



Serving Upper Bucks and Montgomery Counties

The Compassionate Friends

Quakertown Chapter July 2022

Grief on the Fourth Of July

I've always loved the U.S. holiday called Independence Day, but for twenty years I've struggled to enjoy the Fourth of July, the day we celebrate it. Contradictory? Perhaps, but holidays after a loved one's death can become complicated, contradictory things.

On the one hand, **maintaining annual traditions can give survivors a lifeline of continuity in a time when their lives have been demolished by death.** Things will never be normal again, so holiday celebrations and commemorations can — for some mourners — offer the comforting familiarity of ritual. For the first couple of years after my child died, only at the last minute did I remember to buy hot dogs, potato chips, dip, and soda (our family's traditional Fourth of July junk food) — primarily because our kids expected it.

On the other hand, **for some who grieve, carrying on with past traditions (as if nothing has changed) hurts more than it helps.** Also in the first year (or two) after my child died, I felt raging jealousy and resentment for those going about their days as if everything was okay — because to me it wasn't. I couldn't make myself display any of our household Independence Day decorations I'd made and/or purchased, and that bin remains untouched.

If your friends have lost loved ones recently, please be sensitive to their grief this Fourth of July (and in holidays yet to come):

Acknowledge that this holiday will be different (if not downright difficult) for the bereaved. **Don't be afraid of reminding them of their loss or "making" them sad; they already remember their loss every minute of every day.** What they need is to know someone else does, too.

Invite them to join you in cookouts, picnics, beach trips ... whatever you usually do to celebrate. **Tell them the invitation remains open** if they decline. *Don't push — they may really need space — but do make certain they are welcome to change their minds later.*

Don't take it personally if they turn you down, won't RSVP, or don't return calls or messages. In the early months after my child died, sometimes I answered the phone only for my immediate family but let other calls go to voicemail. (It wasn't them, it was me.) It took me more than six months to be able to even *think* about attending social gatherings (and it took longer to actually go).

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If you are reading this newsletter and do not receive emails from the chapter, and would like to, please email contact@tcfquakertownpa.org to be included on the email list. Be sure to include your name!



As our membership grows costs are rising to mail paper copies of the newsletter each month. Please consider receiving the newsletter by email, or Facebook, or our website. Please contact us with your email address!!! Thank you for helping us SAVE funds!!! email or scan -----> contact@tcfquakertownpa.org



Quakertown Chapter
PO Box 1013
Quakertown, PA 18951
Chapter Info Line: 215-703-8431
contact@TCFQuakertownpa.org
website: www.tcfquakertownpa.org

NEW

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.



The Compassionate Friends

Quakertown Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

Serving Bucks and Montgomery Counties



About Our Chapter

Chapter Leader – Crystal Hunter

Chapter Treasurer – Lisa Dechant

Chapter Secretary – Gail Blase

Assistant Secretary –

Mary Anne Macko

Newsletter Editor/Webmaster –

Linda Stauffer

Membership Outreach-

Ginny Leigh Manuel

Social Media Coordinator & Sibling

Coordinator – Crystal Hunter

Memorial Garden Chairperson –

Theresa Sitko

Committee members – Bob Albro,

Dianna Cox, Diane Gurecki, and

Lynette Lampman, Sherri Albro,

Barbara Reboratti

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
215-703-8431**

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. 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 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



Two Simple Words: Thank You

The revival Memorial Walk and Butterfly Walk of 2022 was a huge success. The event is much needed to sustain our financial fund for the Memorial Garden, but this year it was needed even more simply so we could all be together. AND together we were! Brian, who has been our bagpiper for many years, said he had never seen such a huge turn out in. We counted over 250 people who completed the actual walk and several dozen more people hanging in the pavilions. While no one volunteers for recognition, I did not get a chance to thank my team who helped pull this event from start to finish.

- Dianna (in memory of her son Michael) - thank you for rocking the ordering of the registrations! It ran so smoothly I do not even know what you did.
- Lisa (in memory of her son Eddie) - overseeing the raffle baskets and the financials could not be completed without you! Thank you!
- Theresa & Henry (in memory of their son Clayton and many siblings) - Thank you so much for housing the trailer the chapter owns in addition to making sure the garden was in tip top shape.
- Lynette (in memory of her son Shawn) and our special Plaque Team - Nothing feels better than getting those plaques applied! Thank you ... you know who you are!
- Ginny (in memory of her son Brian) - Thank you for giving up a day so we could get organized and all of the memories/knowledge on the details of the event! I could

not have done this without you.

- Day of Volunteers - there were so many of you who spoke up and offered to help. This is a dream come true for me! I left the event and simply hoped you felt appreciated and needed— I can't list all of you because I will miss someone. From selling items to setting up to putting things back and of course cooking the hot dogs— the hours you gave are truly irreplaceable.

I cannot list everyone, but know that every act was appreciated as it takes a team to complete an event this large. Whatever your role was, thank you. Thank you for *spreading the word*. Thank you for *attending the event*. Thank you for *donating items for the raffle baskets*. Thank you for *purchasing t-shirts and butterflies*. Thank you for *making things* so we could sell them for profit to our chapter. While we got hit with a few sprinkles (tears from above), the weather was absolutely perfect (considering this sweltering 90 and higher we are having!).

Until next time, I am so sorry you are receiving this newsletter but I am so grateful we are here to support you. This event is a beautiful reminder that you are not alone and we are here right beside you.

All the hugs.

Crystal, Chapter Leader



Photos by Tristan Cox



*“Our Children Remembered on their July Birthdays
Always Loved, Missed and Forever in Our Hearts.”*

7/1 - **Karen Slotter**, daughter of Dolly Bibic

7/3 - **Shane Bowen**, son of Agnes & Robert Bowen

7/6 - **Morgan Basciano**, daughter of Sharon & Nicholas Basciano; sister of Olivia Basciano

7/6 - **Ryan McMullen**, son of Kathleen & John McMullen

7/9 – **Kyle Silver**, grandson of Jeanne Hofmann

7/9 – **Brian Beyer**, son of Eileen Beyer Curry

7/13 - **Scott Silver**, son of Jeanne Hofmann

7/18 - **Brian Michael Leigh-Manuell**, son of Ginny Leigh-Manuell; brother of Jennifer Wills

7/20 - **Katie Leck**, daughter of John & Anita Bardsley

7/20 – **Adriana Toro**, daughter of Israel Toro

7/20 – **Alycia Pinkowski**, daughter of Patty Rugulo

7/21 - **Lisa Dawn Weatherly**, daughter of Norma Jean Weatherly

7/22 – **Michael Cogossi**, son of Cheryl Cogossi

7/25 - **Joe Discher**, son of Martha & Art Discher; sister of Wendy Park

7/28 – **Mitchell Yelovich**, son of Jacquie Yelovich

7/29 - **Donald Dolan, Jr.**, son of Don & Tina Dolan

7/30 - **Robert Marich**, son of Michele Callon

7/30 - **Douglas Minner**, son of Louise & Toby Minner



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

7/1 – **Dustin David Weiss**, son of Nikki Radcliff

7/2 – **Peter Smith**, son of Angela & Richard Smith

7/3 – **Lynda Mohlenhoff**, daughter of Frank & Peggy Posivak

7/4 – **CalliMae Derstine**, daughter of Lucy & Mike Derstine

7/5 – **Adam Graham**, son of Albert & Carol Graham

7/6 – **Joshua Woods**, brother of Jenn Kroll, Eliot Woods, Tricia Woods

7/6 – **Alex Shiloh**, son of Irena Shiloh

7/6 – **Eric David Schwartz**, son of Amy DeLellis

7/7 – **Michael Bolan**, son of Jennifer Bolan

7/9 – **Steven Ketterer**, son of Steven & Gail Ketterer

7/10 – **Heather Wagonseller Ash**, daughter of Janet Wagonseller

7/11 – **Emmalee Ingrid Bryan**, daughter of Terri Bryan

7/12 – **Hunter Larrabee**, son of Michelle Larrabee Argue

7/13 – **Joshua Sotak**, son of Mary Catherine Nederosteck

7/17 – **Melinda Daniel**, daughter of Jacqueline & Bob Daniel

7/17 – **Scott Silver**, son of Jeanne Hofmann

7/25 – **Denise Layton**, daughter of Edward & Gloria Layton

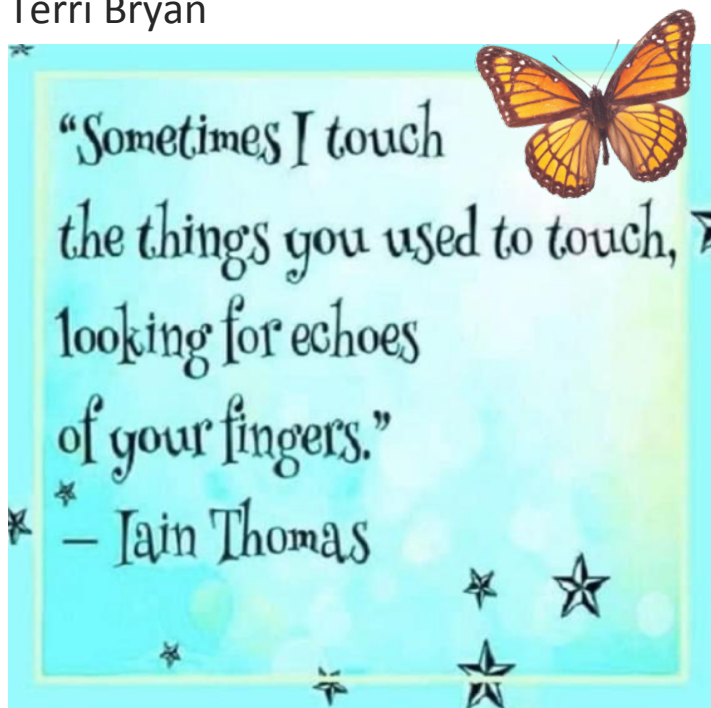
7/26 – **Eric Hill**, son of David & Susan Hill

7/28 – **James P. Ryer**, son of Diana M. Adams, brother of Pat Ryer

7/29 – **Chris Guidotti**, son of Nancy & Al Guidotti

7/30 – **Morgan Basciano**, daughter of Sharon & Nicholas Basciano; sister of Olivia Basciano

7/30 – **Chris & John Inscho**, sister & brother-in-law of Diane Anderson



Special Thanks

A special thank you to Diane Guerecki, Lisa Dechant, Jenifer Pini, Sierra Doyle, Rosemary Stewart 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 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.

Paint Nites for our members at Haycock Township Community Center



“The Angel” The background color is up to you as well as the text message. I will create a pattern for the angel. Friday, July 22 7-9:00pm

Linda Stauffer, retired art teacher and mother of Katie Stauffer, has an art studio at the Haycock Township Community Center at 1014 Old Bethlehem Rd. Event will be held there. Cost will be \$25.00 per person. Space is limited to 18 people at each event. kt4ever@mac.com. RSVP by July 15.



The “Love you to the moon and back” can have multiple hearts. This one is the easier of the 2 to paint. Sunday, July 31- 2:00-4:00

Next Support Meeting

July 12 @ the Gathering Place

7-8:30pm

Come as you are for the meeting. No dues and you do not have to talk - listening only is welcomed!

If you want to, you can bring a favorite snack to share in memory of your child/sibling.

The Guidelines:

- Finger food (no forks or plates available)
- Individually wrapped/proportions

The chapter will provide napkins and you will bring your own drinks.

We look forward to seeing you at the meeting!



Thank you to our Generous Sponsors

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(continued from page 1)

- **Ask them how they usually celebrated the holiday with their deceased loved one.** Most mourners are grateful for the chance to speak about the ones they grieve.
- **Tread lightly with greetings** like "Happy Fourth." Of course you want your friends to be happy, and happiness *is* possible even while grieving, but when grief is new and raw, a safer, more considerate message

might be "Thinking of you on the Fourth."
 (To find out why I've had an aversion to July 4th since the 1990s, see [Fireworks of Grief](#).)
 One more thing. While you're enjoying whatever it is you like to do on this national holiday, please take one moment (or more) to reflect on the gift it is to be able to celebrate as you wish. **The freedoms we too often take for granted were purchased by the labors — and the lives — of many to whom we owe a debt our gratitude can never repay.**
Theresa Bruce (Teal Ashes)

UNDERSTANDING GRIEF WHEN YOUR LOVED ONE DIES IN THE MILITARY

The Compassionate Friends by Doreen and Patrice Cappelaere
in loving memory of their daughter, LT Valerie Cappelaere Delaney, USN



When a loved one dies while serving in the military, it affects your entire family and the ensuing grief can be overwhelming. One is immediately thrust into shock and disbelief. The shock is a natural physical and human response when you experience the death of someone you love. It provides the ability for the griever to do the impossible and prepare for the funeral, take care of business and hold the family together in times of crisis. When the shock wanes and the full emotional impact of the loss becomes real, we may start to experience trauma without the protective numbness that the armor of shock provided. When the reality of living with loss becomes apparent in all that you do, the true grief journey begins. The following information has been prepared by bereaved parents who have, themselves, experienced the death of a loved one who had died in service to our country.

The death of a family member is a life-changing event for the entire family. Although bereavement eventually occurs in every family, the loss of a child of any age can be life changing. Surviving members of military families find themselves in a unique position from other losses in that their loved one voluntarily put themselves into harm's way, knowing the potential for the death and injury. Serving in our country's armed services carries with it intrinsic dangers distinct to the military that family members are aware of when their loved one enlisted. As such, they gain a different perspective in

processing the loss. This is not to say it makes the loss any easier to bear, in fact the circumstances that surrounded the death of their loved one may even complicate the grieving process.

From the initial distress of notification when two soldiers knock at your door, to the presentation of the American flag at the funeral service, families of the military face difficult emotional issues distinctive to a military death. However, families impacted by a military death may also possess unique protective factors that affect their bereavement process and experience of loss.

Family members may experience feelings of psychological cognitive dissonance, where they feel the immense pride for their loved ones who made the ultimate sacrifice, and yet may be conflicted with their own deep feelings of despair. Dependent on the circumstances of the death, there may be anger at the military for lethal accidents, friendly fire, or the politics of engagement of military combat.

Some military losses may result from heroic action which can provide the griever with the "feel good" hormones released from intense pride. This physical reaction is autonomic and can help to neutralize the stress hormones released in the stress of grief and the intensity of pain can be buffered. Conversely, a death from suicide or needless accident may lead to anger at their loved one and or at the military for possible culpability that may have influenced factors that resulted in their death. Anger can increase the release of stress hormones and magnify the intensity of pain associated with loss.

Another unique aspect of the grief journey with a military loss is the camaraderie factor with other families of the military who have suffered loss. There is a huge network of support with veterans and family of veterans who share similar journeys. One organization that stands out in the support of Gold Star families with their grief and healing is T.A.P.S., the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors, which was created by Bonnie Carroll in 1992 to assist military families who have suffered a loss. For further information, please visit their website at www.taps.org.

GRIEF IS NOT A PROCESS.

There is no endpoint.

It's not
something I'll
be "done"
with...

It's something
I'm learning to
live with.

www.facebook.com/missingindiana



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:

To Ray & Janet Popowitz, In loving memory of their beloved daughter Sherri Reiss, a donation was made. "You were always very special to us"

To Dianna Cox for the 2 Mandeville for garden pots .In memory of her son Michael.

To everyone who attended our Memorial Walk and made donations in memory of their children, from the Steering Committee-Your thoughtfulness is a gift that will always be treasured- we "Thank you".

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:

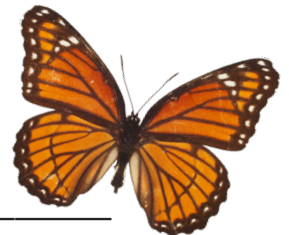
The Compassionate Friends, Quakertown Chapter

Mail to:

PO Box 1013

Quakertown, PA 18951

Yes or No - include my name / love note in the newsletter.





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

Support Group Meeting is July 12th at The Gathering Place

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.

