



Serving Upper Bucks and Montgomery Counties

The Compassionate Friends

Quakertown Chapter April 2024

FINDING SPRING AGAIN

We are nearing the end of what has often been a brutal winter. While gazing at the mountains of snow piled high in my front yard and the foot-long icicles hanging from my roof, it is hard to imagine that spring will ever come. We have endured bitter cold winds that have chilled us to the bone and treacherous roads that we have cautiously traveled.

The days have been long and dark and often free of sunlight. No matter how long I have been a native of the Upper Midwest, I know I will be glad when it comes to an end.

However, as I described these thoughts about winter, I felt as if I was describing the days of my early grief. At that point, I did not believe that a day would ever come when I would thaw from the chill that had overtaken my body and mind. The bleakness of my existence during those early months after Nina died

continued on page 4



Save the Date

Our annual Memorial Walk
and Butterfly Release

Saturday, June 15, 2024

(rain or shine)

James Memorial Park

(1027 Ridge Road, Sellersville)

As our membership grows costs are rising to mail paper copies of the newsletter each month. Please consider receiving the newsletter by email, or Facebook, or our website. Please contact us with your email address!!! Thank you for helping us SAVE funds!!! email or scan ----->
contact@tcfquakertownpa.org



Quakertown Chapter
PO Box 1013
Quakertown, PA 18951
Chapter Info Line: 215-703-8431
contact@TCFQuakertownpa.org
website: www.tcfquakertownpa.org

Please give some thought to volunteering with The Compassionate Friends. Our Chapter is growing and we need helping hands to continue to help others that are new to this path of grief. We need not walk alone.

In Loving Memory of Our Children on their April Birthdays

4/1 **Eric Ervin**, son of Linda &
Rich Ervin

4/5 **Benjamin Martin**, son of
Kristine Fallows

4/7 **Jonerik "EJ" Perullo**,
grandson of Suzanne & Tom Kwan

4/7 **Giacomo Maurizio**, son of
Bonnie Maurizio

4/8 **Cole Ferdock**, son of Kelly
Ferdock

4/12 **Steven Ketterer**, son of
Steven & Gail Ketterer

4/13 **Kelly Eisenhart-
Schmittinger**, daughter of Nancy
Eisenhardt, sister of Dana
Hutchinson

4/15 **Ben Smith**, son of Nick
Wyllie

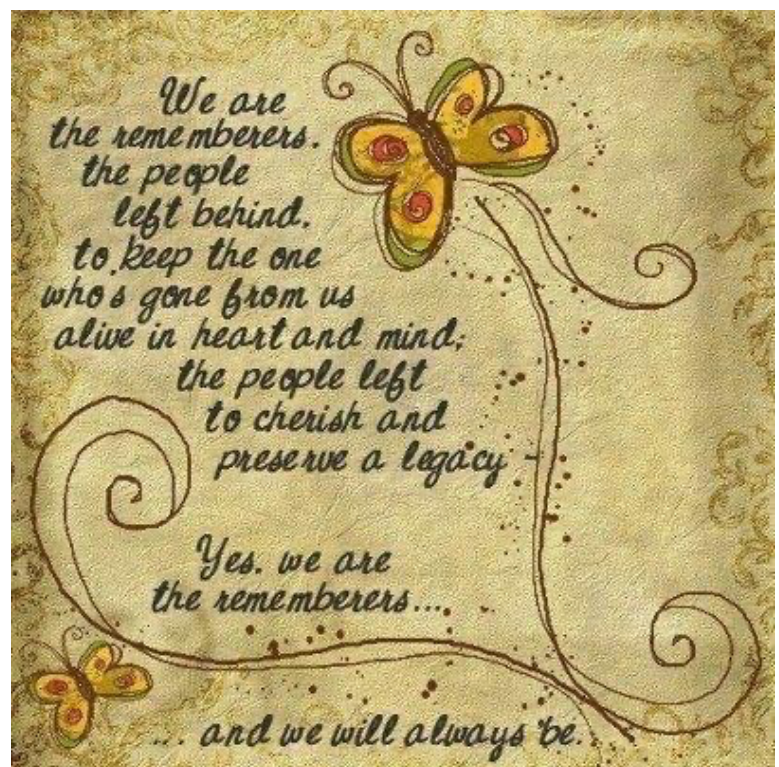
4/19 **Dalton Hunsberger**, son of
Charis Hunsberger

4/25 **Tony Kulp**, son of Mary Ann
Kulp

4/29 **Christopher Court**, son of
Caroline & Tim Court



Have a poem or something you've written
that you'd like to share with our group?
(send as a word file) to kt4ever@mac.com
by the end of the month for inclusion in the
coming month.



Our Children Remembered on the Anniversary of Their Death, loved, missed and always in our hearts

4/5 - **Sherry Reiss**, daughter of Ray & Janet Popowitz; sister of Lisa Springer

4/5 - **Kelly Eisenhart-Schmittinger**,
Daughter of Nancy Eisenhart

4/6 - **Alexis Falcone**, daughter of Dominic & Carolyn Falcone

4/7 - **Kyle Smith**, son of David & Maria Smith

4/7 - **Richard Jefferson**, son of Richard Jefferson

4/7 - **Ashley Schlaner**, Daughter of Joseph Schlaner

4/8 - **Eric Ervin**, son of Linda & Rich Ervin

4/9 - **Michael Morgan**, son of Deb & Ray Virtis

4/11 - **Jordan Campbell**, son of Marci Borits

4/12 - **Thomas Water**, brother of Pamela Buda

4/12 - **Skye A. Gilbert**, daughter of Susan Gilbert

4/13 - **Keith Heckler**, son of Emma & Lamar Heckler

4/13 - **Ryan Strauch**, son of Dave & June Strauch

4/14 - **Liz Ann Whipple**, daughter of Liz Sullivan

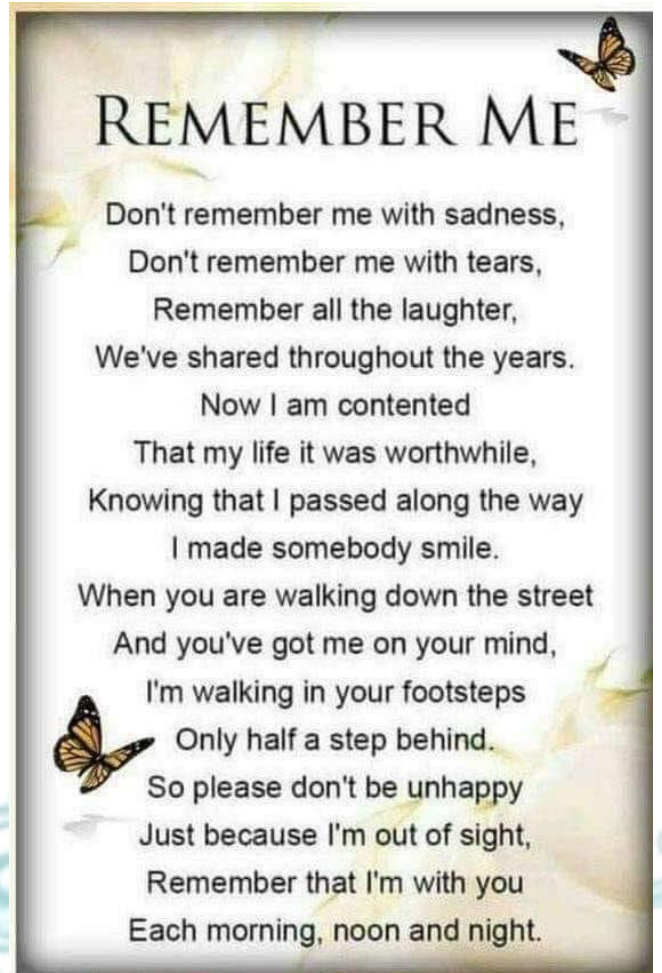
4/19 - **James Palatinus**, son of Susan & Nandor Palatinus

4/19 - **Kaia DeCesare**, daughter of Kristina Robinson

4/22 - **Douglas Minner**, son of Louise & Toby Minner

4/24 - **Sundai Marie Peters**, daughter of Arlene & Phil Peters

4/25 - **Michael Cogossi**, son of Cheryl Cogossi



continued from page 1

is almost frightening to remember; it is so difficult to even conceive of that much pain. I was anesthetized from some of its cruelty by the protective blanket of numbness that shielded me from the gale force of such overpowering sorrow. How could I ever feel spring in my heart again?

Spring had always been my favorite season. The air had a certain freshness to it that I would drink in. Simply put, it always made me feel happy and light of heart. Spring was our reward for surviving the freezing winter months that preceded it. It brought a smile to my face and a bounce to my step.

However, it was the spring of the year where my heart was irretrievably broken into a million pieces. It was during this exquisite season of warm, lilac-scented breezes and sun-kissed mornings where my precious, beautiful daughter Nina's life would end.

I wondered if my thoughts about spring would ever be the same. Rather than anticipate with gladness the coming of spring, I dreaded it with the knowledge that it now included the anniversary of her death. The smell of the air and the look to the sky that I once found exhilarating now brought me back to my darkest day. I know that anyone, who has lost a loved one to death, no matter the season or relationship, understands.

Will spring come again to your life? In the almost six years since Nina died, has it come to mine? Looking back at my description of the winter of "my early grief", I know that I have come a long way from that time of despair. I have found, especially after the first two years, that with each subsequent spring, I have rediscovered some of the pleasure I used to feel. I have also learned that just because I

have found things to feel joyful about again doesn't mean I am dishonoring my daughter's memory. I now take her along with me in my mind and my heart. I try to retrieve memories of the dandelion bouquets she so carefully gathered and presented to me, the rides to the park in the Radio Flyer, our talks

while sunning on the deck, and, of course, shopping for spring clothes! Her favorite pastime! I will always feel uneasiness, apprehension and sadness as May 11th draws near, but I no longer hold it against spring.

It is a slow, difficult journey this grief pathway we travel. It is as treacherous as the roads we maneuvered following the winter storms, never knowing when we will hit an icy patch on the road and be thrown into a tailspin. Yet, we must travel it if we are to find any measure of peace and healing.

Please be patient with yourself as you are working hard to survive this winter in your heart. Trust that spring, though a much different one than the one we knew before our beloved child died, will come again.

By CATHY SEEHUETTER
TCF, Nina's Mom

One of my greatest fears is that the world will forget her. And I can't let that happen.

So she shows up in the world through me.

When I help another or act in love or choose kindness, I bring her humbly back into the world and remind others that she lived, she died, and she matters. Still.

From the blog of Dr. Joanne Cacciatore
KindnessProjectDay.org

I Don't Need a Special Day

I don't need a special day to bring you to my mind.

The days I don't think of you, are very hard to find.

Each morning when I awake I know that you are gone. And no one knows the heartache as I try to carry on.

My heart still aches with sadness and secret tears still flow, What it meant to lose you, no one will ever know.

My thoughts are always with you, Your place no one can fill... In life I loved you dearly, In death I love you still.

facebook.com/Missinglovedone



The
Gathering
Place

<https://gatheringplaceevent.com/>

A special thank you to Donna Hesse (Kisha), Diane Gurecki (Michael) and Sierra Doyle (Ashley) for the Remembrance cards that you receive. They do this in memory of their children / siblings. Thank you to Linda Stauffer for supplying the ink and paper and creating and printing our newsletter and creating and maintaining our website. She does this in memory of her daughter Katie. Thank you to Theresa and Henry Sitko for managing our memorial garden. They do this in memory of their son Clayton. Thank you to Dianna Cox for addressing our monthly newsletters for mailing. She does this in remembrance of her son Michael. Thanks to Barb and Bob Heimerdinger for applying the memorial Plaques to the wall in the memorial garden. They do this in remembrance of their son Ryan.



Katie reading a book to her teddy bear and our dog

I recently joined a Facebook group called “Older Artist Group” . As a retired art teacher i thought it would be interesting to see what other retired artists are working on. I posted a few photos of a sculpture I made a few years ago when I enrolled in a Foundry class at BUCKS. Little did i know that I would take the class every semester for the next 15 years. As of today there are over 2700 comments. They are sculptures of my daughter Katie.

A woman from Ireland wrote me a poem

'The Girl with a Book'

Bernadette Dillon- Ryan

In amongst these many artists
I stopped to have a look
At the most beautiful sculptures by a woman
Of a girl sitting with a book

And as I browsed through all the comments,
In rightful praise of what was here,
I read that this artist had heartbreak,
And life changed with many tears.

For 'the girl with a book' was Katie,
Linda's daughter and her pride
And the amazing sculptures along with art
Was keeping Katie's memory alive

'The Girl with the Book'
Was an avid reader,
Soaking words and seeking knowledge.
She was curious and intellectual
And fulfilling every promise.

'The Girl with the Book'
Was a concert pianist
And an artist like her mother.
She was a top swimmer at championship level
And reaching goals quite like no other.

'The Girl with a Book'
Was a scholar athlete,
She just excelled in every way.
Bright as a button with a zest for life
She made the most of every day.

I'm very sure (as a fellow mom)
That Linda yearns for 'The Girl with a Book'.
As a parent I can only empathise
When your world was rocked and shook.

But 'The Girl with a Book'
Won't be remembered
For negativity and tears,
When Katie packed so very much
Into her vibrant nineteen years.

Her legacy is powerful
And you have ensured that it is so.
You have carried on through your heartbreak
And you have risen from the lows.

So this little poem is just a few words
From an 'older artist' to another
And Katie will be remembered
With her treasured books of many covers.



Katie reading a book with her feet in the water



Garden Planting Time

Spring has sprung , the winter snows that protected our garden have melted. We need to add some beautiful bright flowers!

As we haven't been able to have fundraisers , we would appreciate anyone who could donate . The flowers will be planted in memory of our children and siblings.

10 plants for \$25

25 plants for \$50

Please fill out the love donation form on page eight, check-for Memorial Garden. We will add your donation in our next newsletter.

Any donations will be greatly appreciated.



Love Gifts

"There is a sacredness in tears. They are not the mark of weakness, but of power. They speak more eloquently than ten thousand tongues. They are messengers of overwhelming grief...and unspeakable love."
Washington Irving

Sending a very special thank you to those who sent in love gifts this month:



Sundai Marie Peters, Love and miss you more each day. Love Mom, Dad and Adam
Willie Hetherington, Miss your hugs! Love Mom and Ashly

Donations made in memory of your child, grandchild or sibling are always welcome,.
Please help us help others. We Need Not Walk Alone.



LOVE GIFTS

A Love Gift is a donation of money in support of our Quakertown Chapter of The Compassionate Friends. Donations can be in memory of a child, sibling, or grandchild on their birthday, angel day or anytime. Your Love Gift will be acknowledged in our newsletter. Love Gifts are our Chapter's main monetary support. Anyone can donate and we thank you for your support of our chapter.

We are a 501(c) 3 nonprofit, chapter #2053. Donations are tax deductible.

In Memory of: _____

Birth Date _____ Death Date _____

Check One: Please use my gift for:

General Operating Expenses Memorial Garden

Your Name: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Address: _____

Love Gift Message _____

Please make check payable to:

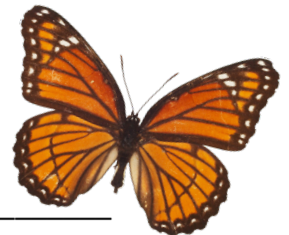
The Compassionate Friends, Quakertown Chapter

Mail to:

PO Box 1013

Quakertown, PA 18951

Yes or No - include my name / love note in the newsletter.





The Compassionate Friends

Quakertown Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

Serving Bucks and Montgomery Counties



About Our Chapter

Barbara Reboratti, Chapter Liaison

Chapter Treasurer – Lisa Dechant

Chapter Secretary – Gail Blase

Newsletter Editor/Webmaster –

Linda Stauffer

Assistant Secretary -

Mary Anne Macko

Memorial Garden Chairperson –

Theresa Sitko

Committee members – Dianna Cox,

Donna Hesse, Diane Gurecki

Amy DeLellis, Member list

Membership Outreach TBD

TCF National Office:

877-969-0010

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.



**New Chapter
phone number
215-703-8431**

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. Re-member 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're 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



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

Next Support Group Meeting— April 9 at the Gathering Place.

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.

