



# THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS OF METROWEST



## NEWSLETTER

*The mission of The Compassionate Friends is to assist families in the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child and to provide information to help others be supportive.*

May-June 2013



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Vol. 18 Issue 3

### YOU ARE INVITED

The Compassionate Friends - Metrowest Chapter meets twice a month. Evenings on the third Tuesday from 7:30 to 9:30 pm in the library of St. Mary's Parish Center, Route 16, Washington St., Holliston. The parish center is located between the church and the rectory. Our next two meetings will be on:

**May 21st      June 18th**

The **Tuesday** afternoon meetings will be held on the last Tuesday of the month next to St. Mary of the Assumption Church in Milford at the parish center. **Please call Ed or Joan Motuzas at (508) 473-4239 by the last Monday or earlier if you plan to attend.**

**Directions....**On Route 16 (Main St.) going north through downtown Milford (Main St.) at Tedeschi's Market on the left, take a left at the lights onto Winter St. The parish center is the last building before the church. Going south on Route 16 (East Main St.) after Sacred Heart Church on the left, bear right on Main St., continue past Dunkin' Donuts on the right, proceed to the next set of lights and take a right onto Winter St. There is parking on both sides of the street. Look for Compassionate Friends signs to meeting room. Our next two meetings will be on:

**May 28th      June 25th**

### WHO ARE WE?

The Compassionate Friends is a nonprofit, nonsectarian, mutual assistance, self-help organization offering friendship and understanding to bereaved parents and siblings.

Our primary purpose is to assist the bereaved in the positive resolution of the grief experienced upon the death of a child and to support their efforts to achieve physical and emotional health.

The secondary purpose is to provide information and education about bereaved parents and siblings for those who wish to understand. Our objective is to help members of the community, including family, friends, employers, co-workers, and professionals to be supportive.

Meetings are open to all bereaved parents, grandparents and siblings. No dues or fees are required to belong to the Metrowest Chapter of The Compassionate Friends.

### *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. ©2013**

### *Weather Cancellation*

**In the event of inclement weather on meeting days or nights, if in doubt call:**

**Ed or Joan Motuzas at  
(508) 473-4239**



# THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS OF METROWEST



## Chapter Information

### Co-leaders

\* Ed Motuzas 508/473-4239  
 \* Joan Motuzas 508/473-4239

### Secretary

\* Joan Motuzas 508/473-4239

### Treasurer

\* Joseph Grillo 508/473-7913

### Webmaster

\*Al Kennedy 508/533/9299

### Librarian

Ed Motuzas 508/473/4239

### Newsletter

Ed Motuzas 508/473-4239

### Senior Advisors

\*Rick & Peg Dugan 508/877-1363

### Steering Committee \*

Judy Daubney	508/529-6942
Janice Parmenter	508/528-5715
Linda Teres	508/620-0613
Mitchell Greenblatt	508/881-2111
Judith Cherrington	508/473-4087
Carol Cotter	774/219-7774

The chapter address is:

The Compassionate Friends  
 Metrowest Chapter  
 26 Simmons Dr.  
 Milford, MA 01757-1265

**Chapter Web Page**  
[www.tcfmetrowest.com](http://www.tcfmetrowest.com)

### Regional Coordinator

Rick Mirabile  
 11 Ridgewood Crossing  
 Hingham, MA 02043  
 Phone (781) 740-1135  
 Email: Rmirabile@comcast.net

The Compassionate Friends has a national office that supports and coordinates chapter activities. The national office can be reached as follows:

The Compassionate Friends  
 P.O. Box 3696  
 Oak Brook, IL 60522-3696  
 Voice Toll Free (877) 969-0010  
 Fax (630) 990-0246  
**Web Page:** [www.compassionatelfriends.org](http://www.compassionatelfriends.org)

## TRIBUTES, GIFTS AND DONATIONS

There are no dues or fees to belong to ***The Compassionate Friends***. Just as our chapter is run entirely by volunteers, your voluntary, tax-deductible donations enable us to send information to newly bereaved parents, purchase pamphlets and books, contribute to the national chapter and meet other chapter expenses.

**THANK YOU** to the friends who help keep our chapter going with their contributions.

### Love Gifts

Mr. & Mrs. Henry Slopek in loving memory of their daughter ***Laurie Ann Slopek*** on her birthday April 13th and her anniversary June 24th.

Mr. & Mrs. William Bardol in loving memory of their son ***William "Billy" Bardol*** on his birthday March 7th.

Mr. & Mrs. Charles Clark Sr. in loving memory of their daughter ***Cynthia A. Renaud***.

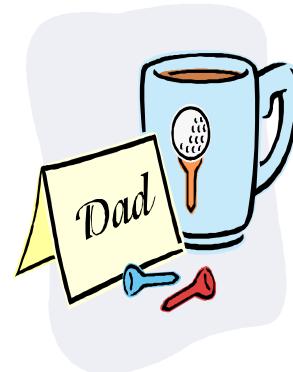
Mr. & Mrs. James S. Carpenter in loving memory of their son ***James S. Carpenter VI***.

Mrs. Beverly Marks in loving memory of her son ***Shawn P. Marks***. Loved and missed so much.

Ms. Betty Myers in loving memory of her son ***William Bruce-Tagoe***. Loved and missed.

Mr. & Mrs. Burton Stuchins in loving memory of their son ***Alan R. Stuchins*** on his birthday March 2nd.

My Apologies to Carol Booth for the omission of her son ***Marc P. Lewis*** on his anniversary April 21st. in the last newsletter. Sorry.





## THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS OF METROWEST



# Our Children Remembered

As a regular feature, the newsletter acknowledges anniversaries of the deaths of our children/siblings and their birthdays. This issue covers the months of May and June. If information about your loved one is missing, incorrect or our chapter files are in error, please send the correct data, including your name, address, and telephone number, the name of your loved one and the birthday and date and cause of death to the newsletter editor, Ed Motuzas, 26 Simmons Dr., Milford, MA 01757-1265.

### *Anniversaries*

#### *May*

LAUREN THIBEAU FLANAGAN  
COREY S. VAUTIER  
ANDREW ROBERT BIBBO  
BEATRICE ELIZABETH HUDSON  
SHAUN LAMPILA  
NICHOLAS POST  
LEA M. SIEBERT  
DONNA M. KIELION  
SUSAN A. QUINLIVAN  
LISA RANDALL  
MARINA E. KEEGAN  
ROBERT L. LOMBARD JR.  
DOLORES ROSE BERGERON  
MICHAEL PATRICK MURPHY

#### *June*

KIM ASCHER  
CHRISTOPHER MARC DULLEO  
MATTHEW PISAPIA  
BARBARA HOUF  
MICHAEL HEARNS  
RUSSELL J. TERES  
LAURIE SLOPEK  
MAJ. ROBERT M. RANERI  
SAMANTHA HAMILTON  
IAN GREENBLATT

### *Birthdays*

#### *May*

LEX ROTHMAN  
COLIN M. DORAN  
JENNIFER L. GOLDSWORTHY  
MICHAEL P. McLAUGHLIN  
SCOTT W. RUTH  
MAJ. ROBERT M. RANERI  
GERALDINE DiCARLO  
KELLI S. DONOVAN  
MICHAEL PATRICK MURPHY  
WILLIAM C. LEWIS  
MARC P. LEWIS  
BRIAN JAMES MOORE  
SHAUN LAMPILA  
KRISTEN DONOVAN

#### *June*

DONNA ANN WOLFSON  
KIM ASCHER  
SCOTT MOTUZAS  
BRIAN JOSEPH MacISAAC  
JUSTIN MAYER  
STEVEN GRILLO  
NICHOLAS L. BOUDREAU  
NICHOLAS POST  
LEANA GRANOVSKY

### *Compassionate Friends Offers Grief Related Webinar Series*

The Compassionate Friends is expanding its outreach to bereaved families by offering a series of free online grief related seminars. The webinars, to be held once per month, are on various grief topics and guests are well-known experts in the field.

Webinars have included such topics as "Handling Grief Through the Holidays," "Getting 'Stuck' and 'Unstuck,'" "Caring for Your Health While Grieving," and "Coping with Guilt During Bereavement." These webinars were recorded and are available to view on demand on TCF's national website.

To reserve a seat for the next webinar (or to view the previous month's webinar), go to [www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org)>News & Events>Special Events>Webinars. Webinars are being archived in TCF's Webinar Library, accessible from the webinar page.



# THE SIBLING CORNER

This page is dedicated to siblings together adjusting to grief thru encouragement & sharing



"*Siblings Walking Together.*" We are the surviving siblings of The Compassionate Friends. We are brought together by the deaths of our brothers and sisters. Open your hearts to us, but have patience with us. Sometimes we will need the support of our friends. At other times we need our families to be there. Sometimes we must walk alone, taking our memories with us, continuing to become the individuals we want to be. We cannot be our dead brother or sister; however, a special part of them lives on with us.

When our brothers and sisters died, our lives changed. We are living a life very different from what we envisioned, and we feel the responsibility to be strong even when we feel weak. Yet we can go on because we understand better than many others the value of family and the precious gift of life. Our goal is not to be the forgotten mourners that we sometimes are, but to walk together to face our tomorrows as surviving siblings of The Compassionate Friends.

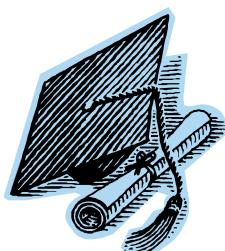
## **GRADUATION—A TIME TO REMEMBER**

I was driving down the road the other day, thinking of how the retail market makes any event an opportunity for revenue. Graduation seems to fall into that category, with cards and gifts for every Graduate. This time of year reminds me that my graduation from high school was a bittersweet time.

Really, it was the first time I had "surpassed" my older brother, David, in anything significant. I turned the age that he was when he died, 18, in the beginning of my senior year of high school. That year was difficult for me, as I felt that I was getting to move past where he had been cut short. Graduation day was no exception. I was happy to be getting out of high school, and looking forward to that coming August when I would go to college. But why was I getting to do these things, and not David? What made me so special that I got to stay here and experience these things? I still am not quite sure of the answer to those questions.

Graduation from high school was really just the first of many events which I have gotten to experience that David never will. College graduation, my wedding, and the birth of my two children are examples. And for me, each event has been a bit bittersweet.

The good news is this: that while time does make it easier to bear day-to-day activities without your sibling, each major event in your life presents itself as a new opportunity to remember your brother or sister, as well.



For me, figuring that out was a huge relief, as it meant that my fear of forgetting David was not something I needed to worry about any more. His memory is just as alive for me today, 15 1/2 years later, as it was when I took that walk across the stage to accept my high school diploma.

*Amy Baker Ferry  
TCF, Heart of Florida Chapter*

## **CHOCOLATE ANGEL**

I attended my first TCF (Compassionate Friends) national conference in Philadelphia, Alan's second hometown, in 1995, shortly after the third anniversary of his death. The first workshop, for siblings, was called Dreams and Visions. Here I had hoped to learn how to live my future without Alan. There was a typo in the program; it should have been called Dreams and Visitations. I was about to walk out. I had dreamt for months after Alan's death that he was still alive but was not ready for the unknown.

A few years later, during tropical storm Floyd while walking to my car during heavy rain and winds, I suddenly got very worried, and upset thinking that the storm could damage Alan's stone at the cemetery. Then I stepped on a Hershey Bar wrapper and immediately stopped worrying. Alan and I had visited Hershey, PA very often, including a two-night stay, by ourselves, at age 14. I felt that this was his way of telling me not to worry.



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## THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS OF METROWEST



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Recently I was worried about another problem. I took my nephew to Burger King, where they advertised Hershey Park. The next day I saw a girl wearing a Hershey Chocolate t-shirt. The following day someone from Hershey checked into my hotel. I finally decided what to do about my problem; I like to think, with assistance from Alan.

I was once asked by a fellow TCF member to visit a medium. I am not sure if it's just by chance, but I like my way of healing.

*Daniel Yoffee  
In Memory of my brother, Alan*

### ***May: The Unusually Difficult Month***

For the bereaved parent, May is frequently the cruellest month. The month of May offers the rest of the world a promise of another carefree summer, swimming, family vacations, relaxation, reading, cook-outs and picnics, trips to the lake and so much that is inherent in our culture.

Yet May also brings memories of our children. The common denominator for mothers (and fathers) is Mother's Day. This tradition was wonderful when our children were alive; now the direct mail and newspaper advertising, sentimental television spots, in-store promotions, cards and letters and the countdown to the day itself are very cruel reminders of our lost children. Who will remember us on Mother's Day?

This will be my fourth Mother's Day without my son. I miss him terribly all year long, but May and December are the worst months for me. First we have Mother's Day, then my son's birthday and throughout the month I am bombarded with invitations for high school and college graduations.....each one reminding me of what once was. My son finishing grade school, high school, college, graduate school. Each was accompanied by a ceremony. All the ceremonies rush into my mind as I realize how much of myself is my memories and those memories are very entwined with my son's life. A big part of me died with him that night in December.

Three years ago I was overwhelmed, sobbing, still occasionally in deep shock. My mind was mush, my heart was crushed and I did not have the will to do much more than quietly weep. It was my first Mother's Day without my son, the first birthday that he wasn't here, the first Memorial Day Weekend without him. I was paralyzed. May would never be joyful for me again.

What to do....what to do. I ask myself this question each April as we begin the ramp up to the longest month. This year, I am counting out the last days of April and wondering how I will handle it.

I am not worried about it; I am just wondering. I have gotten used to the transformation that has taken place in my mind, heart and soul. I experienced a slow spiritual awakening which accompanied a deep, deep sense of loss over which I have no control. I go with it.

There are questions that we must ask ourselves. The answers are unique to us. Collectively we know this is a month to dread; individually we have our own memories and our own methods of coping. Collectively we lean on each other for hope, comfort and support. Individually, we each walk our own road depending on how many circumstances of life are in our month of May: Mother's Day, Memorial Day, birthdays, death anniversaries, graduations, weddings, baptisms, first communions, confirmations, how we handled the beginning of summer, the end of the school year.....all of these events can bombard us in May.

The memories float into our minds like a mist that thickens into a heavy fog. We are enveloped in our fog of memories; the before death years come to us in a hodgepodge of the happiest times and clash with the reality of now. These are our memories, our children and ultimately our choices. And there seems to be little joy we can take from this month of memories.

Once again, we make the decision. If we are not ready to acknowledge Mother's Day, we shouldn't do it. If we are facing other days in May that will tear at our hearts, we must plan for it. Some of us prefer to be alone and isolated. Others of us prefer to be with friends or family. Some of us go to the cemetery, others go to the park. Some read, watch movies, sit on the deck or simply rest. Others take a weekend trip which puts them into a different state of reality.

There are as many choices as there are parents who have lost their children. Consider your options. Be honest with yourself. Don't be pushed into anything. Take control. We each move forward toward hope at a different rate and in a different way. This is not about meeting the expectations of others; this is a personal journey toward peace and hope. It is your journey.

I will always miss my son. I will always feel deep sorrow at his uncompleted life. But I know that he would want me to move forward, move back into the sunshine that is life on this earth. I'm working on it. Be patient with me. This is the most difficult road I have ever walked, but I am in motion, moving mostly forward and seeking something akin to peace, hope and tranquility. I will always be a work in progress.

*Annette Mennen Baldwin  
In memory of my son, Todd Mennen  
TCF, Katy, TX*



# THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS OF METROWEST



## Father's Day Is Still a Time for Celebrating

A long time has passed since I've enjoyed a holiday, or for that matter any special occasion.

With Father's Day coming up shortly, I've decided that this year I'm celebrating.

The kids used to love when special occasions came along. I can still remember Stef's eighth birthday, only three months before her death, and how proud she was when we told her she could invite her best friends over for a birthday party. She wore her prettiest blue trimmed party dress with the lace ruffles.

The games they played still stick in my mind. There was "pin the tail on the donkey" and then "Simon Says." I remember clothes flying everywhere in a contest to see which child could put on a complete set of clothes fastest over her party clothes. I remember the hotdogs, punch and cake, the party favors. I remember Stef's giggles.

The memories also wander back to the party our family threw for Stephen's fifth birthday, only three days before the accident which also claimed his life. I still have the picture in my mind of that goofy orange cap someone had given Steve. He loved it, but it was at least two sizes too small. When he tried to put it on, the bill of the cap was up and Stephen flashed us one of those impish grins that reminds you of Spanky and Our Gang.

As I'm writing this, the tears are flowing down my cheeks remembering the good times we had together.

A lot of things changed when the kids died. Christmas, Easter, birthdays all became days other people celebrated. But not us.

I've done a lot of thinking since then. I know Stef and Steve are in a better place than I could ever imagine and that every day is a holiday for them. In my mind, I think Stef and Stephen would be sad if they felt their Mom and Dad couldn't celebrate life anymore.

Pat and I now have another son, Christopher, plus we have our fourth child on the way. We're trying to rebuild our lives and I feel we have been blessed along the way. Of course, Christopher is too young to understand Father's Day, but even without him here, I would still consider celebrating Father's Day.

I can still remember the Father's Day a couple of years before Stef and Stephen died. With their mom, they had searched all over for something special for me, finally deciding on a T-Shirt that said "World's Coolest Dad." I still wear that now faded shirt occasionally despite the many grass stains and grease marks.



When Father's Day arrives, I think I'm going to pull out that old T-Shirt and wear it.

*I'm going to lay down out in the grass, letting the warm breeze hit me. And I'm going to pretend I'm being caressed by Stef and Steve. I'm going to remember . . . and I'm going to celebrate!!!*

**Wayne Loder**

**TCF, Lakes Area, MI**

**In Memory of Stephanie and Stephen Loder**

*This is what helped me . . .*

## TCF Stepping Stone for New Life

When I attended my first TCF meeting in Seattle 12 years ago, I had totally lost the desire to live. As I sat in the meeting room at Seattle University, I thought, "What am I doing here?" Overwhelmed with grief over the recent death of my seven-year-old son, and only child, Daniel, I couldn't bear the pain any longer. I listened to each grieving parent sharing their story of loss. I kept thinking "Oh dear God, it's been many years for some of these families since their child died and they're still coming to these meetings! Is this what I have to look forward to, a lifetime of this excruciating pain and monthly meetings?"

Daniel and my five-year-old stepson, Isaac, were struck by a car, which sent them both to the ER comatose and on life support for six days. Isaac sustained brain stem damage and paralysis. He was hospitalized for a couple of months, followed by years of physical therapy, complications, and visits to doctors and neurologists.

A wrongful death lawsuit was filed against the 17-year-old who had hit my sons when driving 55 miles per hour in a 35 mph zone. A continual flow of appointments lasted eight months, meeting with attorneys and going through the courts and the trial. Through my frustration, I began lobbying for a bill to change the laws concerning reckless driving vs. vehicular homicide. It passed in the House of Representatives and in the Senate, but the Governor vetoed the bill due to a lack of jail space.

I was eventually forced to take a leave of absence from my job, which was somewhat of a relief, since I had become a non-functioning employee. Simple tasks at work had become overwhelming. The doctor had prescribed tranquilizers for me as my increasing anxiety attacks, depression, and stress mounted.

Alcohol seemed to calm my nerves and helped me to sleep. I thought if I drank enough, it would deaden the pain. Alcohol, being a depressant, only caused my depression to escalate. It also gave me the false courage to attempt suicide one night, in the early stages of my grief.



## ***THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS OF METROWEST***

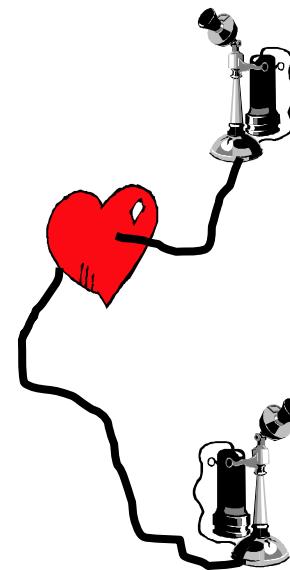


### ***Phone Friends***

Sometimes it helps to just be able to talk to someone; maybe at a time when pain or stress seems too much to bear. We maintain a list of Telephone Friends; people who are willing to listen, to commiserate, to give whatever support they can. In a time of need, feel free to call one of our Telephone Friends.

Ed & Joan Motuzas, ...**Scott**, age 31, Kidney and Liver Failure, .....(508)473-4239  
 Janice Parmenter, .....**Tyler**, age 29, Chronic Addiction, .....(508)528-5715  
 Judy Daubney, .....**Clifford**, age 27, Suicide, .....(508)529-6942.  
 Linda Teres,.....**Russell**, age 19, Automobile Accident, .....(508)620-0613  
 Mitchell Greenblatt,...**Ian**, age 18, Automobile Accident,..... (508)881-2111  
 Judith Cherrington,...**Jeffrey**, age 48, Cancer, .....(508)473-4087  
 Sandra Richiazz.....**Bryan C. Plunkett**, Automobile Accident,.....(508)877-8106

It is always useful to have more Telephone Friends; individuals who are willing to provide support and comfort via the telephone. The chapter provides guidance for those who want to help. When you listen and talk to the bereaved, you make a difference. A longer list of Telephone Friends increases the likelihood that someone will be available when needed. Call Ed Motuzas at (508) 473-4239 if you would like to be a Telephone Friend.



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Marital problems from the accident compounded and seven months after my son's death, my husband and I divorced. A month later I spent my "first" Christmas alone in my dimly lit living room, begging God to please take me home.

That was in 1985, and now I understand why people return to TCF, it's healing. As time passes, to be able to still hear our child's name, to share with others who understand, acknowledge birthdays, special anniversary dates and their lives as it becomes a faded memory no longer talked about among family and friends. We don't want to "worry" others that we don't "seem" to be "getting over our loss." Bless them for they are unable to understand that we never fully "get over it."

A special comforting bond grows among the bereaved parents in which our children brought us together. Thank God for the "seasoned" TCF members, and close friends who have given me strength and courage to go on, who have listened tirelessly for hours, who let me "fall apart," cry, "lose it," and vent my anger and rage. Through their own pain, they let me know that I need not walk alone. What a beautiful, loving gift these TCF parents and dear friends have given to others who are hurting.

I listen closely to these "seasoned veterans." They've gone through their child's death and all that follows, yet they still came out on the other side. They've been down the path before me, and know what's ahead. They give us hope and understanding.

I never imagined that 10 years after my son's death, I would take that tragedy and volunteer to work with other grieving parents and siblings. A friend with the Los Angeles Police Department Crisis Response Team suggested that I take my own experience and apply at the department to take the training for the team. That was two years ago.

Our team members assist the police with death notifications to families. We are on 24 hour call and respond to natural deaths, homicides, suicides, rapes, and armed robberies to provide short-term intervention to the victims and their families.

The Compassionate Friends National Board President Rich Edler (LA/South Bay TCF Chapter) had begun working with us as a speaker during our L.A.P.D. training classes. He has compiled TCF packets that each team member can give to grieving families to aid in long-term support.

We have also begun training new police recruits within the L.A.P.D. Harbor Division on the Crisis Response Team, helping them to become sensitive to the initial shock and grief of the victim's families and the need for our team members to assist the officers and grieving families.

The direction of my life changed dramatically May 8, 1985 and I'm grateful The Compassionate Friends has been the stepping stone to where my life has now taken me.

***Gay N. Kennedy***  
***San Pedro, CA***  
***In Memory of my son, Daniel***



# THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS OF METROWEST



## *Other Area TCF Chapters*

MA/CT Border Towns Chapter ( Dudley, Webster areas)

Chapter Leaders: Paul & Anne Mathieu  
(508) 248-7144.....ampm@charter.net

South Shore Chapter (Hingham, Weymouth areas)  
Martha Berman

(781) 337-8649.....mmartha1@comcast.net

Worcester Chapter

Chapter Leader: Phyllis Simas  
(508) 845-1462...mrspbs1@verizon.net

Central Middlesex Chapter (Needham, Concord)

Chapter Leader: Carol Gray-Cole

(781) 444-1091.....cgc603@aol.com



## *On A Rosebush Full Of Blooms*

On a rosebush full of blooms, there is occasionally one rose more fragile than the rest. Nobody knows why. The rose receives the same amounts of tan and sun as its neighboring blooms; it receives the same amounts of water and food from the earth, of clipping and tending and gentle encouragement from the gardener. Its time on earth is neither more nor less significant than that of the other blooms alongside. Its promises of development are just as rich. In other words, it has all the necessary components to become what it is intended to be; a beautiful flower fully open, spreading its petals and fragrance and color for the world to see.

But for some inexplicable reason, once in a while a single rose doesn't reach maturity. It's not the gardener's fault. It's not the fault of the rose. For some roses, even the touch of a gentle spring rain leaves bruises on the petals. The sun's rays, so soft and warm to some flowers, feel searing to others. Some roses thrive while fragile ones feel buffeted by inner and outer ghost winds.

So it is that sometimes, despite the best growing conditions, the best efforts of the gardener, and the best possibilities and predictions for a glorious blooming season, a particularly fragile rose will share its glow for a while, then fade and die. And the gardener and the rosebush and the earth and all around grieve.



We are never ready for a loss, not for a loss of a promising rosebud, nor for the loss of a friend or relative whose life appears ready to unfold with brilliant color and fulfillment. In the midst of our grieving, we can remember and celebrate the glimpses of color and fragrance and growth that were shared. We can love fragile rose and the fragile soul for the battles won and blooming that was done. And as our own petals unfold, we can remember the softness and beauty of those who touched us along the way.

***Earnestine Clark  
TCF, Oklahoma City, OK***

## ***WISDOM***

As bereaved mothers, we know the joys and the pain of Mother's Day. Through the life and death of our child, we have loved much and lost much. We are far better people because of our children. Our wisdom surpasses anything we could have considered possible before our child died, for now we know loss, the darkest places of the human psyche, the deepest valley of the soul and the depths of insurmountable pain. This wisdom was not chosen by us. It is, nevertheless, our wisdom and experience to share with others as we choose. It is ours to keep in our minds as we live a life without our child. It is the purest wisdom one finds on this side of the moon.

We will continue to learn much about life as we live on after our child has gone. We were active participants in the lives of our children; we must be active participants in the mourning and grief following the deaths of our children. From this experience we grow....it is painful growth, but it is absolute growth of mind and spirit. As our growth increases exponentially, we find that, wondrously, we have come full circle.

One day we choose to focus on the life of our child. When that day comes, as it does for each of us, we are released from the darkness and despair and gently enter into the ambient glow of the light hope. Tentatively we take our first steps into the light. Then gradually we move with more confidence. The light glows brighter as we accept the healing it provides to us. As we heal, we reach out, we return to life, we work a little harder, love more deeply, and give freely to others. Our perspective turns outward. We will still reflect, but we will not be enveloped by our grief. We will laugh again, we will smile. We will even act spontaneously on occasion. We will live....live in the shining light of hope.

(continued on page 11)



## THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS OF METROWEST



### NEWSLETTER MAILING LIST UPDATE (THIS PAGE WILL BE PRINTED EVERY OTHER EDITION)

We continue to update our mailing list. We want everyone who reads our newsletter to receive it; however, mailing costs make this update necessary. We want to send it where it is being read. Your donations allow us to print and mail this newsletter and to reach out to hundreds of parents and siblings.

*Please fill out this form now if you wish to be added to or removed from our mailing list. This form should be filled out annually. If we don't hear from you in a year's time you will be notified through the newsletter that your name will be removed from our mailing list unless we hear from you.*

If you are able to make a donation at this time, it will be gratefully received. Please mail to address below.

#### PLEASE FILL OUT THIS FORM AND RETURN IT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

I (do ) (do not ) wish to continue receiving the TCF newsletter.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

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(Parent / Sibling / Grandparent ) (professional )

(Donation included ) Make checks payable to "The Compassionate Friends" or TCF

If there are any errors in spelling or other information in this newsletter, please call it to my attention so that I may correct it. Please use this page to send back information, reverse side is addressed for your convenience.

**Mail to: TCF Metrowest, 26 Simmons Dr., Milford, MA 01757-1265**

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Fold & Tape \_\_\_\_\_



# THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS OF METROWEST



(continued from page 8)

And so, gentle mother, as you mark Mother's Day, 2013, think of your child's life. Think of love. Think of times passed and those to come. Think of your journey. Think about your vast wisdom. Think about hope. You are a remarkable work in progress. Think about that. Peace to you on Mother's Day,

*Annette Mennen Baldwin*

*In memory of my son, Todd Mennen*

*TCF, Katy, TX*



A very special thank you goes out to those people that facilitate our meetings every month. It is through their unselfishness in stepping up, that makes our chapter a safe place for the newly bereaved to get through the grieving process.

Thank you for your involvement and continued support.

*Mitchell Greenblatt (Ian's Dad)*

*Linda Teres (Russell's Mom)*

*Rick Dugan (Larry's Dad)*

*Janice Parmenter (Tyler's Mom)*

*Judy Daubney (Clifford Crowe's Mom)*



## Butterflies Make Me Happy

Sometimes in our grief we truly believe we are going crazy. We hurt so bad we don't think we can manage to go on living without our precious child here with us. Part of the grieving process is learning how to do just that. Some parents need the reassurance that their child is okay. I think the human mind can only take so much pain and jumps at the chance to see signs from their children, reassuring them that they are okay.

The way I look at it, if you get comfort from a dream or a sign...enjoy it. You've suffered enough, and believing in signs, butterflies, dreams or what ever else gives you comfort and hurts no one else, is your right as a bereaved person.

Are these signs real, or just in my imagination? Can I prove they are messages from my son? Does it even need to be proven? No, I can't scientifically prove it. But I know that dreams, butterflies, signs and enjoyment in nature makes me feel closer to Eric and therefore I will continue to enjoy them. It hurts no one, I'm not obsessive about it and anyone who chooses to think I'm nuts for believing in such things, can think I'm nuts.



We've all heard how the butterfly is a symbol of rebirth. Whether it's our child moving from this world onto a higher plane, or a bereaved parent emerging from the cocoon of grief into a world without our child here. With us, butterflies are a comfort for many. When I'm missing my son and see a butterfly flitting from flower to flower, I smile and feel better. When I'm in a happy mood and see a butterfly, I enjoy the beauty of such a delicate creature. Taking the time to slow down and watch such a fragile creature going about its business is calming and I don't think anyone should discount the benefits from having a calming moment.

About four months after Eric died, I had a dream about him. I woke myself up from tears of joy running down my face, I knew he was okay...what a relief that was. I still hurt terribly and missed him more than I thought I could endure, but I felt comforted by the dream. Some could say it was my subconscious trying to sort things out, but I choose to believe it was his way of trying to comfort me. Either way, it made me feel better.

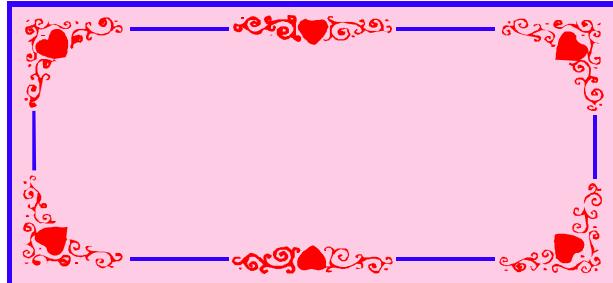
Maybe it's because bereaved parents walk around in such a fog and function on automatic pilot that we are moving slow enough to notice the signs that are around us. Maybe dreams are one way for us to accept messages we need to hear and take into our hearts without logically trying to interpret them. Maybe faith is what we rely on when nothing else makes sense and we instinctively know we need something to hold on to. Whatever it is, just give me a second helping; I like feeling closer to my son!

*Lynn Vines  
TCF South Bay/L.A., CA  
In Memory of my son, Eric*

Normal day, let me be aware of the treasure you are.  
Let me learn from you,  
love you, savor you, bless you before you depart.  
Let me not pass you by in quest of some rare and  
perfect tomorrow.  
Let me hold you while I may,  
for it will not always be so.  
One day I shall dig my nails into the earth,  
or bury my face in the pillow,  
or stretch myself taut,  
or raise my hands to the sky,  
and want more than all the world for your return.

by *Mary Jean Irion*

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**Save the date: July 5-7, 2013 in Boston, MA**