

The Compassionate Friends

April 2018

Serving Upper Bucks and Montgomery Counties





The Compassionate Friends Quakertown Chapter proudly presents its Memorial Garden Dedication.

The celebration will be on Sunday, April 29 at 2:00pm at the garden in James Memorial Park.

Please let us know if you plan to celebrate with us by filling out the RSVP form emailed to you, emailing MemorialGardenTCF@gmail.com, signing up at the support meeting, or leaving a message at 267-380-0130.

The Details of the Dedication

When: April 29th at 2:00pm (rain or shine)

Where: James Memorial Park; Ridge Road; Sellersville, PA (take 309 and exit on Ridge Road, turn away from the hospital. At the light, turn left onto Ridge Road. The park is on the right about 1 mile down).

Our Garden Dedication will include speakers & a celebration cake. There will also be commemorative items for sale (cash & checks only). Bring your own chairs or blankets for your family to sit on. We absolutely cannot wait for this special day. Thank you for



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.

Next meeting April 10, May 8

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

Our Support Group Meetings are the 2 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

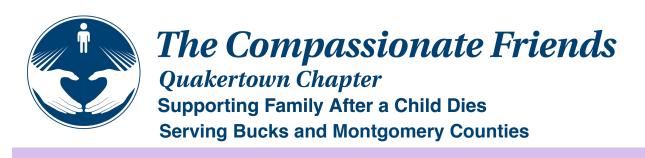
Quakertown, PA 18951

Chapter Info Line: (267)380-0130
contact@TCFQuakertownpa.org

website: www.tcfquakertownpa.org

"The world loves closure, loves a thing that can, as they say, be gotten through. This is why it comes as a great surprise to find that loss is forever, that two decades after the event there are those occasions when something in you cries out at the continual presence of an absence."

—Anna Quindlen



About Our Chapter

Chapter Leader:

Ginny Leigh-Manuell **Treasurer:** Crystal Hunter **Secretary:** Gail Blase

Chapter Librarian: Theresa Sitko Newsletter : Linda Stauffer Website: Linda Stauffer **Steering Committee:** Mary Anne Macko Linda Stauffer Theresa Sitko

Carol Graham Lynette Lampmann Barbara Reboratti Gail Blase

Mary Catherine Neiderstock Celeste Nice Sheri & Bob Albro

Remembrance & Thank You Cards:

Lynette Lampmann Kelly Logan Mary Catherine Neiderstock Iennifer Pini

TCF National Office:

877-969-0010

www.compassionatefriends.org

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

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



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 is 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 meet¬ing. We please contact the newsletter editor by email: 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 your 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

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

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 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

OUR CHILDREN REMEMBERED

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

- **4/1 Eric Ervin**, son of Linda & Rich Ervin
- **4/1 Joani Freeman,** daughter of David & Donna Freeman
- **4/5 Benjamin Martin**, son of Kristine Fallows
- **4/7 Joneric "EJ" Perullo**, grandson of Suzanne & Tom Kwan
- 4/8 Cole Ferdock, son of Kelly Ferdock
- **4/11 Michael Johnson**, son of David & Donna Freeman; brother of Dorene Elwell
- **4/12 Steven Ketterer**, son of Steven & Gail Ketterer
- **4/13 Kelly Eisenhart-Schmittinger**, daughter of Nancy Eisenhardt, sister of Dana Hutchinson
- **4/14 Farrald Lee III**, brother of Kendra Stenack
- **4/15 Jeffrey Carpenter**, son of Steve Carpenter
- 4/15 Ben Smith, son of Nick Wyllie
- **4/17 Patricia Loughrey**, daughter of Desiree Loughrey
- **4/18 Tristan Engarde**, son of Edward & Lisa Engarde
- **4/19 Benjamin Culton**, son of Mark & Barb Culton
- **4/19 Matthew Hawk**, son of Carol Hawk
- **4/20 Todd Iatarola**, son of Rhonda latarola & nephew of Sandy Bittenbender
- **4/20 Kevin Cannon**, son of Barb Cannon

- **4/24 Vivenne Martin**, daughter of Justin & Mary Martin; granddaughter of James & Catherine McFadden
- 4/25 Tony Kulp, son of Mary Ann Kulp
- **4/29 Christopher Court**, son of Caroline & Tim Court
- **4/29 Jessica Roth**, daughter of Wilbur & Carol Roth



TO MY SISTER

You touched us all, you loved us all, Forever giving, forever caring, Forever forgiving.

Never wanting in return.

Blessed are those who shared your life Rich are those who carry your memories.

Please rest now; your chores we will finish.

Till we meet again ...

By Cindy Keltz

Arlington Heights, IL

Our Children Remembered on the Anniversary of their Death

April Anniversaries

4/1 - Carla Taylor, daughter of Else Ridgeway

4/3 - Tim DeCoursey, brother of Kimberly Flagello

4/4 - Leah Corrine, daughter of Doug & Anita Brown

4/5 - Kelly Eisenhart-Schmittinger, daughter of

Nancy Eisenhart; sister of Dana

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

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

4/6 - Laim Williamson, son of Erin & Daniel Williamson

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

4/10 - Rich Hollabaugh, son of Linda Hollabaugh

4/10 - Katherine Hurley, daughter of Jennifer & Zachary Hurley

4/10 - Joey Acker, son of Anne Marie Acker

4/11 - Jordan Campbell, son of Marci Borits

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

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

4/14 - Cynthia Cole, daughter of Hugh & Marie Madden

4/14 - Sarah Parvin, daughter of Keith & Sandy Parvin; niece of Kim Eubanks

4/15 - Brooke Miller, daughter of Beth Miller

4/17 - Jason Reall, son of Steven & Barbara Reall; brother of Jennifer

4/17 - Cpl. Elliot Teisler, son of Roberta & Daniel Teisler

4/19 - Allan Afflerbach, son of Herman & Janice Afflerbach

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

4/19 - Michael Morgan, son of Deb & Ray Vrtis

4/20 - Gary Zemitis, son of Lynne Bowers

4/20 - Andrew Shadle, son of Barbara Shadle

4/20 - Frank Voce, son of Frank & Anna Voce

4/20 - Craig Zakeosian, son of Mike Zakeosian

4/22 - **Donald Cass, Sr.**, brother of Brian & Trish

Cass; Wendy & Scott Ramage

4/22 - **Adam Tomlinson**, son of Lynn Miller & John Tomlinson, Jr.

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

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

4/26 - Brian Lambert, son of Richard & Alberta Lambert

4/27 - Kristy Bender, daughter of Kathy & Frank Bender

4/27 - Richard Carver, Jr., brother of Carla Clark

4/28 - Scott Newell, son of Carol Newell

4/28 - Ronald Phillips, son of Richard & Theresa Phillips

4/30 - Krysta Henkin, daughter of Martin & Kathleen Shea

Flowers - Word Search

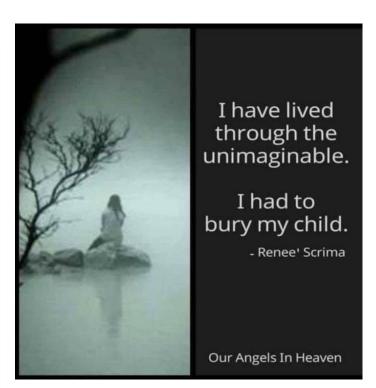
Try to search for all the flowers such as Daisy, Jasmine and Rose. The words in this word search are hidden across and down, no backwards.



CROCUS DAHLIA DAISY

JASMINE LILAC LILY MIMOSA NARCISSUS ORCHID PANSY

ROSE THISTLE TULIP



OUR HIBACHI ANGEL BY GAIL BLASE



Katey died of a heroin overdose on June 13th, 2012. She was twenty-five years old. We'd planned a dinner out together, to celebrate how well she'd had been doing with her recovery. We were finally getting our old Katey back. We had no idea that she had relapsed. When I got to her house, there was no answer when I knocked. I used my key to enter, called her name and got no response. Then, I found her lifeless in her bed; she had been dead for six to eight hours. Needless to say, Katey's death was the beginning of the worst time in my life. The years after that were so hard. Holidays, birthdays, family gatherings and weddings left a gaping hole in my heart. I kept thinking she should be here. Our lives were changed forever. I went to various grief counseling groups, where many people talked about "signs" they had received from their loved ones who'd passed. I wanted so much to get a sign from Katey. At last, about five months after her passing, I was preparing a Sunday school lesson about Joseph interpreting the Pharaoh's dreams. I fell asleep while reading, and that was the night I had my first "dream," which was more like a visitation. As the dream ended, Katey said to me: "Look up. Look down. Look around. Look to God." I immediately woke up.

I think she was trying to tell me that she is still with us. She's everywhere we are. And then she proved it.

My sister, Dee, had a birthday and we celebrated it at Ooka, a Japanese restaurant in Doylestown, Pennsylvania. When the hibachi chef poured oil on the grill, the flames almost reached the ceiling. The grill got so hot that we were forced to move as far back as we could. Dee took pictures of the flames until they died down. When we looked at the photos later, there was a very clear image of an angel in the flames. She was there with us at the birthday party. Our angel, Katey, came to my birthday celebration last night! I know she did!





IT'S THE MUSIC THAT BONDS THE SOULS

The room you once lived in, Doesn't look the same.

The people who used to call you, Never mention your name.

The car you used to drive,

They may not make them anymore; And all the things you once treasured, Are boxed behind closet doors.

The clothes you set the trends by, Are surely out of date.

The people you owed money to, Have wiped away the slate.

Things have changed and changed again Since you went away,

But some things have remained the same Each and every day .. .

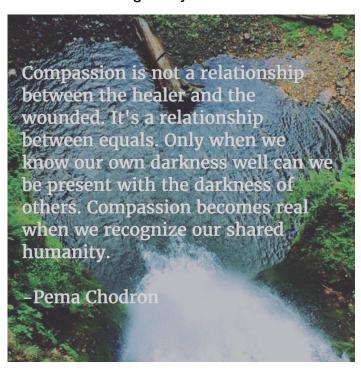
Like this aching in my heart, A scar that just won't heal,

Or the way a special song, Can change the way I feel.

Brother, you must know that the music Bonds us and will keep us close; Because secretly I know deep in my heart; It's the music you miss the most.

So let the world keep on turning, And time can take its toll. For as long as the music keeps playing You'll be

alive and dancing in my soul.



YOU WILL NEVER KNOW

You will never know

How much I loved being your big sister How much I loved looking out for you.

You will never know

How I would lie in bed late at night, And wait until you

were home.

You will never know

How I would pretend to be asleep, As I heard you say

goodnight to Fudge

And quietly pass by my door.

You will never know

How on that last night you left the house I waited wide awake listening for your familiar sound

But that sound never happened and you never

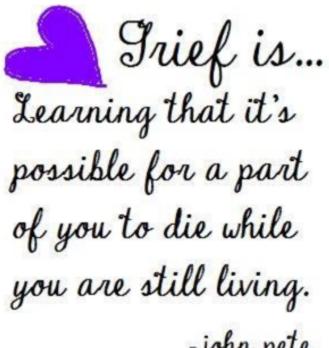
Passed by my door.

The house is so quiet now and the only sound

Is from myself—crying.

Because you will never know how much I miss

Being your big sister.



- john pete facebook.com/griefquotes



Thanks For The Offer, But I Don't Know What I Need!

We've all heard it before, from the well-meaning, tilted-head friends at the funeral and in the weeks to follow: "Let me know what you need." It is, of course, a kind and often well-intentioned offer, but there is one fatal flaw: it assumes you know what you need. To be fair, on the surface, this isn't an unreasonable expectation. If a person hasn't experienced the depths of grief or some other pit of despair, it can be hard to imagine that sometimes you are just so overwhelmed you can't figure out what you need.

The reality is, no one can meet the needs that may be most pressing in your mind or give you the things you want the most. This is why you may find yourself internally screaming the response, "Yes, I need you to bring my loved one back!" or "Yes, I need you to take away this pain!" every time someone asks you if there is anything you need or anything they can do. Thinking about any other needs can feel impossible and overwhelming. You may find that you feel like you're sinking, but it isn't clear what help would help you come back up for air.

We want to talk about this basic but complex challenge: how do you figure out what you need when you have no idea what you need?

First, remember your needs might not all look directly like grief needs. When a child dies, your life is shattered. One person disappears and it can feel like everything else falls out of place. We call those other things "secondary losses." Getting support from others is not always about that primary loss, often it is finding support for one of those secondary losses.

When you're feeling completely overwhelmed, it can be helpful to consider that you have needs in all the different areas of loss you are going through. In others, it may be emotional support – someone to let you cry, remember and listen without judgment. Finally, it may be just support related to your general well being — things and people who will help boost your mood and reconnect with yourself. As with many things in grief, it is helpful to take it step by step.

Each day we encourage you to increase your awareness around your greatest "pain points". These don't have to be

grief specific. Anything in your life that is a stressor may be part of your grief or making it more difficult to cope with your grief, so it is important to consider any needs that can ease your overall suffering in a given day. To do this, you will need to become aware of the moments in your day that cause the most pain, bring up complex emotions, are the most physically taxing, the most mentally taxing, and create the most stress. Write them down during the day, either on your phone or on a sheet of paper. If it is helpful, you may want to look at your needs in three categories:

Practical/logistical needs: Whether it is childcare, grocery shopping, filing taxes, mowing the lawn, etc, there is often countless concrete needs we have. Knowing what these are can make it easier to ask people in your support system for the help or take them up on an offer.

Grief needs: Though all needs may be connected to grief, some are certainly more explicitly so. You may realize your need is for people who you can share memories with, or someone to be comfortable with your tears. You may need someone who wants to help you memorialize your loved one or join you in advocacy work. Whatever the case, you may realize you are feeling very alone in honoring and remembering and it is time to reach out to others. Well-being needs: These needs fall somewhere outside of just the grief experience, and are things that simply help with our overall well-being. This can be anything from needing that push to get off the gym to needing someone to be social with (or at the very least, grab a coffee). It can be anything from painting to writing to photography that you know would boost your mood and well being, but that you keep avoiding.

These are just a few small examples. The important thing is to slowly begin increasing your daily self-awareness about what is difficult. At moments that you feel stressed or overwhelmed, make a note of what is creating that experience. At the end of a day, rather than just saying "this day is terrible," instead outline what has made it so challenging. As you do this over time, you may see trends emerging, areas big and small where some small help from others could make your days just a little bit easier.

Others are unable to provide support if you can't tell them what you need, so just knowing your needs is the first step to receiving support.

~ Submitted by Barbara j Reboratti with permission from "What's Your Grief."





The Compassionate Friends Quakertown Chapter Memorial Walk & Butterfly Release June 9, 2018

Location: James Memorial Park; Ridge Road; Sellersville, PA

Name:	Phone Number:	
Please list first & last name of p	erson(s) to be remembered at the Walk:	
ľ		

Mail Checks to:
TCF Quakertown
PO Box 1013
Quakertown PA 18914
Payable: TCF Quakertown
Memo: Walk

HOITIOI FRANK	
Postmark Registration	by May 9
2018 to guarantee	items

** Shippir		not attending the walk, SHIRTS ONLY
	is additional:	\$5 for one shirt, \$10 for more shirts \$20
Address		
City:		
State:	Zip:	

Pre-Registration Cost	\$
Additional Donation	\$
** Shipping	\$
Total Enclosed	\$

Questions: 267-380-0130 or contact@tcfquakertownpa.org

You may also order online and pay with your credit card at tcfquakertownpa.org

You may bring one photo of your child/sibling/loved one (5X7 or smaller) to post on our memory board display. You will take the photo home when you leave. NO guarantee that photos left behind will be returned.

<u>ltem</u>	Quantity of Items	Price per Item	Quantity x Price = Total Item Cost
One (1) Butterfly		\$15	\$
	SINGLE SI	HIRTS	
Shirts Youth Small - Adult XL		\$20	\$
Shirts Adult XXL - XXXL		\$23	\$
	PACKAC	SES	
Packages (1 shirt & 1 Butterfly) Youth – Adult XL		\$30	\$
Packages (1 shirt & 1 Butterfly) Adult XXL - XXXL		\$33	s

Please List Quantity of Shirt Sizes in each Box. Shirts not available until day of walk.

Youth Small	Youth Medium	Youth Large	
Adult Small	Adult Medium	Adult Large	
Adult X-Large	Adult XX-Large	Adult XXX-Large	

 $({\sf Add\ all\ lines\ together})\ \underline{\sf Pre-Registration\ Cost}$

\$





The Compassionate Friends

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

The Compassionate Friends Quakertown Chapter

Memorial Walk & Butterfly Release June 9, 2018

Remember When

Location: James Memorial Park; Ridge Road; Sellersville, PA (Rain or Shine)

This walk is the chapter's annual time to gather, reflect, and remember loved ones who have died. While our chapter supports parents, siblings, and grandparents who have experienced the death of a child, sibling, or grandchild, the walk is open to all.

Order Butterflies & T-shirts Online at visit tcfquakertownpa.org or request a form at contact@tcfquakertownpa.org

Pre-registration is due by May 9th

Day of the Event

Come enjoy lunch Hot Dogs, Chips, Water & Baked Goods





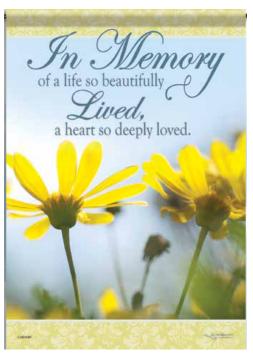
Registration Pick Up – 1pm Walk Begins – 2pm Program & Butterfly release following the walk

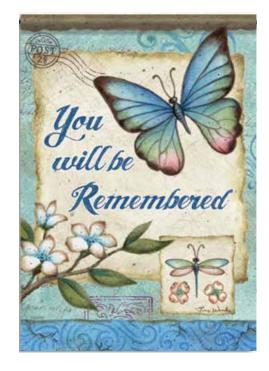


Raffle Basket Tickets Sold from Noon – 2pm Baskets Close after the walk Winners Announced after Butterfly Release 1 for \$1 or 6 for \$5 Silent Auction Open Noon – 2pm
Last Bid at 2pm
Winners Announced after before Butterfly
Release. Pay via PayPal Friends and Family,
Credit Card via PayPal, or Check
Must be present to win

50/50 Raffle

Shirts not available until day of walk.





Garden Flags available at the Memorial Walk in June

Texas RoadHouse Fundraiser May 3, 2018

Forget making dinner on Thursday, May 3rd!

PROCEEDS GO TO

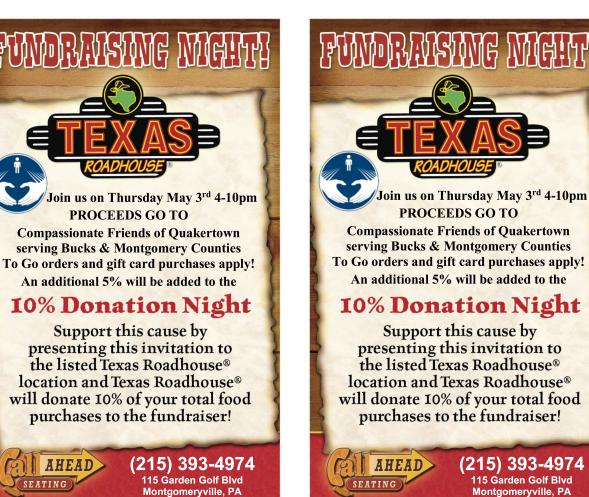
SEATING

THEY WALK BESIDE US EVERY DAY,

UNSEEN, UNHEARD, BUT always NEAR, till loved, STILL MISSED,

AND very dear.

Invite your friends! Come on down to Texas Roadhouse from 4-10pm at the Montgomeryville Location (115 Garden Golf Blvd. Montgomeryville, PA 19454) and our chapter will get not only 10% but an extra 5% of all sales (including take out and gift cards). We cannot get the donation if you use a coupon, unfortunately. Take the flyer in this newsletter and print a bunch and give them to your friends! See you for dinner!



One to use and one to share



Refreshments for March

Crystal Hunter, in memory of her brother Justin Hunter; Theresa Sitko, in memory of her brother, Patrick Pettie;; Joan Asprakis, in memory of her son Demetrios "Jimmy" Asprakis, Celeste Nice in memory of her son David. In loving memory of my Christopher's birthday and in loving memory of my Matthew Trauger, who so looked up to his older brother. Loved you then; love you still! Always have and always will!" - Mom forever, Mary Anne Macko 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.

A special thank you to Lynette Lampmann, Kelly Logan, Jennifer Pini and Mary Catherine Neiderstock for the Remembrance that you receive. They do this in remembrance of their children/ siblings, Shawn (Lynette), 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 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 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. **Jeanne Hofman** in memory of her son, **Scott Silver**, and
grandson, **Kyle Silver** -- Miss and love you both so
very much. You are in my heart forever. Love Mom/
Meme

Charles & Betty Hottenstein in memory of their daughter, Tracy Elizabeth Hottenstein -- Gone too soon, but forever in our hearts! Happy 45th Birthday. Love always, Mom & Dad

Arlene Peters in memory of her daughter, **Sundai Marie Peters**

Marie Madden in Memory of her daughter Cindy Cole.

Gone too soon! Forever in my heart! Love always, Mom

Without their generosity in giving to a good cause we would not be able to continue reaching out to newly bereaved parents and families with our Outreach packet and newsletters.



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			Checks payable to: TCF Quakertown Chapter			
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		Mail to: PO Box 1013, Quakertown, PA 18951 Love Gift Message:				
		Memorial Walk 8	& Butterfly Release			
		General operation	ng expenses			
Your Name:						
Email or Telephone:_						
Address:			Treasurer Use Only			
			Cash/Check # Amount			
			D Q T N			



Next Meetings April 10, May 8



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.