



The Compassionate Friends

February 2018 *Serving Upper Bucks and Montgomery Counties*

That First Compassionate Friends Meeting

This article is for those of you who are working up the courage to attend your first TCF meeting. Recently some people who came talked about the effect their first meeting had on them and why they continue to attend. One couple said they felt so drained and unsettled they could hardly sleep and just dragged through work the next day. Another, a teacher, said that after her first meeting she made arrangements to have a substitute teacher for her class the day following the second meeting she was going to attend. She knew she wouldn't feel up to teaching after coming to TCF. One man said he got up on the Tuesday morning of the week TCF met dreading having to go. He dreaded it all day, naming to himself many good reasons why he couldn't be there. Then he said he always felt better after the meetings and was glad he had made himself go. These examples show why we say, *"Try TCF two or three times before you give up on it."*

You may be asking yourself why someone would willingly attend a meeting that had such a seemingly bad effect and apparently left them more upset than when they came. Psychologists say we need to talk, feel and act in order to resolve grief in a positive way, so the lasting effects are beneficial to our functioning well and to our eventual healing. To heal we must have the courage to face reality and to change.

People continue to come to TCF, even if their first meeting turned them off, because they sense these things and they see a group of people who are individually coping and struggling to make peace with one of the worst traumas they will ever encounter. Initially they may feel worse because for two hours they've dealt with their grief in a concentrated way. They haven't been able to avoid it, push it to one side, be distracted by other things or deny the death of their child. They've told their story, they've listened to other people tell theirs, they've hurt for others, for themselves and for a world in which death has inverted the natural order of things. They've gotten a bucket load of grief all at once. No wonder they feel overwhelmed.

For many, the idea of group grieving is uncomfortable. They've treated their grief as personal (and it is), they've been self-centered (most griever are), they've wrapped themselves in a cocoon of not being understood and feeling different from normal people, and they've bought society's myth that the repression of feelings is a sign of strength. Then here they are in a group of strangers who're spilling their guts. If they continue to attend, they may find "those people" aren't really strangers. They share a common bond. They, too, may have been uncomfortable at first, but as time went on, they found that a TCF meeting is the one place where it is safe to crawl out of that cocoon and talk about those unusual, crazy thoughts and actions that plague them.

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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 February 13

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

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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



The Compassionate Friends

Quakertown Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

Serving Bucks and Montgomery Counties

About Our Chapter

Chapter Leader:

Ginny Leigh-Manuell

Treasurer: Crystal Hunter

Secretary: Gail Blase

Chapter Librarian: Theresa Sitko

Newsletter : Linda Stauffer

Steering Committee:

Mary Anne Macko

Linda Stauffer

Theresa Sitko

Carol Graham

Lynette Lampmann

Barbara Reboratti

Gail Blase

Mary Catherine Neiderstock

Celeste Nice

Remembrance & Thank You Cards:

Lynette Lampmann

Kelly Logan

Mary Catherine Neiderstock

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www.compassionatefriends.org

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

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

Support Group Meetings

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

As a reminder to families that would like to attend a support meeting. Please allow yourself at least 3 or 4 meetings of attendance to determine if they are for

you. It may take a few meetings before you are able to talk about your loved one and that is understandable. What you say at our meetings is kept in the meeting, you can cry, hug, talk about how you are feeling freely. Our meetings are for parents, grandparents and siblings in grade 9 or above and adult siblings.

Your Friends at TCF Quakertown Chapter

Library Books

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

Newsletter Errors and Omissions

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

About This Newsletter

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

If you no longer wish to receive the newsletter please contact the newsletter editor by email: newsletter@tcfquakertownpa.org PLEASE NOTE: If you are moving or your email has changed please notify the newsletter editor so that we can update your information and you continue to receive the newsletter. If the newsletter is returned to us either via mail or your email bounces back and you have not notified us you will be removed from the mailing list.

OUR CHILDREN REMEMBERED

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

2/3 - Robert Kyle Rainey, son of Lynne Rainey
2/3 - Heather Schaefer, daughter of Linda Schaefer
2/4 - Eric Martin, son of Daniel Martin; brother of Mikaela Martin
2/4 - Lynda Mohlenhoff, daughter of Frank & Peggy Posivak
2/5 - Robert Bowen, son of Agnes & Robert Bowen
2/5 - Jonathan McCormick, son of Jacqueline & Bob Daniel
2/6 - Stephen Fuhrmeister, son of Lisa Fuhrmeister; nephew of Renee Hudoka
2/9 - Katey Blasé, daughter of Gail Blasé, sister of Hiliary Blasé
2/9 - Dario Datis, son of Sherie Datis
2/9 - Derick M. Lawley, brother of Tara Lawley-Bergey
2/10 - Jeffrey Broxteman, son of Roger & Janet Broxteman
2/10 - Shawn Lampmann, son of Lynette Lampmann
2/12 - David Schaller, son of Raymond Schaller
2/14 - Marc Falcone, son of Dominic & Carolyn Falcone
2/14 - Joshua Sotak, son of Mary Catherine Nederosteck
2/15 - Kristin Statutu, daughter of Henry & Maryann Statuti
2/16 - Alesandria Gasior, daughter of Linda & Dan Brophy
2/16 - Chris Guidotti, son of Nancy & Al Guidotti
2/16 - Scott Newell, son of Carol Newell

2/18 - Tracey Elizabeth Hottenstein, daughter of Charlie & Betty Hottenstein
2/18 - John Inscho, son of Peggy Daggitt; brother of Diane Anderson
2/18 - John Ruch, son of Christina Dunning
2/19 - Bill Molko, son of Ellen Molko
2/19 - Will Moyer, son of Sue Simon
2/20 - Kinsey Duvall, son of Craig Duvall
2/20 - Scott Naber, brother of Anje Naber
2/25 - Tammy Moore, daughter of Tom & Sandra Moore; sister of Tom, Tara, & Thad
2/26 - Cpl. Barton Humlhanz, son of Michele & Don Carey
2/26 - Joey Siedlecki, son of Joe Siedlecki & Monica Siedlecki
2/28 - Jason Tyler, son of Mitzi Foulke
2/28 - Sullivan Burd, son of Jessica & Glenn Burd
2/28 - Matt Cardinal, son of Lynn Cardinal; brother of Mike Cardinal



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Another thing that may bother people is that some TCF members actually laugh and socialize. Laughter is a great balm for tension and indicates that a certain amount of healing is taking place. People at TCF are in all stages of grief. Their laughter and socializing means they're making progress. It shows that all bereaved parents may one day want to laugh again, that grief will not be all encompassing.

Because you are so raw and vulnerable since your child died, certain meetings may anger you or hit your most tender spots. TCF does have off-nights when nothing comes over as intended, the speaker isn't on target, the sharing groups don't jell, the vibes are all wrong. Don't judge the possible benefits by one attendance. Consider, too that it might have been an off-night for you, or maybe you are attending too soon after your child's death and need to wait a while before coming back.

Time alone will not heal the wounds of the bereaved. It will distance you from the event, but it will not make you well. Acknowledging the death and the possibility for positive change, actively working to resolve the upheaval caused by the death and find new avenues and persons to invest in and love will produce healing. TCF attempts to help as you reshuffle your life and work through your pain. Grief is hard work; that's what TCF is all about. If, after attending several meetings, you feel TCF isn't for you, stop coming. It truly isn't for everyone, but the group is there if you need them, whenever you need them.

Elizabeth B. Estes, TCF

We Need Not Walk Alone, the national magazine of The Compassionate Friends.

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Our Children Remembered on the Anniversary of their Death

2/1 – Myrl Packer III, son of Anna Packer
2/3 – Joseph Cavataio, son of Libby Cavataio
2/6 – Jonathan McCormick, son of Jacqueline & Bob Daniel
2/7 – Stephanie Kissel, daughter of Barbara & Bob Krantz
2/7 – Douglas Hofmackel, son of Marie & Ken Hofmackel
2/8 – Blake Smith, son of Colleen & Robert Bendesky
2/8 – Philip D. Calabrette, Jr., son of Lynn Calabrette
2/9 – Dawn Cannon, daughter of Joanne & David Cannon
2/9 – Anne-Marie Acker, daughter of Anne Marie Acker
2/10 – Megan Eschenburg, daughter of Gary & Peggy Eschenburg
2/10 – Joshua Taylor Fehrle, son of Thelma Dobson; brother of Riannon Harris
2/10 – Lisa Kumiega-Lewis, daughter of Alan & Arlene Vogel
2/10 – Christopher Harrison, son of Berry Harrison
2/10 – Brenda Meehl, daughter of Patricia & Harold Hunsicker
2/11 – Rachel Behrig, daughter of David & Kimberly Behrig
2/12 – Robert Bowen, son of Agnes & Robert Bowen
2/12 – James Monahan II, son of Kim Kleinsmith
2/12 – Lisa Dawn Weatherly, daughter of Norma Jean Weatherly
2/13 – Shawn Lampmann, son of Lynette Lampmann
2/13 – Jake Paternoster, son of Mike & Ruth Paternoster
2/13 – Rebecca VanLuvanee, daughter of Nanette & Daniel Helms
2/14 – Derick Schubert, son of Anne & John Schubert; brother of Marie
2/15 – Randy Angstadt, son of Paul & Barbara Angstadt
2/15 – Tracey Elizabeth Hottenstein, daughter of Charlie & Betty Hottenstein
2/15 – Brittani James, daughter of Christine James; sister of Shannon Short
2/16 – Benjamin Michael Albro, son of Sherri & Bob Albro
2/16 – Stormy Weaver, daughter of Nathan & Amber Weaver
2/17 – Vivienne Martin, daughter of Justin & Mary Martin; granddaughter of James & Catherine McFadden
2/18 – Rodney Bossert, son of Julia Bossert Roush
2/18 – Gregory Hallman, nephew of Mary Pat Hallman
2/18 – Kevin Short, son of Fran & Lynne Short
2/22 – Sarah Souder, daughter of Dean & Kay Souder
2/24 – David Cassel, brother of Carol Lamonte
2/24 – George Davish, son of Sheryle & Geroge Davish
2/24 – David Grebe, brother of Sue Grebe
2/25 – Shane Bowen, son of Agnes & Robert Bowen



2/25 – Daniel Murphy, son of Merry Murphy
2/27 – Brian Hackmaster, son of Barbara Hackmaster; brother of Amy Hackmaster
2/27 – Willam Nemec, Jr., son of Margo Staats
2/27 – Christopher Ulmer, son of James & Patricia Ulmer
2/28 – Justice Goodwin, son of Holly & Keith Goodwin



Garden News

Plaque Update



Visit the James Memorial Park
1027 Ridge Rd., West Rockhill
Twp., PA (Sellersville)

The second batch of plaques has been ordered. These, plus the first batch, will be applied once the weather warms up and we can power wash the Memorial Garden. Once that happens, we will have an announcement so you can see your loved one's plaque.

The next ordering deadline will be announced at the Garden Dedication. The Dedication date will be announced soon.

We will continuously need donations towards the Garden for upkeep and supplies. Love Gifts are donations made in memory of a child or sibling. As always, they are the Chapter's main monetary support, and are tax deductible. The Love Gift form can be found in each newsletter.

Questions about the garden can be emailed to Crystal at MemorialGardenTCF@gmail.com

“The mindset of loss of a loved one is to understand that the loss will never be undone. You must live with it, like it or not. But, to live well, you must turn that loss into something positive. That way, you can become the best version of yourself; scarred, flawed and unstoppable”
— Val Uchendu

LOOKING FOR a few good volunteers! In 2017, the Raffle Basket and Silent Auction was the largest one we have had in years! It is always more fun and entertaining with a variety of topics and hobbies. I would like to have 2-3 people who are willing to help ask for baskets and donations. We have papers to hand out, and we would have maybe 2-3 meetings. All donations are due, in my hands, by May 22, 2018. If you are interested, please email treasurer@tcfquakertownpa.org and I will get back to you!

Thank you,
Crystal Hunter
Raffle Basket Committee Chair
Treasurer



**COPING WITH GRIEF THROUGH
PUZZLES**

Side effects of grief such as anxiety or post-traumatic stress can be paralyzing. I went through this after my husband died and two and half years later after my son died. I found myself blindsided by anxiety and grief so deep that I just could not cope. One day while I was upset, I picked up a Word Search Puzzle book. I began doing the puzzle through tear blurred eyes. It took a bit but I slowly calmed down. Turns out you can't focus on a puzzle and be upset at the same time! By the time I finished the puzzle I was calm again and able to cope. So the next time I felt unable to cope, I took a break and picked up a Sudoku puzzle. Again, I found it worked wonders to deflect my thoughts from my grief. I took it a step further and placed puzzle books everywhere; at work, the car, my purse, and every room in the house. I found the easier the puzzle was to solve, the faster I would calm down and the harder the puzzle was to solve my thoughts had just enough time to creep back in.

To cope with sleepless nights and grief, I read myself to sleep. I couldn't think and grieve if my mind was occupied with reading.

So next time you feel unable to cope, try a puzzle or pick up a book. We put a puzzle in the newsletter to get you started.

Ginny Leigh-Manuell

Strange Inheritance?

I discovered a show on Fox Business called Strange Inheritance, maybe you've watched it. It shows the many things people inherit like a Rembrandt painting they thought was junk or a lifelong collection of lead toy soldiers, comic books and baseball cards. Its a fun show. It got me thinking about the inheritance I will leave to my surviving daughter.

There are many things I've saved that belonged to my daughter Katie. Her favorite things, a class ring, her swimming medals, items of

clothes, a stuffed animal, jewelry, photos, videos and so much more that I cannot bear to give away. What will happen to her stories and her journals? What will happen to these things when I am gone? They won't have the same meaning to her sister as they have to me. Will she throw it all out?

She doesn't have any children to give these things to, so they will remember her sister. It's the end of our family tree. No one will every open ancestry and search for an ancestor again. My

parents, my grandparents will not be remembered. They will truly be just a name on a tombstone. Sometimes I lay awake at night thinking of this.

I know my daughter can't keep everything I've saved but I cannot bear the thought of it all ending up in the trash.

Linda Stauffer

WINTER WORD SEARCH



WORDS TO FIND:



Amy Mascott of teachmama.com for Scholastic



Patti Dille, Peyton Heart Project Ambassador for Telford, PA

Patti Dille is from Telford, PA. Patti will be a Peyton Heart Project ambassador for Telford, PA until January 31, 2019. In Patti's words:

September 23rd, 2014 was an ordinary day but turned into a day that will forever be in my memory. I am a suicide loss survivor. I hate putting labels on people, but I now feel I own this one.

I lost my son, Matthew Ryan Dille, to suicide on September 26th, of 2014. Matt was funny, witty, smart and handsome. Behind Matt's beautiful smile, his laughter and jokes, he hid his anxiety and depression. He suffered in silence and did not talk to others about his feelings or internal pain.

After I lost Matt, I felt I had to do more to help myself, my family and others. So, I became a member of The Montgomery County Suicide Prevention Taskforce and I became a QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer) trainer.

I do not know how I initially found out about The Peyton Heart Project. But, when I heard about it, I knew it was the perfect fit for me. Not only do I know how to crochet, but I also lead a Stitch

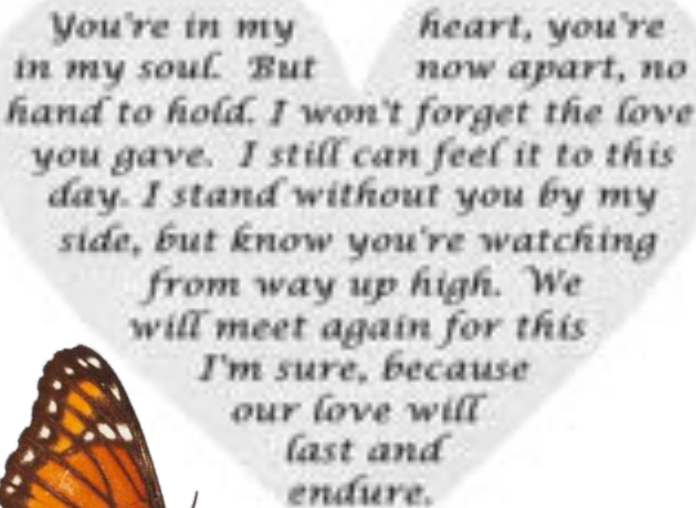
and Chat group at the library.

One of the first things I did was make some Peyton hearts and bring them to the Taskforce. I remember handing a Peyton heart out to everyone at this meeting. I shared my Matt story and told them about the Peyton Heart Project. Everyone loved them! I asked if I could incorporate them at the end of each of my QPR trainings. It was the perfect way of ending a difficult talk. I could offer kindness, hope and awareness to others.

The Taskforce gave me the title of Chair of the Kindness Committee. We began to have Peyton Heart Days. We would offer afternoons or evenings and ask others to make Peyton hearts or help tag them. I even created a felt heart for others to make if they could not crochet. I have personally been asked to attend many events i.e.; I have been to churches, suicide awareness/prevention events, Out of Darkness walks, behavioral health hospitals, college events through Active Minds and many more. Our task force was even allowed to put Peyton hearts around all 13 of the walking/bike trails in Montgomery County this September. September is National

Suicide Prevention month, a perfect time to spread Peyton hearts. I have had the privilege of meeting Jill Kubin, The Peyton Heart Project founder, and Sue Harris, co-founder. I was thrilled when they made a special tag in memory of Matt for me. I always watch Facebook posts to see who is posting, their comments and where the Peyton hearts are found. It especially touches my heart when I see a heart that has a Matt Dille tag on it. I just had the pleasure of traveling to India and was able to leave some there.

I am a full-time volunteer now who is passionate about The Peyton Heart Project! I would love to become a Peyton Heart Project ambassador. I have a small team of friends that helps me make Peyton hearts. Volunteering has become the best thing to help me through my grief journey. It is my mission to help others in suicide awareness and prevention. I will continue to make Peyton hearts and spread the word about this wonderful kindness mission to offer kindness, hope, and suicide awareness throughout the world.



You're in my heart, you're in my soul. But now apart, no hand to hold. I won't forget the love you gave. I still can feel it to this day. I stand without you by my side, but know you're watching from way up high. We will meet again for this I'm sure, because our love will last and endure.

Miscarriage or loss of child sympathy wishes gift



Precious Child
Now a
Forever Child

There will always be dreams of joyful times. You were wanted to stay longer so you could be watched to grow into all that you could be. God now has your Little Soul in His keeping, safe in the hollow of His hand.

An Ugly Pair of Shoes

I am wearing a pair of shoes.
They are ugly shoes.
Uncomfortable Shoes.
I hate my shoes.
Each day I wear them, and each day I wish I had another pair.
Some days my shoes hurt so bad that I do not think I can take another step.
Yet, I continue to wear them.
I get funny looks wearing these shoes.
They are looks of sympathy.
I can tell in others eyes that they are glad they are my shoes and not theirs.
They never talk about my shoes.
To learn how awful my shoes are might make them uncomfortable.
To truly understand these shoes you must walk in them.
But, once you put them on, you can never take them off.
I now realize that I am not the only one who wears these shoes.
There are many pairs in the world.
Some women are like me and ache daily as they try and walk in them.
Some, have learned how to walk in them so they don't hurt quite as much.
Some, have worn the shoes so long that days will go by, before they think of how much they hurt.
No woman deserves to wear these shoes.
Yet, because of the shoes I am a stronger woman.
These shoes have given me the strength to face anything.
They have made me who I am.
I will forever walk in the shoes of a woman who has lost a child.

~Author Unknown~

I thought of you with love
today, but that is nothing
new.
I thought about you
yesterday, and days before
that too.
I think of you in silence. I
often speak your name.
All I have are memories,
and your picture in a
frame.
Your memory is my
keepsake, with which I'll
never part.
God has you in His
keeping... I have you in my
heart.





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

Refreshments for January

Carol Graham, Theresa Sitko and Dianne Cox *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 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..



LOVE GIFTS

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

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

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

Birth Date _____ Death Date (Angel I

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

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

Checks payable to: TCF Quakertown Chapter

Mail to: PO Box 1013, Quakertown, PA 18951

Love Gift Message:

Your Name: _____

Email or Telephone: _____

Address: _____

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

