



The Compassionate Friends

Marin County Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies



July—August, 2024 ISSUE

Vol 45, No. 4

#1184

This issue of the TCF Marin Newsletter is sponsored by love gifts from our members.

Chapter Leader:

Eileen Rusky
erusky@gmail.com

Facilitator:

Mark Rosengarden

TCF Marin Monthly Meetings:

Beginning July 15, from 7:30 to 9, the Compassionate Friends of Marin will be meeting at Christ Presbyterian Church in their main sanctuary.

620 Del Ganado Rd.
San Rafael, CA

First time attendees are encouraged to arrive at 7:00 for orientation. All attendees arriving before 7:00 p.m. are asked to sign in and be seated in the lobby until the meeting room is ready. The TCF Newsletter and informational pamphlets will be displayed for attendees to browse.

FORWORD to this edition and note from the editor:

Beginning July 15, from 7:30 to 9, the Compassionate Friends of Marin will be meeting at Christ Presbyterian Church in their main sanctuary. The address is 620 Del Ganado Road, San Rafael.

Please let us know if you are not receiving periodic email information or if your email address is not on our contact list. We will add you to the list. Thank you for your continuing support.



As of January 2025, The Compassionate Friends of Marin newsletters will be available to everyone online. The print version will be available on a subscription basis only.

TCF Marin is a non-profit, all volunteer organization. The cost for printing the newsletter is \$3000 a year plus mailing. The printed version is the same as the online version except the "Our Children Remembered" pages include the full names, birthdates & anniversary dates of all children as listed by the parents when they joined TCF. Due to privacy concerns this information is redacted from the online version.

If you would like to continue to receive the printed version, please complete the form below and send in a \$20.00 per year or more subscription

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____

Zip _____

Child _____

Mail the information above along with your donation (check) made payable to TCF Marin to: TCF/Marin c/o Newsletter, P.O. Box 150935, San Rafael, CA 94915-0935 .



Meeting Calendar

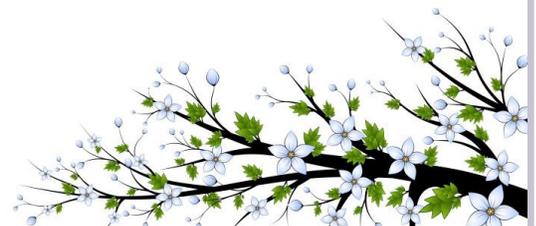
Third Monday of the Month:

Monday, July 15, 2024

Monday, August 19, 2024

Monday, September 16, 2024

Monday, October 21, 2024



TCF RESOURCES:

The Compassionate Friends, Marin County Chapter:

P.O. Box 150935
San Rafael, CA 94915
www.tcfmarin.org
tcfmarin@gmail.com
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/36595597804>
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TCF San Francisco and Peninsula Chapter:

Meets: 2nd Wednesday
Taraval Police Sta. 2345, 24th Ave
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Co Leaders: Meg Cunningham, Doug Cameron

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P.O. Box 3696
Oak Brook, IL 60533-3696
Phone: (630) 990-0010
Toll Free: (877) 969-0010
Fax: (630) 990-0246
Email: nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org
www.compassionatefriends.org

Additional Support Sites:

opentohope.com
survivorsofsuicide.com
griefspeaks.com
friendsforsurvival.org

Other Grief Counseling Resources:

By the Bay Health (formerly Hospice by the Bay) offers individual and group grief counseling. Free Monthly Grief Support Group for Bereaved Parents 1st Thursday 11a-12p. Pre-registration required.
· Marin and SF (415) 526-5699
· Sonoma (707) 931-7299
Email: griefsupport@bythebayhealth.org
Website: <https://bythebayhealth.org/>

North Bay Grief Recovery in San Rafael:

www.NorthBayGriefRecovery.com
Ph.: 1.415-250-3027
[LINK TO WEBSITE](#)

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention:

www.afsp.org Ph.: 1.707.721.4062

Friends for Survival, Inc

www.friendsfordurival.org
Ph.: 1.800.646.7322

7 THINGS I HAVE LEARNED SINCE THE LOSS OF MY CHILD

Posted on July 21st, 2021

Child loss is a loss like no other. One often misunderstood by many. If you love a bereaved parent or know someone who does, remember that even his or her "good" days are harder than you could ever imagine. Compassion and love, not advice, are needed. If you'd like an inside look into why the loss of a child is a grief that lasts a lifetime, here is what I've learned in my seven years of trekking through the unimaginable.

1). Love never dies.

There will never come a day, hour, minute or second I stop loving or thinking about my son. Just as parents of living children unconditionally love their children always and forever, so do bereaved parents. I want to say and hear his name just the same as non-bereaved parents do. I want to speak about my deceased children as normally and naturally as you speak of your living ones.

I love my child just as much as you love yours— the only difference is mine lives in heaven and talking about about him is unfortunately quite taboo in our culture. I hope to change that. Our culture isn't so great about hearing about children gone too soon, but that doesn't stop me from saying my son's name and sharing his love and light everywhere I go. Just because it might make you uncomfortable, doesn't make him matter any less. My son's life was cut irreversibly short, but his love lives on forever. And ever.

2). Bereaved parents share an unspeakable bond.

In my seven years navigating the world as a bereaved parent, I am continually struck by the power of the bond between bereaved parents. Strangers become kindreds in mere seconds— a look, a glance, a knowing of the heart connects us, even if we've never met before. No matter our circumstances, who we are, or how different we are, there is no greater bond than the connection between parents who understand the agony of enduring the death of a child. It's a pain we suffer for a lifetime, and unfortunately only those who have walked the path of child loss understand the depth and breadth of both the pain and the love we carry.

3). I will grieve for a lifetime.

Period. The end. There is no "moving on," or "getting over it." There is no bow, no fix, no solution to my heartache. There is no end to the ways I will grieve and for how long I will grieve. There is no glue for my broken heart, no exilir for my pain, no going back in time. For as long as I breathe, I will grieve and ache and love my son with all my heart and soul. There will never come a time where I won't think about who my son would be, what he would look like, and how he would be woven perfectly into the tapestry of my family. I wish people could understand that grief lasts forever because love lasts forever; that the loss of a child is not one finite event, it is a continuous loss that unfolds minute by minute over the course of a lifetime. Every missed birthday, holiday, milestone— should-be back-to-school school years and graduations; weddings that will never be; grandchildren that should have been but will never be born— an entire generation of people are irrevocably altered forever.

This is why grief lasts forever. The ripple effect lasts forever. The bleeding never stops.

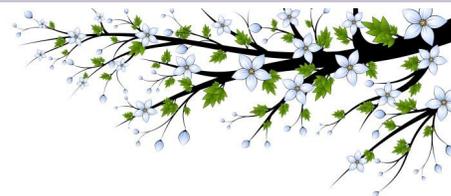
4). It's a club I can never leave, but is filled with the most shining souls I've ever known.

This crappy club called child loss is a club I never wanted to join, and one I can never leave, yet is filled with some of the best people I've ever known. And yet we all wish we could jump ship— that we could have met another way— any other way but this. Alas, these shining souls are the

Continued on ² page 6

Carol's Corner

by Carol Kearns, PhD
author of "Sugar Cookies and a Nightmare"



Columns for The Compassionate Friends

I have found great solace volunteering for The Compassionate Friends, a hard-working group that supports families seeking "the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child" (www.compassionatefriends.org). My columns discuss topics of continuing concern in the Marin County CA newsletter. Please visit my newly updated website at www.carolKearns.com. - Carol

A Grandmother's Grief

My mother, diagnosed with lymphoma, died just before Mother's Day in 2008. Only two months prior, she had been a high spirited fun-loving woman, the heart of our family who was looking forward to her 90th birthday celebration that fall. As I cared for my dear mother, knowing I would soon lose her, I reflected back on my daughter Kristen's death at age seven and my mother's concerns about me at that time.

I had been so consumed by my own grief then, and the grief of my young son, only nine when his sister died, that I was hardly aware of others' grief. Not until a few years ago did my mother confide her pain of not only grieving for her precious granddaughter, but her daughter as well. Her fear was that the tragic and sudden loss of Kristen could also mean the loss of her daughter. "Kristen drowned in the ocean," she said, "but you were drowning in grief. I know you felt helpless to save her, but I felt the same about you. I had no idea how to rescue you." Surprised to hear this, even though I had also feared losing my mind, I became aware for the first time of the unique role grandparents play when their grandchild dies.

I recently became a grandmother myself and have been overjoyed with this new role of welcoming Joseph into the world. My favorite picture is of my mother, shortly before she died, with a huge smile and outstretched arms reaching for baby Joseph when meeting him for the first time. While my mother's death, unlike Kristen's, is part of the natural cycle of life, I will miss her deeply. She taught me so much. I think of her often in my new role as a grandparent.

When Joseph was born, I had the luxury of spending the first several weeks with him,

watching him change daily as his parents moved nervously into their new role. I loved being witness to the bond developing as they changed from being a couple to being a little family.

My son, a resident in anesthesiology, studies nightly, often with Joseph nestled against his chest in a baby sling. He once shared how much he misses his baby while he spends long hours at the hospital. Watching the creation of this strong parental bond, I became aware of the unique dual bond of the grandparent. A bond that takes her heart to places she never thought possible...a bond that should never be broken. I now appreciate more than ever what my mother experienced.

If I Should Go

If I should go tomorrow
It would never be goodbye,
For I have left my heart with you,
So don't you ever cry.

The love that's deep within me,
Shall reach you from the stars,
You'll feel it from the heavens,
And it will heal the scars.

Author Unknown



Our Children Remembered—July

Child	Dates	Bereaved
Jonathan Adkisson, Jr.		Anne & Jonathan Adkisson
John Christopher Alioto, Jr.		John Alioto
Chancellor Argall		Grier Argall & Jeanni Lang
Maraina Lee Arik		Rich & Linda Arik
Garrett Artigiani		Joe & Anya Artigiani
Bret William Baumgarten		Bobbi & Dan Baumgarten
Nicholas Justin Bennett-Strauss		Stephanie & Jay Bennett-Strauss
Kevin Connor Bledsoe		AnnMarie Bledsoe
Nino Angelo Bosco		Frauka Kozar
Sean Stephen Bourke		Beryl Bourke
Larry Antoine Boyd		Annette Broussard
Brian Jay Buckley		Merilee Rossi, Chris Valentino & Family
Anthony Brandon Carmignani		Lynnette Frary & Tony Carmignani
Michelle Gayle Carter		Cynthia Carter
Lisa Danielle Clark		Julie & Bruce Clark, Lucy Martinez
Kevin Peter Clarke		Rich & Bonnie Clarke
Matthew Jason Comin		Marci & Mark Comin Comin
Matthew Corral		Karen Corral
David Riley Crook		Ronald & Joan Crook
Dylan Simon Duncan Wright		Mara Duncan
Bodi Cooper Ealey		Sarah Ealey, Eli Echelmeier
John Patrick Feeney		Lois & Dan Feeney
Jack Fisher		Holly Seeler
Peter Alexander Forstner		Kitty Forstner
René Garcia		Bertila, Carmen & Jose Armando Garcia
Basilio Nathan Garza Jr.		Renee Garza
Janet Suzanne Hoch		Linda & Peter Hoch
Mark Hornor		Christa Kaufmann-Hornor
Mina Hornor		Christa Kaufmann-Hornor
Matthew David Hubal		Bruce & Louise Hubal
Rodrigues Juliana		Connie Rodrigues
Myles Kawashima		Caroline Kawashima
Alicia Scott Lee		Jon & Cathie Lee
Adam Blake London		Trudie London
Laura Catherine Maatz		Russell & Marcia Lizza
James MacDonald		Christine MacDonald
Michael Allen Mannheimer		Shirlee J. Newman
Fernando Martinez		Don & Maria Pazour
Douglas Duncan McGeehon		Patricia McGeehon
Sean Michael Morgan, Jr.		Sean & Claire Morgan
Alex Morris		Paula Morris & Cory Pohley
Melody Rae Osheroff		Aaron Osheroff
Luke Benjamin Pedemonte		Richard and Therese Pedemonte
Joshua Adam Portnoy		Bob & Gunilla Portnoy
Warren James Ruele		Kate & Glenn Ruele
Eric James Schor		Audrey Schor
Caleb Kalani Sears		Tim & Eliza Sears, Ann Bentley
Richard Sielert		Diane Sielert
Vinnie J. Simons		Lori Jones
William Kreitzberg Spinrad		Caroline Kreitzberg
Baby Sprinkles		Ed Dudkowski
Brekhus Alan Williams		Catherine & Scott Williams
Spencer Wood		Rich & Denise Wood
Victor Robinson Zenoff		Nisha Zenoff

Our Children Remembered—August

Child	Dates	Bereaved
Alana Teresa Alioto		John Alioto
Beth Ann Aney		Sharon Guy
Shane Arneson		Carolyn Beasley
Tobias M. Biedul		Charles Feeney & Holly Biedul
Anthony Brandon Carmignani		Lynnette Frary & Tony Carmignani
Kevin Peter Clarke		Rich & Bonnie Clarke
Taylor Lynn Cohen		Michael & Gail Cohen
Chloë Sabrina Dator		Dani Dator
Scanlan Derrick		Susan Derrick
Michael Chad Harris		Jerry & Trena Harris
Alecia Anne Marie Hopper		Constance Blake, Bill Hopper
Ian Emerson Jones		Nanette Biers
Spencer Al-Samarrie King		Nadia Al-Samarrie
Grace Perin Kuhzarani		Rachel Kepp & Ali Kuhzarani
Michael J. Lockwood		Barbara Lockwood Albertoni
Mathew Gary Luce		Alice Clary, Christie Clary
Richard C. Mannheimer, Jr.		Shirlee J. Newman
Richard C. Mannheimer, Jr.		Richard Mannheimer, Sr.
Chance Pierre Maurer		Tracy Maurer
Daniel McLaughlin		Eve Pell
Lori Margo Meislin		Barbara J. Meislin
Anthony Dino Nay		Bob & Diana Nay
Lauren Nelson		John & Vicki Nelson
Forest Elijah Newcomg		Annie Mecchi
Katie Okura		Ginny Anderson
Rebecca E. Pabst		Alan & Virginia Pabst
Kareem Rafeh		Hafez & Nada Rafeh
Benjamin Rosenthal		Robert Rosenthal
Jordyn Royall		Michelle Royall & Colin Fleumer
Anna Elizabeth Russell		Lorene Jackson
Eric James Schor		Audrey Schor
Colin Edward Schreck		Daly & David Schreck, Lesley & Ireland Cannan
Railee Naomi Silvis		Linda Cox
Cary Warren Smith		Patsy Curry
Meghan Rae Teresi		James Teresi & Lynda Cardwell
Brigham Robert Thompson		Elizaberth Thompson Mollner
Isabelle Quinn van Bergen		Fran Quinn van Bergen
Eloi Ivan Vasquez-Margolin		Wendy Margolin
Jesse R. Venegas		Brent R. Venegas
Emmeline Jane Vita		Pamela Vita, Ashley Keightley
Phoebe Stewart Washer		David Washer, Drew Washer
Max S. Jackson Weinreb		Beth Jackson & Marion Weinreb
Nicholas Welsh		Frederica Champagne
Gabriel Alexander Whooley		Monica Whooley
Nathan Hall Wright		Elizabeth Wright
Jessica Young		Barbara Young

most beautiful, compassionate, grounded, loving, movers, shakers and healers I have ever had the honor of knowing. They are life-changers, game-changers, relentless survivors and thrivers. Warrior moms and dads who redefine the word brave.

Every day loss parents move mountains in honor of their children gone too soon. They start movements, change laws, spearhead crusades of tireless activism. Why? In the hope that even just one parent could be spared from joining the club. If you've ever wondered who some of the greatest world changers are, hang out with a few bereaved parents and watch how they live, see what they do in a day, a week, a lifetime. Watch how they alchemize their grief into a force to be reckoned with, watch how they turn tragedy into transformation, loss into legacy.

Love is the most powerful force on earth, and the love between a bereaved parent and his/her child is a lifeforce to behold. Get to know a bereaved parent. You'll be thankful you did.

5). The empty chair/room/space never becomes less empty.

Empty chair, empty room, empty space in every family picture. Empty, vacant, forever gone for this lifetime. Empty spaces that should be full, everywhere we go. There is and will always be a missing space in our lives, our families, a forever-hole-in-our-hearts. Time does not make the space less empty. Neither do platitudes, clichés or well-wishes for us to "move on," or "stop dwelling," from well intentioned friends or family. Nothing does. No matter how you look at it, empty is still empty. Missing is still missing. Gone is still gone. The problem is nothing can fill it. Minute after minute, hour after hour, day after day, month after month, year after heartbreaking year the empty space remains.

The empty space of our missing child(ren) lasts a lifetime. And so we rightfully miss them forever. Help us by holding the space of that truth for us.

6). No matter how long it's been, holidays never become easier without my son.

Never, ever. Have you ever wondered why every holiday season is like torture for a bereaved parent? Even if it's been 5, 10, or 25 years later? It's because they really, truly are. Imagine if you had to live every holiday without one or more of your precious children. Imagine how that might feel for you. It would be easier to lose an arm, a leg or two— anything— than to live without your flesh and blood, without the beat of your heart. Almost anything would be easier than living without one of more of your precious children. That is why holidays are always and forever hard for bereaved parents. Don't wonder why or even try to understand. Know you don't have to understand in order to be a supportive presence. Consider supporting and loving some bereaved parents this holiday season. It will be the best gift you could ever give them.

7). Because I know deep sorrow, I also know un-

speakable joy.

Though I will grieve the death of my son forever and then some, it does not mean my life is lacking happiness and joy. Quite the contrary, in fact, though it took awhile to get there. It is not either/or, it's both/and. My life is more rich now. I live from a deeper place. I love deeper still. Because I grieve I also know a joy like no other. The joy I experience now is far deeper and more intense than the joy I experienced before my loss. Such is the alchemy of grief.

Because I've clawed my way from the depth of unimaginable pain, suffering and sorrow, again and again— when the joy comes, however and whenever it does— it is a joy that reverberates through every pore of my skin and every bone in my body. I feel all of it, deeply: the love, the grief, the joy, the pain. I embrace and thank every morsel of it. My life now is more rich and vibrant and full, not despite my loss, but because of it. In grief there are gifts, sometimes many. These gifts don't in any way make it all "worth" it, but I am grateful beyond words for each and every gift that comes my way. I bow my head to each one and say thank you, thank you, thank you. Because there is nothing— and I mean absolutely nothing— I take for granted. Living life in this way gives me greater joy than I've ever known possible.

I have my son to thank for that. Being his mom is the best gift I've ever been given. Even death can't take that away.

~ Angela Miller

"The tears I feel today
I'll wait to shed tomorrow.
Though I'll not sleep this night
Nor find surcease from sorrow.
My eyes must keep their sight:
I dare not be tear-blinded.
I must be free to talk
Not choked with grief, clear-minded.
My mouth cannot betray
The anguish that I know.
Yes, I'll keep my tears til later:
But my grief will never go."

— [Anne McCaffrey](#), [Dragonsinger](#)



Love Gifts

The following love gifts were received for July—August:

Donor/s: Amy Strand
Child: Daniel Rand Barnett
Dates: 11/9/1981 - 3/24/2024
"In my heart forever. Your loving mom."

Donor/s: Shirlee Newman
Child: Michael Allen Mannheimer
Dates: 6/18/1962 - 7/10/2019

Donor/s: Annette Broussard
Child: Larry Antoine Boyd
Dates: 7/27/1989 - 3/17/2023

GIFTS TO THE CHILDREN'S MEMORIAL FUND:

Donor/s: Ms. Nanette Biers
Child: Ian Emerson Jones
Dates: 8/11/1992 - 3/4/2015

Donor/s: Mark Rosengarden
Child: Jamie Rosengarden
Dates: 3/2/1988 - 10/26/2009

Deadlines for Love Gift information for Newsletters:

Jan/Feb issue Dec. 15 Jul/Aug issue Jun. 15
Mar/Apr issue Feb. 15 Sep/Oct issue Aug. 15
May/Jun issue Apr. 15 Nov/Dec issue Oct. 15

IT WILL BE ANOTHER BIRTHDAY WITHOUT YOU

The sun will shine
roses bloom, geese fly
throughout the sky

stocks will trade,
the weatherman predict
politicians debate

it'll seem like another day
just a day, same 24 hours
not a special holiday

But to this mother
who will stand at the grave
lifting balloons into the sky

serving angelfood cupcakes
with rainbow icing
coated with tears

fluctuating between emotions:
the grief over death
the celebration over birth

For this mother
it will be yet
another birthday without you.

In Memory of Daniel

Alice J. Wisler
TCF Wake County, NC

Child's name _____ Donor's name _____

Child's Birthdate & Anniversary Date _____

Newsletter month _____

Message _____

Include your name, address and phone # if not on check in case of questions:

Mail the information above along with your donation (check) made payable to TCF/Marin to: TCF/Marin c/o Love Gifts, P.O. Box 150935, San Rafael, CA 94915.



The Compassionate Friends
Marin County Chapter
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

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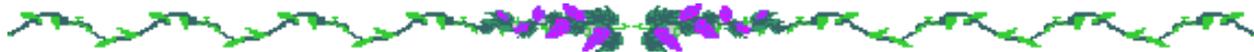
The Compassionate Friends, Marin County Chapter
P. O. Box 150935
San Rafael, CA 94915



JUL—AUG, 2024

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Dated Material - Please Deliver Promptly



"Grieving is a journey that teaches us how to love in a new way now that our loved one is no longer with us. Consciously remembering those who have died is the key that opens the heart, that allows us to love them in new ways." - Tom Attig, *The Heart of Grief*

Sponsored by The Marin
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Compassionate Friends
www.tcfmarin.org
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