



The Compassionate Friends

December 2019 Serving Upper Bucks and Montgomery Counties

Holiday Grief

“Merry Christmas!” “Happy New Year!” As the end of the year approaches, everywhere we turn someone is telling us we should be happy. But for those who’ve recently lost someone they love, the holidays can seem more like something to survive than to enjoy. The traditions and events that can add so much joy and meaning to the season are punctuated with painful reminders of the person we love who is not here to share in it. Many have wished they could find a quiet place to hide until January 2.

While those of us who surround grieving people can’t fix the pain of loss, we can bring comfort as we come alongside those who hurt with special sensitivity to what grief is like during the holidays. Grieving people wish we all knew at least five truths, among others, at Christmas.

1. Even the best times are punctuated with an awareness that someone is missing.

I remember a conversation I had with a friend as we prepared to head out on a holiday trip shortly after our daughter, Hope, died. “That should be fun!” she said. I sensed I was supposed to agree wholeheartedly with her.

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23rd Annual

World Wide Candle Lighting

Hosted by the Compassionate Friends
Quakertown Chapter

This is a time to remember our loved ones who have died. It is sponsored by the local Compassionate Friends chapter, who supports parents, grandparents, and siblings who have had a child, grandchild, or sibling die.

December 8, 2019 @ 6:30p.m.

First United Church of Christ

151 S 4th St. Quakertown, Pennsylvania 18951

(the program is non-religious)

Doors open at 6:00p.m.

Coming January 14, 2020 at our TCF Quakertown Meeting

“Healing With Journaling”

Memorial Garden Journals will be available for purchase at the meeting, or bring your own.

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.

Quakertown Chapter

PO Box 1013

Quakertown, PA 18951

Chapter Info Line: 484-408-7314

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.

December 8, 2019 @ 6:30p.m. World wide candle lighting



The Compassionate Friends

Quakertown Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

Serving Bucks and Montgomery Counties



About Our Chapter

Ginny Leigh-Manuell, Chapter Leader
 Crystal Hunter-Co-leader
 Sherri Albro, Chapter Treasurer
 Gail Blase, Chapter Secretary
 Mary Anne Macko, Assistant Secretary
 Linda Stauffer, Chapter Newsletter & Website
 Theresa Sitko, Memorial Garden Director
 Barbara Reboratti, Chapter Delegate
 Carol Graham
 Lynette Lampmann, Hospitality
 Mary Catherine Niderostek, Hospitality
 Diane Guerecki, Remembrance Cards
 Lisa Dechant, Remembrance Cards
 Bob Albro

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.



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'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

Our Children Remembered for December Birthdays

- 12/2 - John Fonsemorti**, son of Rose Fonsemorti
- 12/3 - Sundai Marie**, daughter of Arlene & Phil Peters
- 12/5 - Keven Kuestner**, son of Keith & Tammy Kuestner
- 12/7 - Scott Smakula**, grandson of Naomi Shaw
- 12/7 - Laura Smith**, daughter of Valerie Smith
- 12/8 - Ashley Doyle**, daughter of Brian Doyle
- 12/10 - Jason Miller**, son of Phil & Pam Miller
- 12/15 - Arthur Ucci**, brother of Joan Ucci
- 12/17 - Ryan Strauch**, son of Dave & June Strauch
- 12/18 - Christopher Dixon**, son of Steve & Kim Dixon
- 12/19 - Thomas Onraet**, son of Ruth & Maurice Onraet
- 12/19 - Andy Walnes**, daughter of Kim Walnes
- 12/19 - David Curran**, son of Barbara Santaniello
- 12/20 - Rich Hollabaugh**, son of Linda & the late Wayne Hollabaugh
- 12/20 - Michael Fayewicz**, brother of Sandra Ligowski
- 12/24 - Kiana Alvarenga**, daughter of Tina & Jose Alvarenga
- 12/25 - Allison Fawcett**, daughter of Anne & Bernie Smith
- 12/28 - Michael Bolan**, son of Jennifer Bolan

(continued from page 1)

What I didn't know how to explain is that when you've lost a member of your family, even the best of times are painfully incomplete. Someone is missing. Even the best days and happiest events are tinged with sadness. Wherever you go, the sadness goes with you.

2. Social situations are hard.

I have never been able to figure out why crowds are difficult when you're grieving, but they are. Small talk can be unbearable when something so significant has happened. Meeting new people will likely bring questions about family. To walk alone into a room full of couples when your spouse has died, or into an event filled with children when your child has died, can be a soul-crushing reminder of what you have lost.

"For those who've recently lost a loved one, the holidays can seem more like something to survive than to enjoy."

If you've invited someone in the midst of grief to your holiday event, let them know that you understand if it seems too hard at the last minute and they have to cancel, or that they may only be able to stay for a short time.

If you're going to an event, give a grieving person a call and ask if you can pick her up and stick

with her throughout the event for support. When you come upon a grieving person at a holiday social event, let him know that you are still thinking about the person he loves who has died, and invite him to talk about his memories with that person. Don't be afraid to say the name of the person who has died. It will be a balm to the grieving person's soul.

3. Extended family can be awkward and uneasy.

Grief is often awkward — even, and perhaps especially, with those to whom we're closest. My husband and I host weekend retreats for couples that have lost children, and the difficulty of being with family at the holidays is often a topic of conversation among these couples. They know that some family members think they've grieved long enough and want them to move on. Others want to initiate a conversation about the person who died but aren't sure how. What often happens is that the name of the person who died is never mentioned, and it feels to the person who is grieving that they have been erased from the family.

Nancy Guthrie

OUR CHILDRENS REMEMBERED on the Anniversary of their deaths

Loved...Missed...Remembered on their
Birthdays and Always

12/2 – Matthew Detweiler, son of Eleanor Detweiler; brother of Lesley & Phyllis Mikolon

12/2 – Alan Roskow, son of Nan Roskow

12/5 – Chad Liles, son of Carl Liles; Susan & John Rowe

12/6 – Beverly Sue Otten, daughter of Mary Leuz

12/7 – Adrienne Heber, daughter of Anna & John Heber

12/7 – Randy Freed, son of Bonnie Freed

12/7 – Josiah Weigner, son of Keith Weigner

12/8 – Kevin Myers, son of MaryLou Nyce

12/12 – Sean A. Ryer, son of Pat Ryer; grandson of Diana Adams

12/12 – Nicole Rush, daughter of Harold Conrad, Sr.

12/13 – Sean Dawson, son of Roger & Becky Dawson

12/13 – Michael Tondera, son of Maria & Steven Tondera; brother of Yvonne Perrucci

12/14 – Robert Kyle Rainey, son of Lynne Rainey

12/14 – Finnegan Ward, son of Carlee & Edmund Ward, Jr.

12/15 – Christopher Thomas, son-in-law of Barbara & Eduardo Reboratti

12/15 – Robert Dorman, Jr., brother of Donna & Greg Rowe

12/16 – Robert Marich, son of Michele Callon

12/16 – Zachary Dawson, son of Roger & Becky Dawson

12/17 – Joseph Vincente, son of Christine & Donald Vincente

12/18 – Brian Keim, son of Ronald & Joan Keim

12/19 – Dwayne Hager, son of Ruth & Stanley Hager, Jr.

12/19 – Billy Savage, son Bill & Blanche Savage; brother of Jennifer

12/20 – James Fiorelli, son of Steve & Roseanne Fiorelli

12/20 – Russell Snyder, Jr., son of Sandra & Russell Snyder, Sr.

12/21 – Jon Masso, brother of Melissa Fisher

12/21 – Jacquelyn Dahms, daughter of Don Croisette

12/22 – Kim Biborosch, daughter of Diane Biborosch

12/23 – David Schaller, son of Raymond Schaller

12/24 – Jesse Miskovsky, son of David & Debra Miskovsky; brother of Courtney Covelens

12/25 – Amber Eisenstein, daughter of Ben Eisenstein

12/25 – Michael Johnson, son of David & Donna Freeman; brother of Dorene Elwell

12/27 – Christopher Dixon, son of Steve & Kim Dixon

12/27 – Jeremy Gibialante, son of Kim Gibialante; brother of Monica Shumaker

12/29 – Peter Angstadt III, son of Lynette & Peter Angstadt

Community Corner

Raising Funds to Help Kids, in memory of Kevin O'Donnell

By: Kaitlin (O'Donnell) Cron

On November 17, 2012, Kevin O'Donnell, my brother, lost his life to a tragic motorcycle accident. On this day, he was doing a motorcycle run to raise money for children in need around the holidays. It took me years, but last year with the help of family and friends, we collected toys for children and donated them for the holidays. It brought so

much joy to myself, and my daughters, and is a wonderful tribute to my sweet brother Kevin.

Many people have asked to send me money, so this year I decided to set up a GoFund Me account. 100% of the proceeds will go to buy toys for those in needs. (My daughters love doing the shopping too... see the picture!). If you would rather send a check, please email me at Kaitlinod825@gmail.com to get more information.

Thank you all in advance for your love and support. Kevin is shining down on all of you.



Link for GoFundMe:
<https://qr.go.page.link/EBTta>
or scan the QR code.



Grief and *Christmas* go together like fire and wood. When everyone around you wants to be happy and joyful, you just want to be left alone with the hurt of loss, curl up and hide with the tears and pain .. **It's okay!**
It's your grief .. So do it your way!

all-greatquotes.com

THANK YOU



Cindy O'Donnell , in memory of her son Rourke
Carol Graham, in memory of her sons Peter and Adam
Lynette Lapmann, in memory of her husband Bill
Sheri Albro , in memory of her son Ben
Lisa Dechant, in memory of son Eddie Lanowski III
Alyssa Sandt and Lori Jordan, in memory of Andie Clutter,

A red advertisement for the GIANT Giving Tag Program. It features a box of 'GIANT ALL YOU KNEAD & LOVE' flour with a '\$1 DONATION' tag. The text reads: 'GIVE BACK TO THE COMMUNITY. USE THE TAG, SEND US A \$1 DONATION. GIVING TAG PROGRAM'.

If you would like to sponsor refreshments or bring some to a meeting in remembrance of your loved one, please call our Chapter Info Line 484-408-7314.

A special thank you to Diane GuereckiKasey Bradley Lisa Dechant and Crystal Hunter for the Remembrance cards that you receive. They do this in memory of their children/ siblings: An appreciated Thank You to our members for helping to set up and tear down for chapter meetings. Thank you to Linda Stauffer for doing our newsletter and website. She does this in memory of her daughter Katie. Thank you to, Betty and Charlie Hottenstein for addressing our monthly newsletters for mailing. They do this in remembrance of their daughter, Tracy. 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.

HELP US RAISE MONEY

Do you use the reusable (and super sturdy) bags for the grocery store? If so, go to GIANT and purchase some reusable **Bags 4 My Cause with the Giving Tag**. Go home, get online (website is provided on the Giving Tag) follow the directions and choose **The Compassionate Friends Quakertown Chapter** as the non-profit. You will have to scratch off and enter a code, but it literally takes less than 5 minutes to give us some cash! We get a check from Giant to add to our funds. It is SUPER easy. Tell your friends! If you don't use them, now is a good time to start! Thank you!



A Christmas card with a green patterned background and a red scalloped border. The text reads: "Please Understand I HAVE GONE THROUGH THE LOSS OF A LOVED ONE AND CHRISTMAS IS NOT EASY FOR ME. WHILE MANY OF YOU ARE SINGING CHRISTMAS CAROLS AND ENJOYING YOUR FAMILIES, I MISS MY LOVED ONE. IN THE MEANTIME, I CHERISH MEMORIES, WHICH ARE PRICELESS." The bottom right corner says "Angels at My Door/EB".

Love Gifts

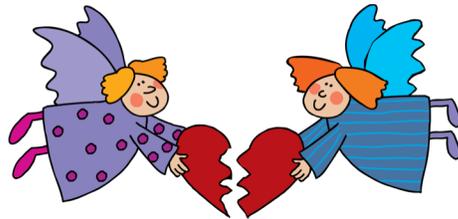
Patti Dille in memory of Matthew Dille; We miss you Matt, you are always in our hearts.

Lisa Dechant in memory of Eddie Ulanowski; Happy 29th birthday Eddie. We love and miss you. Love, Mom, Keith, Heather, Anthony, Ava and Autumn.

Kay Souder in memory of Sarah Souder

Jeanne Hofmann in memory of my son, Scott Silver and my grandson Kyle Silver; I think of you every day and night. I miss you both so much. You are my heart and soul. You are loved for eternity.

Arlene Peters in memory of Sundai Marie Peters; Our hearts still ache, we miss you and love you. Mom, Dad and Adam.



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. Please make checks payable to The Compassionate Friends Quakertown Chapter. (Bank will not accept just TCF)

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

Love Gift Message:

Your Name: _____

Email or Telephone: _____

Address: _____

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

Treasurer Use Only
Cash/Check # _____ Amount _____
D _____ Q _____ T _____ N _____

