen - son - 9/28**
- Jeanne R Helmers - Betsy Helmers - daughter - 9/7**
- Nancy Lee & Jerry Hess - Jerry R.L. Hess - son - 9/28**
- Rick & Susan Hilsberg - Amy - daughter - 9/16**
- John Horulko - Daniel - son - 9/30**
- Monica Horulko - Daniel - son - 9/30**
- Gwen Kearns - Dennis J. Kearns, Jr. - son - 9/28**
- Deborah Keevill - Brandon - son - 9/1**
- Donna Kendall - Jennifer - daughter - 9/24**
- Shirley Kennedy - Philip V. Kennedy - son - 9/23**
- Gloria and Jerry Koval - Steven - son - 9/3**
- Joanne & Thomas Lennen - Scott C. Lennen - son - 9/2**
- Mary Leshem - Michael - son - 9/16**
- Maureen Lok - Jessica - daughter - 9/25**

Anniversaries - Cont'd

Eileen & Chris - McKeown - Eric - son - 9/18
Alfred J. & Joan Michini - Adam Jonah Michini - son - 9/7
Betsy Oakes - Bruce Schaeffer - son - 9/2
Marie O'Connon - Curran J - son - 9/8
Elsie Oreski - Gregory T. Oreski - son - 9/3
Teresa and Ron Perkins - Allison - daughter - 9/22
Kathy & Jim Petrokubi - Andrew - son - 9/26
Mary Jane Pollart - Mark Andrew Steffler - son - 9/7
Rusty Puglisi - Michael Puglisi - son - 9/10
Steve & Joann Reynolds - Chris - son - 9/15
Donald & Freda Rhinier - Glenn D. Rhinier - son - 9/16
Bonnie Rosen - Troy - son - 9/29 - Eugene - Husband - 9/3
Lynn Saxon - Michael - son - 9/17
Marie Schmeltzer - Sam "Sonny" Schmeltzer - son - 9/11
Charles & Tish Shaw - Charles "Corky" Shaw - son - 9/29
Fietta Sherlock - Jeremy - son - 9/17
Helen (Barb, daughter) Smith - Patrick Kenneth "Kenny" Smith - son - 9/17
Jean Sykora - Mark - son - 9/27
Renee Teufel - Gregory - son - 9/24
Barbara Tuller - Charles - son - 9/24
Weldon & Marie Tyson - Ronald C. Stewart - son - 9/21
Nancy Venafrá - Justin Aaron - son - 9/9
Sharon Venezia - Justin Negron - son - 9/17
Kelly & Gary Walens - Kevin McGinley - son - 9/28
Lucia Watters - Luanne Zambino - daughter - 9/15
Gisela Witte - Bruce G. Edlund - son - 9/22

I miss you a little, I guess you could say, A little too much, A little too often, A little more every day.

John Michael Montgomery

SHARED THOUGHTS ON THE RETURN OF SCHOOL OPENINGS

Many times seasonal changes can create a mood swing that can bring a setback in our grief progress. Mental health studies have shown depression to be greater, as we physically and mentally adjust to a new season. We often note a sagging morale that adds stress this time of the year. September is particularly a hard month for families whose children would have been returning to school. The display of school clothes, books, bags, and busses can cause intense pain by reminding us that our future dreams of that child are gone forever. We long to bring back the happier days, when September brought excitement of shopping for that special back-pack, or lunch box for our child entering a new grade. We remember the feeling of pride that our child was progressing and meeting the high aspiration we had for them.

It is very natural that we connect their growth and development with the school calendar. Many have warm feelings about the relationship their child had with the school system. Particularly if the child was an honor student, involved in sports and school activities, and received much recognition for their accomplishments. While others have had bad experiences, that create a rage at the thought of how their child was mistreated, misplaced, and misunderstood, or was denied participation in a particular program, or was just plain ignored, and received no recognition for their efforts. Regardless of what category our children fell into, the beginning of the school year can stir deep emotions. It is very normal for us to wish we could return to the days when our life was simple, and our biggest decisions were what to pack for their lunches, and which piece of new clothing should they wear on the first day of school, and to share in the excitement as they headed for the bus to meet their friends.

As we experience moments of nostalgia watching other people's children return to school, our fragmented lives may feel additional emptiness. It is very painful when life goes on without our child. This is a season that makes memories very vivid, and brings home the thought that our children did not get the opportunity to complete their life, as we had planned it for them. Most often it is best to take time to remember, and allow ourselves to hurt. Suppressing emotions does not generate healing. We need a friend who will listen and try to understand (this can be very difficult for a non-bereaved person). Giving and receiving love is very essential to life, and particularly to our healing. Our showing expressions of love to others can help a heavy heart as much as receiving it. We all need one another.

Eventually our pain does soften, and the very memories that brought us pain, can bring smiles and meaning into our lives again. Unfortunately we have to go through the bitter to become better.

God Bless, Marie Hofmockel , TCF Valley Forge

A SOLITARY JOURNEY

Grief is a solitary journey. No one but you knows how great the hurt is. No one but you can know the gaping hole left in your life when someone you know has died. And no one but you can mourn the silence that was once filled with laughter and song. It is the nature of love and of death to touch every person in a totally unique way. Comfort comes from knowing that people have made the same journey. And solace comes from understanding how others have learned to sing again.

Helen Steiner Rice

BIRTHDAYS

Robyn Buseman - daughter - Maya Buseman-Williams - 9/30
Scott & Gail Campbell - daughter - Chelsea - 9/1
Chris Carlton - brother - Eric - 9/5
Judy & William Cosgrove - son - Michael Cosgrove - 9/4
Reno & Bonnie Crescimone - son - Jonathan - 9/5
Alex Crisanti, Jr. - son - John Crisanti - 9/6
Dorothy & G. Robert Daily, Sr. - son - G. Robert Daily, Jr. - 9/19
Catherine Dardozi - grandson - Evan Schmidt - 9/29
Michelle G Doll - son - Justin - 9/1
Bob & Connie Ercole - son - David - 9/26
Sharon & Francis Gailey - son - Francis E. Gailey, III - 9/28
Molly Gehring - son - Daniel - 9/12
Frank & Rhonda Gomez - son - Frank Jr. - 9/30
Jeanne R Helmers - sister - Mary Ann Helmers Kemme - 9/16
Mike & Dorie Henry - granddaughter - Blair - 9/29
Gail & Calvert G. Hess, Jr. - son - Calvert G. Hess, III - 9/4
Walt & Adele Higgins - son/stepson - Brian - 9/22
Michelle Hillstrom - daughter - Jen - 9/26
Jacob & Rachel Himmelstein - son - Benjamin Himmelstein - 9/25
Lesley Jones - son - Christopher - 9/14
Gwen Kearns - son - Dennis J. Kearns, Jr. - 9/18
Jacquie Kilroy - son - Shilen Kenneth - 9/4
Suellen & Stephen King - daughter - Danelle Rossi - 9/18
Frank & Bernadette McAllister - son - Christopher J. McAllister - 9/4
Linda & Jim McGrath - son - Paul Drew McGrath - 9/26
Alfred J. & Joan Michini - son - Adam Jonah Michini - 9/28
Jeffrey & Christine Miller - daughter - Teresa Leanne Miller - 9/12
Betty (Elizabeth) Miller - son - Raymond Jim - 9/1
Barbara & Jeff Norris - son - Greg - 9/21
Mary O'Halloran - brother - Thomas M. O'Halloran - 9/1
Winnie & James O'Halloran - son - Thomas M. O'Halloran - 9/1
Elizabeth Orbann - daughter - Linda Elizabeth Johnson - 9/15



Birthdays — continued

Linda & Andrew Peoples, Jr. - son - Brian A. Peoples - 9/7

Robert & Nancy Ricciardi - daughter - Jessica Lee Ricciardi - 9/23

Gina & Brian Richardson - son - Nicholas Richardson - 9/1

Ruth Richardson - grandson - Nicholas Richardson - 9/1

Mary Rose - daughter - Marjorie Rose-Cotteta - 9/30

Cathy Seehuetter - daughter - Nina Seehuetter - 9/24

Cathy Siciliano - son - Anthony - 9/15

Helen (Barb, daughter) Smith - son - Patrick Kenneth Kenny Smith - 9/5

Walter & Irene Stolarczyk - daughter - Barbara Stolarczyk - 9/11

Anna Maria Tamaro-Bintliff - son - John - 9/27

Sharon Venezia - son - Justin Negron - 9/9

Shelly Wagner - son - Andrew Wagner - 9/29

Terry & Susan Weikel - daughter - Jennifer - 9/26

Kelly & Gary Walens - son - Kevin McGinley - 9/22

Kathryn & Pat White - son - Steven White - 9/16

ALL THE THINGS I MISS

I sometimes think about all the things I miss about my brother.

There are a lot - some painful, some I never would have believed at the time that I would miss. And I find that what I miss the most are the things that should have been.

I bought my first car the year he would have turned sixteen. He should have been here to ask to borrow the keys - not that I would have given them to him - but he should have been here to ask.

He should have been a senior this year, getting ready to face a world with no more summer vacations and deciding what to do with his life.

All the things that should be:

He should be here when I fall in love to tease me and give his opinion of the man I choose.

He should be here when I have a child to be godparent and uncle, friend and confidant.

He should be here to get married and have kids of his own, so that I can be an aunt and a sister-in-law.

He should be here to celebrate when things are good and to commiserate when things are bad.

My brother was my friend and my foe in a way that only little brother can be. And as I sit here and think about my brother, what I think the most is he should be here. I love and miss you little brother.

Shannon Odessa Stiener Lowell, IN



We need not walk alone. We are the Compassionate Friends. We reach out to each other with love, 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 help- less 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 an- swers. 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.

The Compassionate Friends Credo



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

Valley Forge Chapter
of the Compassionate Friends
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