



The Compassionate Friends

Supporting Family After a Child Dies



Serving Upper Bucks and Montgomery Counties

April 2017

Quakertown Chapter
PO Box 1013
Quakertown, PA 18951
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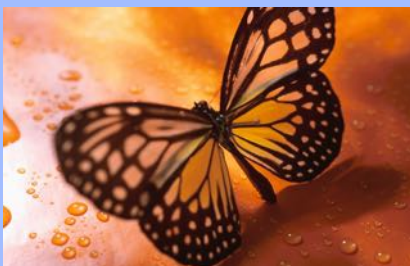
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TCF National Office:

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www.compassionatefriends.org

The Compassionate Friends is a nationally renowned 501 C (3) non-profit organization with 700 chapters in the US. All donations are tax deductible.



The mission of The Compassionate Friends: 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.



15th Memorial Walk and Butterfly Release June 10 at James Park, the site of our Memorial Garden! Registration form included or register on our website! T shirts and butterflies are available.

Memorial Garden Update:

We held our first garden committee meeting and it was a huge success. Many thanks to all the volunteers that were able to attend that evening. Thanks to the cooperation and knowledge of the attendees; we are well on our way for the implementation of the memorial garden. Our next meeting will be held Monday April 24th 7P.M. at Fiddlestix Art Studio. I encourage all who are interested in volunteering for the garden to attend. We will be finalizing the sequence of steps to start the garden the beginning of May. Hopefully the weather will cooperate.

Lynette Lampmann *Chairman*

We talk. We listen. We share. We care.

Our Support Group Meetings are the 2nd Tuesday of every month at St. Luke's Quakertown Hospital, 1021 Park Ave., Quakertown, in the Taylor Conference rooms A & B on the ground floor of the professional wing. Meetings are 7:30 - 9 PM. No need to register. No fees or dues. Just come as you are.

Self-help Program

The Compassionate Friends, Inc. is a mutual assistance, self-help organization offering friendship, understanding, and hope to bereaved families. Anyone who has experienced the death of a child of any age, from any cause is welcome. Our meetings give parents an opportunity to talk about their child and about their feelings as they go through the grieving process. There is no religious affiliation. There are no membership dues. The purpose of this support group is not to focus on the cause of death or the age of the child, as it is to focus on being a bereaved parent, along with the feelings and issues that evolve around the death experience of a child.

To Our New Members

Coming to the first meeting is the hardest, but you have nothing to lose and everything to gain!. Try not to judge your first meeting as to whether or not The Compassionate Friends will work for you. At the next meeting you may find just the right person or just the right words said that will help you in your grief work.

To our Members who are further down the "GRIEF ROAD"

We need your encouragement and your support. Each meeting we have new parents. THINK BACK - what would it have been like for you at your first meeting if there had not been any TCF"veterans" to welcome you, share your grief, encourage you and tell you, "your pain will not always be this bad, it really does get better!"

Information Regarding Our Meetings

PLEASE don't stay away from a meeting because the topic scheduled does not interest you. We are here to discuss whatever is on your mind, we don't stay on the topic only. This is YOUR group and we are here for each other. You do not have to talk at meetings. We welcome your participation in our group but it is not a requirement. Coming to listen to the others is Okay too. Remember also that our meeting is open to adult siblings, grandparents, or adult family members such as aunts or uncles.

Support Group Meetings

We are so sorry for the cause that brings us together. It takes courage to attend a Compassionate Friends support group meeting. We understand how it feels to walk into a room of strangers and share personal feelings, especially when you are in so much pain. At your first meeting, we hope you find care, support, understanding and a group of friends to share with. Truly, there are no strangers among compassionate friends.

As a reminder to families that would like to attend a support meeting. Please allow yourself at least 3 or 4 meetings of attendance to determine if they are for you. It may take a few meetings before you are able to talk about your loved one and that is understandable. What you say at our meetings is kept in the meeting, you can cry, hug, talk about how you are feeling freely. Our meetings are for parents, grandparents and siblings in grade 9 or above and adult siblings.

Your Friends at TCF Quakertown Chapter

Library Books

We have a nice library of books for our members to check out and read and return them back to our library. A problem we currently have is that some books have not made their way back to our library and our library is shrinking. If you have checked out a book or magazine from our library and are done reading it won't you PLEASE return it to us at our monthly meetings. If you are not able to make the meeting you may mail it back to us or have someone else return it to us. Also, if you have any books that would help other grieving families through their journey and would like to donate them to our library please give them to our librarians.

Newsletter Errors and Omissions

For any errors or omissions please contact Linda via email at kt4ever@mac.com with the error and the correction for the next month newsletter. Please remember we are all volunteers and grieving

About This Newsletter

This newsletter comes to you courtesy of The Compassionate Friends, Quakertown Chapter with the hope that it will be a helpful resource for you on your grief journey.

If you no longer wish to receive the newsletter please contact the newsletter editor by email:

newsletter@tcfquakertownpa.org

PLEASE NOTE: If you are moving or your email has changed please notify the newsletter editor so that we can update your information and you continue to receive the newsletter. If the newsletter is returned to us either via mail or your email bounces back and you have not notified us you will be removed from the mailing list.

Newsletter submissions:

Submit articles and poetry to the editor by the 15th of the preceding month. Include the author's name & your contact information. You may mail to our PO Box 1013, Quakertown PA 18951 or email as a pdf file or word document to:

newsletter@tcfquakertownpa.org

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LOST POTENTIAL

Last year I attended a workshop presented by a specialist in grief named Dr. Cable. Dr. Cable said many important things about the grief process, but as a bereaved parent one thing stuck in my mind.

He said that if you ask a bereaved person to describe his deceased mother, he will say, "Oh, she was so sweet. She always wore flowered dresses and loved to bake cookies." But, if you ask a bereaved parent to describe her deceased child, she will say, "Oh, he would be five this year and just starting kindergarten," or, "She would be twenty-two this year and graduating from college."

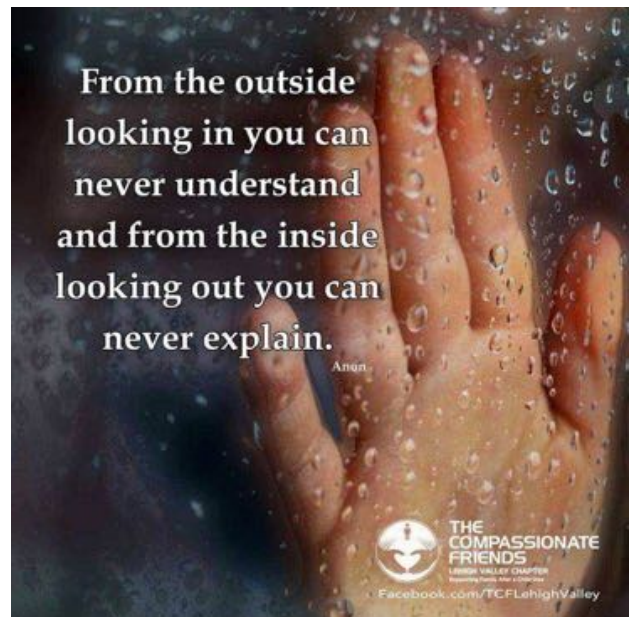
You see, we bereaved parents grieve the lost potential of our children. Our children don't stop growing in our minds. We grieve again and anew each year as our child would have been a different age.

Chris Anderson
 TCF, Walla Walla, Washington

This year's Memorial Walk and Butterfly Release, in memory and celebration of our children and loved ones gone-too-soon, will be held at James Memorial Park at 1028 Ridge Rd. in Sellersville. We are proud to have the CR Strunk Funeral Home of Quakertown as our co-sponsor. THIS ANNUAL WALK AND RELEASE OF LIVE BUTTERFLIES SERVES AS A COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROGRAM AND FUND-RAISER FOR TCF QUAKERTOWN. ALL PROCEEDS GO TO OUR CHAPTER SO WE CAN CONTINUE TO REACH OUT TO NEWLY BEREAVED FAMILIES AND PROVIDE A SUPPORT GROUP FOR PARENTS AND SIBLINGS. We are all volunteers, but we do have printing, postage, equipment and office supply costs. We reach out to every bereaved parent/sibling in the Quakertown, Pennridge, Palisades, Upper Perkiomen, Coopersburg and surrounding communities, with over 250 newsletters every month. Those who pre-register (orders postmarked by May 12th) for the Memorial walk will get a high quality T-shirt with a professionally embroidered logo. Limited supply of T-shirts and butterflies will be available for orders postmarked after May 12th and for same-day registrations until sold out.

Last year, we released 400 Monarch butterflies. Help us surpass the 400 mark this year. Our walk will be along a flat paved path through scenic woodlands and along the Perkiomen Creek led by a professional bagpiper. You can walk the entire route or just a few steps. It's whatever you want to do. At the program we will read the names of every person memorialized with the purchase of a butterfly / T-shirt. We are a 501(c)3 non-profit organization and all contributions are tax deductible. If you have any questions, you may call 267 380-0130 and leave a call-back number or email contact@tcfquakertownpa.org SINCE THIS IS OUR MAJOR FUNDRAISER TO KEEP OUR CHAPTER OPERATING, WE ASK THAT YOU PURCHASE A SHIRT AND/OR BUTTERFLY EVEN IF YOU CANNOT ATTEND THE EVENT.

www.westrockhilltownship.org



A Personal Evolution Through Grief

I have been a bereaved parent now for three and half years. I have learned a few things during that time, and I have much to learn in the future. I am evolving. Evolving from what I once was.....a person who had reasonable expectations of a life that included my son, his children, graduations, holidays, birthdays and special occasions. Now I have become a person who has virtually no expectations that are similar to the ones I had before my son died.

I have evolved into a more sensitive person. I know what some people are thinking before they even say the words. I feel others' joy as if it were my own. I cheer for the success of others. I feel their sorrow, their failures, their missteps. I watch children play and remember my childhood, my son's childhood and I think of the joy that is childhood. I sit for hours watching birds at our feeders, marveling at the beauty of the natural world.

I have slowed down the pace. I no longer feel the pressure to be here or there, to do this or that, to call this one or that one, to wear certain clothes, to "put on the best face" for strangers. I have liberated myself from the mundane and the materialistic. Instead, I simply feel deeply about others. I have become extremely sensitive to all that surrounds me.

I believe the loss of my child has changed me in many different ways. I see this in the attitudes of those who are in the Compassionate Friends as well. While few of us will broach no nonsense in our lives because it is meaningless compared with our experiences, we will listen intently for long periods to the weeping, hysterical cries of a newly bereaved mother. Or we will nod quietly as a parent who is far into grief has a sudden flash of sorrow that is overwhelming. We have a heightened sensitivity to others through no choice of our own. It came with the loss of our beautiful children.

I wonder about what my son would think of events that have unfolded since his death. I have come to conclusions about others that aren't, quite frankly, flattering. Yet, he had come to these conclusions before he died. While I tried to mollify his perception of the dysfunctional people with whom he was burdened, he just said, "that's how it is, mom." And he was right. That's how it is. I have learned to accept people for what they are. If I can help, I will certainly do so. If I can't help, I accept that some things can't be changed, and some people won't change. There is no magic here. It's a simple fact of life. "That's how it is, mom."

I volunteer more these days. I give of myself, my knowledge, any wisdom I may have acquired on life's path to others who are in need. I give of my time, my talents and my labors to those who don't ask as well as those who do. I am comfortable with this.

I have less appreciation for money than I once

had. Perhaps that is the best thing to come out of this. What was I chasing? What was my son chasing? What was the point? Bigger, better, faster, farther, more, more, more. It's a shallow existence when one is so focused on the material things that one is defined by materialism. I have learned to let go of preconceptions, and in that letting go, I have been pleasantly surprised by many people.

How did I get to this place? One minute, one hour, one day, one week, one month at a time. It is a slow journey from crawling through the pits of hell in deep grief to coming back to the reality of here and now. It's as close to a near death experience as I can imagine. Instead of great epiphanies, there are moments of clarity. Instead of instant gratification, there is much work to achieve tiny steps forward. But the effort is well worth making. When I came out from the pits of hell, I realized that my reality was changed; I realized that I was a different person. I discovered that the world doesn't run on the dollar. I found that all people have a capacity for goodness, but that many will never use this capacity.

But most importantly, I discovered that after leaving the pits of hell, there is a road toward hope that is traveled by each of us. Some walk more quickly, some more slowly. But we each walk that road to hope. Hope represents a life that is tolerable once again. Hope represents the acceptance of our child's death and the acknowledgement that we will keep our children alive in our hearts for all eternity as we continue into our tomorrows. Hope is reconciling those two elements: yesterday and tomorrow.

I have learned to adjust to change, because change is inevitable. I have learned to stand up for what is right because that is our duty as human beings. I have learned much about the fears of others and even more about my own fears. I have conquered my phobias as a result of my son's death. Nothing my imagination could conjure would equal that gripping pain, the ache that hangs in my heart forever because my child has died.

But most of all, I have learned that my son was right. "That's the way it is, mom." Shortly before he died, he said he wanted to give me a copy of *Who Moved My Cheese?* He never had the opportunity. But I will read it. I have a feeling I know what it will say. Perhaps Todd gave me the plot line when he died. I'd like to think that he was subconsciously preparing me.

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

April

Jack & Dee Heil, NE Philadelphia Chapter

If is the month of April another year gone by;
I still think of you my child and have a little cry.
April is a start of spring, so many are happy it's true,
But no one can stop my thinking and loving you.



Some people think you should go on with your life and try to have fun,
But they are not the ones who have lost a daughter or son.
They don't know what goes on inside of us each day,
All the hurt and pain that never goes away.



The months go by so fast and then it's a year
That does not mean for our child we won't shed a tear.
Our hearts were broken and our dreams are all gone,
Sometimes we do think, should we try to go on.

April is supposed to bring sunshine and flowers
But to us we don't care if all it brings are showers.
All we wish for is to hold our child once more,
Then we could be the same as we were before.



We wish that people would realize the heartache we go through
Not just in April but every month too.
It does not matter if it's April or May,
It still hurts what some people have to say.

But we try to go on each month if we must.
And we remember that there are so many out there who love us.
Don't listen to anyone who tries to tell you- you'll feel better in time
Because your daughter or son will never leave your mind.

So to all of you that have had a child taken away
We are here for you anytime night or day.
We also know that your pain and sorrow will never end
And that you will always have a Compassionate Friend.

The Compassionate Friends - Quakertown Chapter

15th Annual Memorial Walk and Butterfly Release

Date: Saturday, June 10, 2017 (will be held rain or shine -no raindate)

Place: James Park, Derstine Pavilion, 1028 Ridge Rd, Sellersville PA (NOTE: NEW PARK LOCATION!)

Registration check in: starts at 1PM Bring your lawn chairs / blankets to sit on, we are not renting tents and chairs this year

Memorial Walk starts at 2 PM REGISTRATION / BUTTERFLY ORDERS DUE BY MAY 10TH -LIMITED QUANTITIES AVAILABLE AFTER THIS DATE

Bagpiper will be leading the walk through the park.

Remembrance program and butterfly release following walk - approx 3PM

Refreshments will be available starting at 12 noon for purchase. Come and enjoy lunch before the walk.

Butterfly presentation and display by butterfly breeder, Folk Butterfly Farm will be available to answer questions.

Please bring one photo of your child / sibling / loved one (5x7 or smaller) to post on our Memory board display. You will be able to take the photo home with you when you leave. No guarantee that photos left behind will be returned to owner.

_____ cut on this line and return bottom section.

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY ON REGISTRATION FORM

Registration order form - Pre-register MUST be postmarked by May 10th -- Orders postmarked after May 10th and same day registrations will not be guaranteed -- REGISTER EARLY. See below for details T-shirts are Gildan - 100% ultra cotton 6.1 ounce and embroidered

Order packaged under NAME _____

Address _____

Phone (____) _____

Youth T-shirts: color - sky blue

sizes: X-small; Small; Medium; Large; X-large Cost \$30 for package - additional T-shirts are \$20 each

Adult T-Shirts: color - sky blue

sizes : small; Medium; large; X-Large; 2XL; 3XL

Your name	Name of child to be remembered	Youth or Adult shirt	Pkg \$30 Shirt and butterfly - list size Y - xs to xl A - s- to xl	Pkg \$33. 2XL-3XL Shirt & Butterfly	Extra shirt Y-XS to Adult XL \$20.	Extra shirt 2XL & 3XL \$23.	Additional Butterflies \$15.00	Total of each line
John Doe	Child Doe	A	XL (\$30)				3 X 15 = \$45	\$75
						Total		

Mail registration and check payable to:
Compassionate Friends - Quakertown Chapter

Add shipping # shirts X \$5 = _____
Total enclosed \$ _____

PO Box 1013
Quakertown PA 18951

_ I/We plan on attending
_ I'm not able to attend and would like to have my T-shirts shipped add \$5 per T-shirt for shipment charges (butterflies will not be shipped) # shirts

email Ginny at: contact@tcfquakertownpa.org if you would like to have more than (1) -T-shirt shipped. You may also order online at www.tcfquakertownpa.org and click on events to pay with credit card

Our Children Remembered on their April birthdays

- 4th **Eric Ervin**, son of Linda & Rich Ervin
- 5th **Benjamin Martin**, son of Kristine Fallows
- 7th **Jonerick "EJ" Perullo**, grandson of Suzanne & Tom Kwan
- 8th **Cole Ferdock**, son of Kelly Ferdock
- 11th **Michael Johnson**, brother of Dorene Elwell
- 12th **Steven Ketterer**, son of Steven & Gail Ketterer
- 13th **Kelly Eisenhart-Schmittinger**, daughter of Nancy Eisenhardt, sister of Dana Hutchinson
- 14th **Farrald Lee III**, brother of Kendra Stenack
- 15th **Jeffrey Carpenter**, son of Steve Carpenter
- 15th **Ben Smith**, son of Nick Wyllie
- 17th **Patricia Loughrey**, daughter of Desiree Loughrey
- 18th **Tristan Engarde**, son of Edward & Lisa Engarde
- 19th **Benjamin Culton**, son of Mark & Barb Culton
- 19th **Matthew Hawk**, son of Carol Hawk
- 20th **Todd Iatarola**, son of Rhonda Iatarola & nephew of Sandy Bittenbender
- 20th **Kevin Cannon**, son of Barb Cannon
- 24th **Vivienne Martin**, daughter of Justin & Mary Martin; granddaughter of James & Catherine McFadden
- 25th **Tony Kulp**, son of Mary Ann Kulp
- 29th **Christopher Court**, son of Caroline & Tim Court
- 29th **Jessica Roth**, daughter of Wilbur & Carol Roth

*My Angel
My angel up in Heaven
I wanted you to know
I feel you
Watching over me
Everywhere I go
I wish you were here with me
But that can never be
Memories of you
In my heart
That only I can see
My Angel up in heaven
For now we are apart
You'll always live
Inside of me
Deep within my heart*

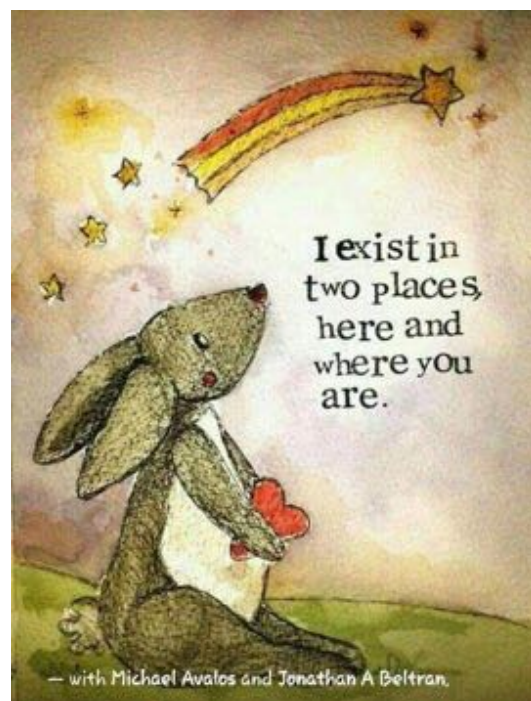


Our Children Remembered on the Anniversary of their death



- 1st **Carla Taylor**, daughter of Else Ridgeway
- 3rd **Tim DeCoursey**, brother of Kimberly Flagello
- 4th **Leah Corrine**, daughter of Doug & Anita Brown
- 5th **Kelly Eisenhart-Schmittinger**, daughter of Nancy Eisenhart; sister of Dana Hutchinson
- 5th **Sherry Reiss**, daughter of Ray & Janet Popowitz; sister of Lisa Springer
- 6th **Laim Williamson**, son of Erin & Daniel Williamson
- 8th **Eric Ervin**, son of Linda & Rich Ervin
- 10th **Rich Hollabaugh**, son of Linda & Wayne Hollabaugh
- 10th **Katherine Hurley**, daughter of Jennifer & Zachary Hurley
- 11th **Jordan Campbell**, son of Marci Borits
- 13th **Keith Heckler**, son of Emma & Lamar Heckler
- 13th **Ryan Strauch**, son of Dave & June Strauch
- 14th **Cynthia Cole**, daughter of Hugh & Marie Madden
- 14th **Sarah Parvin**, daughter of Keith & Sandy Parvin; niece of Kim Eubanks
- 15th **Brooke Miller**, daughter of Beth Miller
- 17th **Jason Reall**, son of Steven & Barbara Reall; brother of Jennifer & Dennis Csondor
- 17th **Cpl. Elliot Teisler**, son of Roberta & Daniel Teisler

- 19th **Allan Afflerbach**, son of Herman & Janice Afflerbach
- 19th **James Palatinus**, son of Susan & Nandor Palatinus
- 19th **Michael Morgan**, son of Deb & Ray Vrtis
- 20th **Gary Zemitis**, son of Lynne Bowers
- 20th **Andrew Shadle**, son of Barbara Shadle
- 20th **Frank Voce**, son of Frank & Anna Voce
- 20th **Craig Zakeosian**, son of Mike Zakeosian
- 22nd **Donald Cass, Sr.**, brother of Brian & Trish Cass; Wendy & Scott Ramage
- 22nd **Adam Tomlinson**, son of Lynn Miller & John Tomlinson, Jr.
- 22nd **Douglas Minner**, son of Louise & Toby Minner
- 24th **Sundai Marie Peters**, daughter of Arlene & Phil Peters
- 26th **Brian Lambert**, son of Richard & Alberta Lambert
- 27th **Kristy Bender**, daughter of Kathy & Frank Bender
- 27th **Richard Carver, Jr.**, brother of Carla Clark
- 28th **Scott Newell**, son of Carol Newell
- 28th **Ronald Phillips**, son of Richard & Theresa Phillips
- 30th **Krysta Henkin**, daughter of Martin & Kathleen Shea



Thank you, Thank you, Thank you

Our March meeting was cancelled due to the snow! *If you would like to sponsor refreshments or bring some in remembrance of your loved one at a meeting please call Carol Graham at 215-538-3651.*

newly bereaved parents and families with our Outreach packet and newsletters.

A special thank you to Mary Ann Kulp, Nancy Eisenhart, Lynette Lampmann, Jenn Pini, Kelly Logan and Jennifer Pini for the Remembrance and Thank you cards that you receive. They do this in remembrance of their children/ siblings, son, Tony (MaryAnn), daughter, Kelly (Nancy), son, Shawn (Lynette), son, Brian (Ginny), and brother, Jason (Jennifer), Kelly does it in remembrance of all those who have gone too soon. An appreciated Thank You to our members for helping to set up and tear down for our meetings, they do this in remembrance of their children and siblings. A special thank you to St. Luke's Hospital for providing us with our meeting rooms each month.

Thank you to Linda Stauffer for doing our newsletter. She does this in memory of her daughter Katie. Thank you to, Betty and Charlie Hottenstein, for taking on the monthly task of addressing our monthly newsletters for mailing, they do this in remembrance of their daughter, Tracy..

Thank you for your Love Gifts and Support We the parents and families of the Quakertown Chapter of Compassionate Friends would like to send a special Thank You to the following donors. Without their generosity in giving to a good cause we would not be able to continue reaching out to

Love Gifts for March

Love gift from Kim Eubanks in loving memory of Sarah A. Parvins.

In memory of Sundai Marie Peters on her birthday * We love and miss you so very much. -- Mom & Dad xoxox

LOVE GIFTS

A Love Gift is a gift of money to The Compassionate Friends. Love Gifts can be in memory of a child or sibling on their birthday or angel day, can honor a friend or relative, or can show support for the work of TCF. Love Gifts are the Chapter's main monetary support. Thank you for your Love Gift.

Love Gifts are tax deductible – Chapter Non-Profit #2053

Circle One: *In Memory* or *In Honor* of (name of person) _____

Birth Date _____ Death Date (Angel Day) _____

Check One: Please use my gift for....

- Memorial Garden
- Special Events (i.e. speakers, community outreach)
- Candle Lighting Program
- Memorial Walk & Butterfly Release
- General operating expenses

Checks payable to: TCF Quakertown Chapter
Mail to: PO Box 1013, Quakertown, PA 18951

Love Gift Message:

Your Name: _____

Email or Telephone: _____

Address: _____

Treasurer Use Only

Cash/Check # _____ Amount _____

D _____ Q _____ T _____ N _____



The Compassionate Friends
Quakertown Chapter
PO Box 1013
Quakertown, PA 18951



Next Meeting April 11, 2017



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.

