



The Compassionate Friends

Supporting Family After a Child Dies



Serving Upper Bucks and Montgomery Counties February 2017

Quakertown Chapter
 PO Box 1013
 Quakertown, PA 18951
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 Linda Stauffer
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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.

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.



Join us at our monthly meeting on February 14th as Mary Ann and Carol lead the group on relaxation and meditation!

Breathing Exercises

By Andrew Weil, M.D.

"Practicing regular, mindful breathing can be calming and energizing and can even help with stress-related health problems ranging from panic attacks to digestive disorders." – Andrew Weil, MD

Since breathing is something we can control and regulate, it is a useful tool for achieving a relaxed and clear state of mind. Try the following exercises to relax and reduce stress.

Exercise: 4-7-8

This exercise is utterly simple, takes almost no time, requires no equipment and can be done anywhere. Although you can do the exercise in any position, sit with your back straight while learning the exercise. Place the tip of your tongue against the ridge of tissue just behind your upper front teeth, and keep it there through the entire exercise. You will be exhaling through your mouth

around your tongue; try pursing your lips slightly if this seems awkward.

- Exhale completely through your mouth, making a whoosh sound.
 - Close your mouth and inhale quietly through your nose to a mental count of four.
 - Hold your breath for a count of seven.
 - Exhale completely through your mouth, making a whoosh sound to a count of eight.
 - This is one breath. Now inhale again and repeat the cycle three more times for a total of four breaths.
- Note that you always inhale quietly through your nose and exhale audibly through your mouth. The tip of your tongue stays in position the whole time. Exhalation takes twice

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.

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.

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

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as long as inhalation. The absolute time you spend on each phase is not important; the ratio of 4:7:8 is important. If you have trouble holding your breath, speed the exercise up but keep to the ratio of 4:7:8 for the three phases. With practice you can slow it all down and get used to inhaling and exhaling more and more deeply.

This exercise is a natural tranquilizer for the nervous system. Unlike tranquilizing drugs, which are often effective when you first take them but then lose their power over time, this exercise is subtle when you first try it but gains in power with repetition and practice. Do it at least twice a day. You cannot do it too frequently. Do not do more than four breaths at one time for the first month of practice. Later, if you wish, you can extend it to eight breaths. If you feel a little lightheaded when you first breathe this way, do not be concerned; it will pass.

Once you develop this technique by practicing it every day, it will be a very useful tool that you will always have with you. Use it whenever anything upsetting happens - before you react. Use it whenever you are aware of internal tension. Use it to help you fall asleep. This exercise cannot be recommended too highly. Everyone can benefit from it.

Exercise: Breath Counting

If you want to get a feel for this challenging work, try your hand at breath counting, a deceptively simple technique much used in Zen practice. Sit in a comfortable position with the spine straight and head inclined slightly forward. Gently close your eyes and take a few deep breaths. Then let the breath come naturally without trying to influence it. Ideally it will be quiet and slow, but depth and rhythm may vary. To begin the exercise, count "one" to yourself as you exhale. The next time you exhale, count "two," and so on up to "five." Then begin a new cycle, counting "one" on the next exhalation. Never count higher than "five," and count only when you exhale. You will know your attention has wandered when you find yourself up to "eight," "12," even "19." Try to do 10 minutes of this form of meditation. ~~~

Submitted by Mary Ann Macko in [loving memory of my sons in Spirit, Christopher and my Matthew \(Trauger\)](#)



A Birthday Wish

I know this day belongs to you
For upon this day you were born
But being apart on your special day
Leaves my heart shattered and torn

I wanted to give you a special gift
One that would surely last
Something to put a song in my heart
And dry away all the tears

I thought perhaps balloons or flowers
To put upon your grave
But I knew that eventually
They would just wither away

I thought about it long and hard
What gift would surely last
Something that you've never had
On your birthday in the past

I realized that such a gift
Couldn't come close to compare
To the grand celebration
That you must be having up there

So I'm sending you a birthday wish
From the bottom of my heart
To give me strength and courage
Every day that we're apart

I know you're happy in Heaven
with no sorrow, tears or pain
But sometimes I'm so lonesome
My tears fall like rain

So on your special day
My wish I send to you
Is someday I'll be with you
When my chores on earth are through

And as I carry on through the tears
Hold my wish close to your heart
For God will come and take me home
As long as I do my part

For now I must travel through life alone
For He isn't ready for me yet
But what a glorious reunion we'll have
When your smiling face I see

So on your birthday this year
My wish I send to you
Keep looking for me, don't give up
For someday I'll be there too.

submitted by Lynette Lampmann in memory of son
Shawn

A Compassionate Valentine

We remember Valentine's Day when we were happy there was so much love to give in our heart

But now our hearts are broken in two when a child that we loved so much had to part
The holidays never seem the same anymore as they did before in the past
We will always remember the good times we had and all of the beautiful memories that will last.

It's like a piece of our heart was taken away and it is a part that never mends
But the group that helped me out the most is the love and understanding from Compassionate Friends.

For all of our hearts were broken one day and we all have our own story to tell
We help each other out the best way we can every time I go there a little more of me gets well.

It is hard to believe there are so many broken hearts that had loved their children this much

A child who had meant so much in our lives who was always so gentle to our touch

I believe that God is taking care of our children for a while they have a new place to play

And that someday we will all be together again who knows it may be on Valentine's Day.

All of our tears come from the heart and the pain just never seems to end
You don't realize that there are so many

like you who understand and want to be your friend

So don't ever think you are alone there are so many that want to help and pray
And remember that our children are watching so try and have a nice Valentine's Day.

By Dee and Jack Heil
NE Philadelphia TCF
2-14-2016

THANKFUL

By Tanya Lord

Today I am thankful for tears
Though an ocean I have cried
They speak of our connection
Reminding me that love has not died

Today I am thankful for the memories
They brighten the road of grief
They remind me of love shared
And provide a small relief

Today I am thankful for love
Felt strongly in my soul
Love continues living forever
Keeping us together and whole

Today I am thankful for friends
Those who didn't walk away
They saw my broken heart
And chose to sit and stay

Today I am thankful for time
For the moments that were too few
Through the tears that are shed
Today I am thankful for you

GRIEVING A FUTURE I'LL NEVER HAVE

Written by Maria Kubitz

When grief is new, it is excruciating and overwhelming. Many people get stuck in a quicksand of pain that is so thick and intense, it feels impossible to escape. As you struggle through those first few days, weeks, and months, you begin to be pulled so far down into it, you can't imagine how you'll survive. I certainly felt that way. I'm grateful that those days are behind me.

And yet you do survive. Despite all odds, you wake up each morning. Your body still functions. You find a way to quietly camouflage yourself within with the "normal" world around you. You learn to live one day at a time. One moment at a time, when the day is particularly hard. Slowly – and painfully – you begin to acclimate to a world without your loved one in it. You do it because you have no other choice.

Over five years after the death of my 4-year-old daughter, Margareta, I've acclimated as best I can. I've continually faced and dealt with those painful feelings and emotions using every tool I can think of. I still go to grief support groups. I write about grief. I talk to a grief counselor when I feel the need to. I talk about Margareta with those who want to hear. I've come to terms with the impossible reality that she is gone and never coming back.

My grief over my daughter's death will never go away. Ask any grieving parent and they'll tell you the same. We'll never "get over it". What we have to do is accept it and learn how to live life despite of it. I've heard some bereaved parents don't like using the word 'acceptance'. That is because they associate the notion of accepting their child's death with being okay with their child's death. But you can accept the reality of something without ever being happy about it; without ever being okay with it. You can't change the past, so you might as well accept it in order to begin to be able to heal from the devastation you find yourself in.

I have healed a lot in the past five years. The open, oozing, excruciating wound of my broken heart has since scabbed over. I'll always have the painful scar that reminds me throughout every day that my daughter isn't here. It's that constant reminder that is the hardest for me

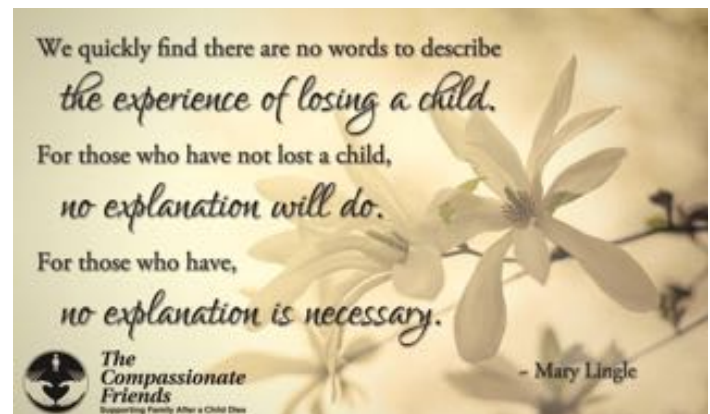
now.

I'm grieving a future I'll never have. I'm reminded every day of what could have been, but can never be. I'm grieving lost hopes and dreams. I'm grieving the loss of my only daughter and the mother-daughter relationship I only had a glimpse of. Instead of the intense, searing pain of early grief, it has transformed into a dull ache I'll never escape from.

I don't think I'll ever feel fully at ease with this constant ache. I'll always miss my daughter. I'll always regret that I didn't get to watch her grow. But I'm dedicated to learning how to live a happy, meaningful life despite of it. I do this in her honor. I do it in the honor of my other children, husband and family. I do it because I didn't physically die when she did.

In her four short years, my daughter lived life to the fullest – full of love, honesty and without fear. It is now my goal in life to do the same. I know she would have wanted it that way.

Maria Kubitz lost her four year old daughter in a drowning accident in 2009. In her grief journey, Maria continually tries to find ways to learn from the pain, and maintain a loving, healthy environment for her four other children. She volunteers at a local chapter of The Compassionate Friends, and in 2012, Maria created www.aliveinmemory.org – a supportive place where families can share precious memories of the loved ones they've lost as well as read articles about learning to live with grief.



Our Children Remembered on the Anniversary of their death



Myrl Packer III, son of Anna Packer – 2/1
Joseph Cavataio, son of Libby Cavataio – 2/3
Jonathan McCormick, son of Jacqueline & Bob Daniel – 2/6
Douglas Hofmackel, son of Marie & Ken Hofmackel – 2/7
Blake Smith, son of Colleen & Robert Bendesky – 2/8
Dawn Cannon, daughter of Joanne & David Cannon – 2/9
Megan Eschenburg, daughter of Gary & Peggy Eschenburg – 2/10
Joshua Taylor Fehrle, son of Thelma Dobson; brother of Riannon Harris – 2/10
Christopher Harrison, son of Betty Harrison – 2/10
Lisa Kumiega-Lewis, daughter of Alan & Arlene Vogel – 2/10
Brenda Meehl, daughter of Patricia & Harold Hunsicker – 2/10
Rachel Behrig, daughter of David & Kimberly Behrig – 2/11
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 – 2/12
Shawn Lampmann, son of Lynette Lampmann – 2/13

Jake Paternoster, son of Mike & Ruth Paternoster – 2/13
Rebecca VanLuvanee, daughter of Nanette & Daniel Helms – 2/13
Derick Schubert, son of Anne & John Schubert; brother of Marie – 2/14
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; Jack & Polly James; granddaughter of Nancy James; sister of Shannon Short – 2/15

Benjamin Michael Albro, son of Sherri & Bob Albro – 2/16
Stormy Weaver, daughter of Nathan & Amber Weaver – 2/16
Vivienne Martin, daughter of Justin & Mary Martin; granddaughter of James & Catherine McFadden – 2/17
Rodney Bossert, son of Julia Bossert Roush – 2/18
Gregory Hallman, nephew of Mary Pat Hallman – 2/18
Kevin Short, son of Frank & Lynne Short – 2/18
Sarah Souder, daughter of Dean & Kay Souder; granddaughter of Betty & Fred Deetz – 2/22
David Cassel, brother of Carol Lamonte – 2/24
George Davish, son of Sheryle & George Davish – 2/24
David Grebe, brother of Sue Grebe – 2/24
Shane Bowen, son of Agnes & Robert Bowen – 2/25
Daniel Murphy, son of Merry Murphy – 2/25
Brian Hackmaster, son of Barbara Hackmaster; brother of Amy Hackmaster – 2/27
William Nemeck, Jr., son of Margo Staats – 2/27
Christopher Ulmer, son of James & Patricia Ulmer – 2/27
Justice Goodwin, son of Holly & Keith Goodwin – 2/28

Seasons of Grief

Shall I wither and fall like an autumn leaf,
From this deep sorrow - from this painful grief?
How can I go on or find a way to be strong?
Will I ever again enjoy life's sweet song?

Sometimes a warm memory sheds light in the dark
And eases the pain like the song of a Meadow Lark.
Then it flits away on silent wings and I'm alone;
Hungering for more of the light it had shone.

Shall grief's bitter cold sadness consume me,
Like a winter storm on the vast angry sea?
How can I fill the void and deep desperate need
To replant my heart with hope's lovely seed?

Then I look at a photo of your playful smiling face
And for a moment I escape to a serene happy place;
Remembering the laughter and all you would do,
Cherishing the honest, caring, loving spirit of you.

Shall spring's cheerful flowers bring life anew
And allow me to forget the agony of missing you?
Will spring's burst of new life bring fresh hope
And teach my grieving soul how to cope?

Sometimes I'll read a treasured card you had given me
And each word's special meaning makes me see,
The precious gift of love I was fortunate to receive,
And I realize you'd never want to see me grieve.

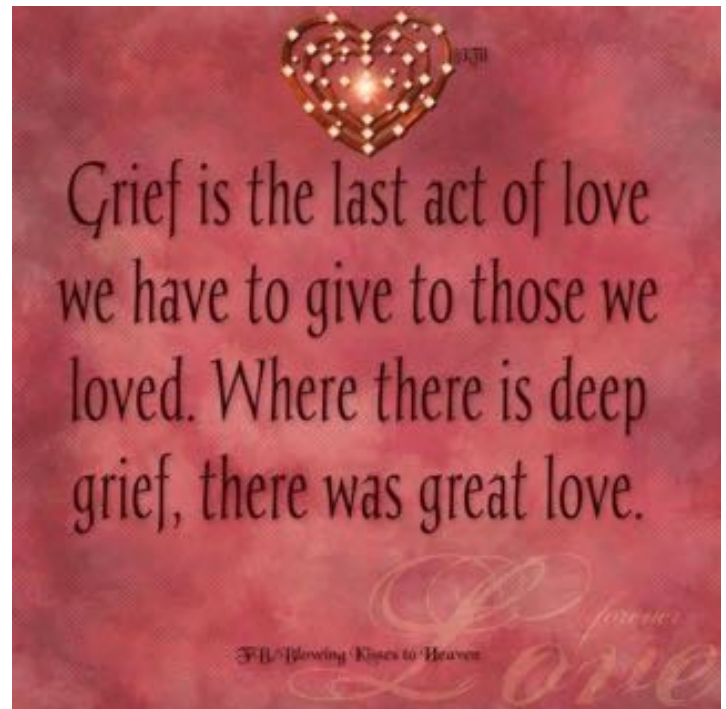
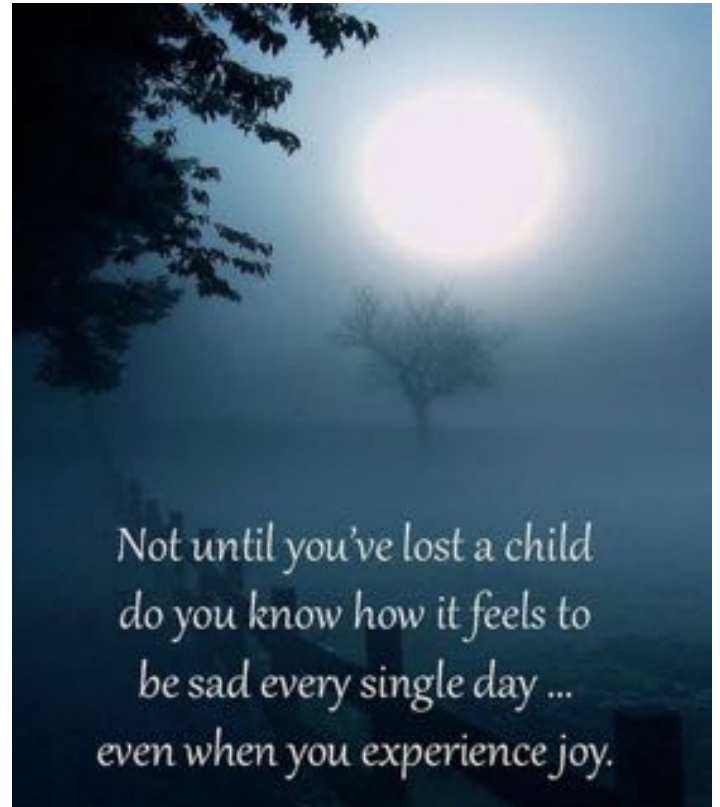
Shall summer's warm brilliant sun bring new light,
And free my anguished mind of its terrible plight?
Will its gentle breezes chase grief's dark clouds away,
And show me a clear path towards a better day?

When I visit the grave where you lie in eternal peace,
I know that death and heaven brought you release;
I try to envision your joy on that shore across the sea,
And, until I join you, that'll have to be enough for me.

For all the remaining seasons of my life on earth,
There'll be days I'll miss your merriment and mirth,
And sometimes I'll sadly long for all the yesterdays;
Missing our chats and your gentle understanding ways.

Yet, the lessons of kindness and love you taught me,
And the good things in life you've helped me to see;
Linger as lasting gifts that comfort and will sustain,
Until I journey to that peaceful shore and see you again

submitted by MARYAnn Kulp



Thank you, Thank you, Thank you

Thank you to Kathleen Hardgrove, Theresa Sitko, Carol Graham and Gail Blase for January refreshments. *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 Mary Ann Kulp, Nancy Eisenhart, Lynette Lampmann, Jenn Pini, Kelly Logan and Jennifer Pini for the Remembrance and Thank you cards that you receive. They do this in remembrance of their children/ siblings, son, Tony (MaryAnn), daughter, Kelly (Nancy), son, Shawn (Lynette), son, Brian (Ginny), 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 our meetings, they do this in remembrance of their children and siblings. A special thank you to St. Luke's Hospital for providing us with our meeting rooms each month.

Thank you to Linda Stauffer for doing our newsletter. 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. 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 for January

Charlie and Betty Hottenstein in memory of their daughter, Tracey Elizabeth Hottenstein. Gone 8 yrs! We will never forget you. You will live forever in our hearts. Love, Mom & Dad

Lynette Lampmann in memory of her son, Shawn Lampmann.
Missed & Loved so very much.

Alan and Arlene Vogel in memory of Lisa Kuniega-Lewis.

Steven Tondera in memory of Michael Tondera's on his Angel Date.

LOVE GIFTS

A LOVE GIFT is a gift of money to The Compassionate Friends. It is usually in memory of a child who has died; either on his/her birthday or anniversary of the death. It can also be from someone who wants to honor a friend or relative who has died, or anyone who wants to help support the work of TCF. Your LOVE GIFTS are TAX DEDUCTIBLE, and are the Chapter's main monetary support. Chapter Non-profit #2053

I wish to make a donation in memory _____ honor _____ of _____ **Birth date
_____ Death date _____

Love gift message

Please send your check payable to: TCF Quakertown Chapter and mail to: TCF Quakertown Chapter, PO Box 1013, Quakertown, PA 18951

I / We would like our Love gift to be used for: _____ Special Events /Speakers/community outreach _____ Memorial Garden
_____ Candle Lighting Program _____ Memorial Walk & Butterfly Release _____ General operating expenses

Your Name _____ email _____

Address _____

_____ Telephone _____



Our Children Remembered on their February Birthdays

We apologize for omitting Peter Graham's birthday and anniversary dates from January's newsletter lists.

Peter Graham, son of Carol and Albert Graham - Birthday 1/10; Anniversary 1/19

Our Children Remembered on their Birthdays

Robert Kyle Rainey, son of Lynne Rainey – 2/3

Heather Schaefer, daughter of Linda Schaefer – 2/3

Eric Martin, son of Daniel Martin; brother of Mikaela Martin – 2/4

Robert Bowen, son of Agnes & Robert Bowen – 2/5

Jonathan McCormick, son of Jacqueline & Bob Daniel – 2/5

Stephen Fuhrmeister, son of Lisa Fuhrmeister; nephew of Renee Hudoka – 2/6

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 – 2/9

Jeffrey Broxteman, son of Roger & Janet Broxteman – 2/10

Shawn Lampmann, son of Lynette Lampmann – 2/10

David Schaller, son of Raymond Schaller – 2/12

Joshua Sotak, son of Mary Catherine Nederosteck – 2/14

Kristin Statutu, daughter of Henry & Maryann Statuti – 2/15

Alesandria Gasior, daughter of Linda & Dan Brophy – 2/16

Chris Guidotti, son of Nancy & Al Guidotti – 2/16

Scott Newell, son of Carol Newell – 2/16

Tracey Elizabeth Hottenstein, daughter of Charlie & Betty Hottenstein – 2/18

John Ruch, son of Christina Dunning – 2/18

Bill Molko, Ellen Molko – 2/19

Will Moyer, son of Sue Simon – 2/19

Kinsey Duvall, son of Craig Duvall – 2/20

Scott Naber, brother of Anje Naber – 2/20

Tammy Moore, daughter of Tom & Sandra Moore; sister of Tom, Tara, & Thad – 2/25

Cpl. Barton Humlhanz, son of Michele & Don Carey – 2/26

Joey Siedlecki, son of Joe Siedlecki & Monica Siedlecki – 2/26

Jason Tyler, son of Mitzi Foulke – 2/26

Sullivan Burd, son of Jessica & Glenn Burd – 2/28

Matt Cardinal, son of Lynn Cardinal; brother of Mike Cardinal – 2/28





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



Next Meeting February 14, 2017



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.

