



Serving Upper Bucks, Southern Lehigh and Montgomery Counties

The Compassionate Friends

Quakertown Chapter September/October 2023



The Compassionate Friends Worldwide Candle Lighting on the 2nd Sunday in December unites family and friends around the globe in lighting candles for one hour to honor the memories of the sons, daughters, brothers, sisters, and grandchildren who left too soon. As candles are lit on December 10th, 2023 at 7:00 pm local time, hundreds of thousands of people commemorate and honor the memory of all children gone too soon. First UCC Church 4th and Park Ave, Quakertown



FYI: West Rockhill Township's Septemberfest
Sunday September 24, 2023
at
James Memorial Park 1027 Ridge Road Sellersville
West Rockhill Township
12 pm to 4 pm

Check out our TCF Memorial Garden, stop by our TCF information table
AND there are always tons of fun events for families, too😊😊

The Maze of Grief

I've heard many bereaved parents say – and have said it myself – that when their child died their life turned upside down. Everything becomes mixed up; we are in unfamiliar territory. Vainly we seek for the familiar, for “normalcy”, for something to hold on to. Sometimes we even seem to lose our faith, as we may feel that God has let us down. We seek to reorient ourselves to our new surroundings.

This process of reorientation is called grieving. It may be like feeling our way through a dark labyrinth. Many times we come to dead ends and may have to feel our way back to a broader way. In this dark maze of grief we seek for someone to guide us. Those closest to us are no help. They too are lost in this labyrinth, searching for a way out, an escape from the pain. But all the avenues of escape – sleep, drugs, work, alcohol, avoidance – only leads us deeper into the maze where we feel even more disoriented and lost.

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<https://www.facebook.com/tcfquakertownpa>

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Our Children Remembered on their Birthdays

September

9/3 - **Shari Gelb**, sister of Lisa Cohen

9/6 - **Rachel Sands**, daughter of Charlotte Tatu, sister of Christian, mother of Tommy

9/6 – **Candace Lambert**, daughter of Brenda Halikias

9/9 – **Liam Parker Lange**, son of Katie & Seth Lange

9/12 - **Clayton Sitko**, son of Henry & Theresa Sitko, brother of Mandy

9/16 - **Jeremy Kuba**, son of Roslyn Kuba

9/17 – **Donald Trujillo**, son of Priscilla Crawford

9/17 – **Julie Petcel**, daughter of Antoinette Sellecchia; granddaughter of Mary Sellecchia

9/18 – **William Young**, son of Barbara Young

9/23 - **John Roeder, Sr**, son of Don & Joan Roeder

9/24 - **Michael Yothers**, son of Brenda Yothers

9/26 - **Michael Adamson**, son of Darlene & Daniel Dean

9/28 – **Andrew Campbell**, son of Beth Campbell

9/30 - **Adrienne Heber**, daughter of Anna & John Heber

9/30 - **Christopher Reed**, son of Sally Reed

Belated remembrance August 14 William J. Hetherington, son of Deborah Hetherington

October

10/3 - **Michael Leach**, son of Beth Horwin

10/3 - **Steffan Oraezewski**, grandson of Crystal Kay

10/3 - **Edward (Eddie) J. Ulanowski, III**, son of Lisa Dechant

10/6 - **Ryan Barr**, son of Londonne & David Barr

10/7 - **Jordan Campbell**, son of Marci Borits

10/8 - **Kisha Hesse**, daughter of Donna Hesse

10/9 - **Becky Rosenberger**, daughter of Lois Rosenberger

10/10 - **Jacob Burkett**, son of Kathleen & Jim Hardgrove

10/10 - **Kaitlin Murphy**, daughter of Pat Murphy

10/10 – **Michael Detweiler**, son of Mary & Larry Detweiler

10/10 - **Josiah Weigner**, son of Keith Weigner

10/12 - **Christopher Fonder**, brother of Brittini Fonder

10/13 – **Janelle Kleckner**, daughter of Teri Monastero

10/16 - **Jethro Hunter**, nephew of Crystal Hunter; grandson Pat & the late Annette Hunter

10/16 - **Stephen Stalheim**, son of Barbara & Gabriel Mertens

10/17 - **David Neider**, son of Celeste Neider Nice; brother of Lexi Hull

10/19 - **Andrew Lister**, son of Jennifer & Kevin Lister

10/20 - **Dawn Cannon**, daughter of Joanne & David Cannon

10/22 – **Danny Trujillo**, son of Priscilla Crawford

10/24 – **Gabriel Whitesell**, son of Crystal Edmonds

10/25 - **Dillon Andrew Godwin**, son of Karen Godwin & Ray Gintowt

10/30 - **Miranda Lynn Schaup-Werner**, daughter of Shirley & Dennis Schaup

10/30 - **Alex Shiloh**, son of Irena Shiloh

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

9/1 - **Kevin Figanik**, son of Thomas & Valerie Figanik

9/1 - **Justin Hunter**, brother of Crystal Hunter; son of Pat & the late Annette Hunter

9/1 - **Danny Trujillo**, son of Pricilla Crawford

9/2 - **Jenna Nicole Burleigh**, daughter of Ed & Jaqui Burleigh

9/4 - **Ryan Heimerdinger**, son of Robert & Barbara Heimerdinger

9/5 - **John Jarema III**, son of Josephine Lenhart

9/5 - **Tyler Mostek**, son of Kimm Mostek & Brendan Dorsa; grandson of Vicki Bartakovits

9/6 - **Billy Klinedinst**, son of Michelle Klinedinst

9/6 - **Jennifer Rose**, daughter of Michael & Donna Rose

9/7 - **Judy Besh**, sister of William Klinger

9/9 - **Liam Parker Lange**, son of Katie & Seth Lange

9/12 - **Ben Smith**, son of Nick Wyllie,

9/13 - **David Cohen**, son of Hilary Cohen

9/16 - **Gabriel Whitesell**, son of Crystal Edmonds

9/17 - **Cole Ferdock**, son of Kelly Ferdock

9/20 - **Gavin Stewart**, son of Courtney Trimble

9/21 - **Geneva Doll**, daughter of Keith & Barbara Doll

9/21 - **Alycia Pinkowski**, daughter of Patty Rugulo

9/22 - **Christopher Fonder**, brother of Brittnei Fonder

9/22 - **Nici Grawonski**, sister of Michelle McDaniels

9/23 - **Julie Petcel**, daughter of Antoinette Sellecchia; granddaughter of Mary Sellecchia

9/24 - **Petie Shultz**, son of Maria Shultz; grandson of Doreen Pettie

9/26 - **Matt Dille**, son of Patti & the late Joe Dille

10/2 - Will Moyer, son of Sue Simon; nephew of Amy Atkins

10/3 - Allison Fawcett, daughter of Anne & Bernie Smith

10/4 - Zachery Roessler, son of Chuck Roessler & Pam Howell

10/6 - Michelle Dena Dusza, daughter of Steve & the late Darlene Dusza; sister of Jenn Geib

10/6 - Tom O'Donnell, son of Thomas & the late Susan O'Donnell

10/9 - Becky Rosenberger, daughter of Lois Rosenberger

10/9 - Sebastian Carey, son of Christine Carey

10/12 - Mitchell Yelovich, son of Jacquie Yelovich

10/15 - Michael Adamson, son of Darlene & Daniel Dean; brother of Michelle

10/17 - Glen McCartney, son of Vivian McCartney; brother of Kelly

10/18 - Courtney Isabella, daughter of Michelle & Anthony Isabella

10/21 - John Tyler Rotelle, son of Jill Rotelle

10/23 - Arthur Ucci, brother of Joan Ucci

10/25 - Jason Tyler Foulke, son of Mitzi & Dean Foulke

10/27 - Christopher Court, son of Caroline & Tim Court

10/27 - Jethro Hunter, nephew of Crystal Hunter; grandson of Pat & the late Annette Hunter

10/30 - John Patrick Sharkey, son of Maggie O'Donnell

10/31 - Andrew Flath, son of Lori Jordan



Reopening of School and No Child!

Summer ends, and across our nation, from the middle of August to the week after Labor Day, schools open for another year. For those parents surviving the death of a child of school age, be that from nursery school to college or university, this can be as trying a time as the holidays.

School buses travel again the busy highways of our cities and the quiet lanes of our countryside. Anxious parents stand with children about to make the first ride to school. Gaggles of youngsters play at countless stops across our land. America's most precious and costly activity is renewed. The children are off to school.

I remember well the silences of the September mornings of those first years. The bus no longer stopped at our home. It simply drove casually by, the people within never realizing it once carried the focus of my love, the repository of my dreams. The drone of its wheels marked anew the mind-numbing dullness of my fragmented senses as it moved its way down the tree lined lane once alive with my son's comings and goings.

It was always possible to avoid "back to school" sales. Seeing young people and their weary parents gather school supplies and clothing was just too much in those earliest years. Somehow, the perfect notebook, the brilliant sweater, the odd-shaped erasers were simply unendurable. The stream of vehicles heading for Cape Cod for that final Labor Day weekend, the last family outing to end the summer, was another scene to avoid. It was a ritual from which we seemed excluded. Could we still be a family without him?

Those years are gone now. Having returned to education, I now have "back to school" buying to do myself. I see the buses arrive to unload their treasured passengers, no longer feeling the emptiness of a bus that drives on, barren of hopes and dreams. But I do and will forever remember the pain of those unhappy years and sometimes I reflect on the many parents who now feel as I did.

If you are such a parent, if you mourn a child who leaves a school desk somewhere unfilled, I promise that you are not alone in that pain. But even though you are not alone, you know that you are forever marked, that the death of your child or children has altered you in some basic manner.

Perhaps time and much grief work remain before your spirit can yield up the agony and permit a new self to emerge. That time and work was necessary for me, as it actually is for all of us. For me, grief resolution finally recalled me to my original work. I teach. I no longer administer or direct. The need for that fled before bereavement's assault.

I teach math, science, and social studies to sixth grade children, ages 11 to 12 over the course of a year. In wondrous ways they have restored love to my living. There is nothing of an intellectual character with enough value to equal that, so I have given them the love and caring that was mine, evoked by and for Olin. Thus do Olin's gifts live on, called forth and given new life through the innocent and selfless love of schoolchildren.

All who walk this road realize this is not substitution. Such is not possible. But it does reflect qualities of successful reinvestment, something each of us sorely needs.

Today as schools prepare for another year, I look forward to a new group of children. But cautions arise within as well, the legacy of that time over 12 years ago, when the world came to a sudden halt, when the laughter of lifetimes ceased, when dreams evaporated with a morning mist.

For those of us who dare live and love again, for those fortunate enough to have found a reinvestment encouraging the same, there is always risk. After all, tragedy can strike again. Our present or past pain grants no immunity. Students, the children within the school, invited me, albeit unknowingly, to take that risk again, although certainly not at the rich and deep level of father and son. Nevertheless, it feels right, and though I will never again know the depth of love which belonged to Olin and me, I welcome the chance to live once more on its margins.

So schools, which were once just another manifestation of hurt, have helped me to restore purpose and balance to daily living. There is surely such a reinvestment awaiting all of us, but we must seek the circumstances and create the opportunities for it to occur. I pray that all of us who have not yet had such good fortune may soon do so. All of our children would want this for us as well. With that thought in mind, it is indeed worth striving for that dimension in life once more.

Don Hacke*

TCF Kingston, MA

In Memory of my son, Olin reprinted with permission

Special Thanks



A special thank you to Jennifer Pini, Diane Gurecki, Sierra Doyle, 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 supplying the ink and paper and printing our newsletter and creating and maintaining our website. She does this in memory of her daughter Katie. Thank you to Theresa Sitko for managing our memorial garden. She does this in memory of her son Clayton. Thank you to Dianna Cox for lovely planters at the garden she donated in loving memory of her son Michael and 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.

Autumn Memories

My son and I always enjoyed the autumn season. Yes, when we lived in the cold zone, we knew that winter's winds and snows were on the way. But, yet, we took time to enjoy the beautiful array of colors that nature gave us as a final salute to the growing season.

Todd and I loved to look at the changing leaves along the bluffs of the river. We would drive on weekends and find the best view. Then we'd park and marvel at nature's wonder. The big bluffs, the turning leaves, the eagles soaring above us. Ducks flying south....even the occasional group of geese overhead...honking, honking as they journeyed to a warmer climate.

The light is different in the autumn...it's diffused somehow. It's different than the light in any other season. Autumn sun was our favorite light. It seemed less harsh, more forgiving, gentler in a strange sort of way. That was another time and another place.

Now in the autumn I remember all the special times I shared with my child. Looking at leaves, collecting leaves, raking leaves.....we did this together, just the two of us. "Mom, when are we going to go look at leaves?" Todd would ask. That was my cue to load up some soft drinks and sandwiches and head out on the first sunny Saturday. We'd repeat this ritual until the leaves had all fallen and it was time to rake.

When we moved to the Houston area, Todd was 12, and we talked about the seasons. He told me about his great memories of leaves and drives and time together. He said he would miss autumn with me. That made me feel good. These were memories that we shared, of a time when it was just Todd and me for those special moments. Looking back, I am so glad that I spent the time to make memories. I thought I was making memories for my child, but in fact, I was making memories for us both. And now those memories are my memories.....good memories.....memories that I will cherish always.

Here it is autumn again. Soon Todd will be gone five years. The memories are flooding back: the first day of each school each year, the changes as he grew to become a man. High school, college, graduate school....all began in the autumn. Autumn marks the beginning of many good memories for me. I listen as the school bus stops in front of our house to pick up today's children. Once in a while I go to the door and watch them load up, chatting with each other as they take their seats. I think of my 12 year old son, getting on that bus in front of our home for the first time: the first day of school in Houston. And for a moment, just a fleeting moment, I think I can see him sitting at a window seat, waving at me. Waving goodbye.

Annette Mennen Baldwin
In memory of my son, Todd Mennen

The Maze of Grief (continued from page 1)

Conversely, the best way out of the labyrinth is through the pain. And the best guide is another bereaved parent, one who has walked the dark maze and knows all the blind alleys, the dead ends and the false promises of escape. The best way out is through talking; telling your story again and again to a friend who will listen, not judge you, and will understand. One who will not tell you to "forget about your child and get on with your life", or "keep busy and don't think about it", or that you "should be over it". A friend who will let you say your child's name, cry an ocean of tears and say all those "crazy" things that you think about after your child dies. In this way you become reoriented to this new life without the physical presence of your child – although he/she is always with you in your heart and memory.

This is what Compassionate Friends is all about. Parents and siblings who are further along in their grief, reaching back and helping newly bereaved parents and siblings find their way through the maze of grief. Reach out and take a hand... you need not walk alone.

Peace,
Helen Bash
(as quoted in the Valley Forge TCF Chapter's January 2021 newsletter)



<https://gatheringplaceevent.com/>

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.

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:



From Mary Anne Macko- In memory of My Boys in Spirit, Chris and Matt. Also in Honor of all our wonderful volunteers, who do all they do in memory of their loved ones in spirit 😊



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

Chapter Treasurer – Lisa Dechant

Chapter Secretary – Gail Blase

Assistant Secretary –

Mary Anne Macko

Newsletter Editor/Webmaster –

Linda Stauffer

Membership Outreach-

Memorial Garden Chairperson –

Theresa Sitko

Committee members – Dianna Cox,

Diane Gurecki, Barbara Reboratti,

Lynne Rainey, Donna Hesse

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
267-379-0429**

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



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

Support Group Meetings are Sept 12 and Oct 10
At The Gathering Place, Quakertown, PA

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.

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