



The Compassionate Friends

May 2019

Serving Upper Bucks and Montgomery Counties

MOTHERS DAY AND GRADUATION

After my daughter Kyra died on November 14 of 2004, one of my first thoughts was I am no longer a mother, because Kyra was my only child. It didn't take me long to realize that that was not true; I am and always will be Kyra's mom. As I have walked my grief journey I have found myself referring to grief as labor. It then came to me that for me, losing Kyra was like giving birth in reverse. I experienced intense emotional and physical pain that I wondered if I could endure, similar to the physical pain of labor, only in grief it lasts for weeks, months and years. It took my breath away, brought me to my knees and often I found myself crying out in anguish and anger, like child birth. It has been over a year and a half since Kyra died and I have felt a break in the pain. It has started back up recently due to graduation but I know it will ease some after May. Some women experience false labor leading up to the birth of their child. I think that those intense pains that come from out of nowhere and last only a short time is something that I will forever experience. I now realize that in letting go of her death, I can embrace and carry her spirit with me always. So, I liken grief to giving birth in reverse.

I go from Mother's day to Graduation, because Kyra would have graduated from High School at the end of May.

Graduation was something I knew would be hard for me to endure without her here, alive and being part of the celebration. I thought about what Kyra graduating would mean to me and it didn't take me long to come up with, it was going to be my day to celebrate. Kyra was an intelligent child with a low attention span, a need to talk, and lower than I would have liked motivation. It was a frustration that her teachers and I shared. So, homework time was a challenge and I used motivational charts, rewards and even punishment. But, I quickly found that you can't force someone to be motivated and went back to encouraging. I knew that she would come around and become motivated and I started seeing it her Junior year the year she died. I thought that graduation would be the reward for all the long nights and constantly trying to encourage and motivate. Well, it's not to be and I had to decide how will I endure graduation. I began to think about all she is missing. I believe in Heaven so I don't believe she is missing any joy or good times, because I believe she is now experiencing indescribable joy and unimaginable good times. The reality of what she is missing is, she is missing misery, pain, frustration, disappointment, a broken heart, grief, hopelessness and

(continued on page 4)

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 Meetings: May 14, June 11

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

PO Box 1013

Quakertown, PA 18951

Chapter Info Line: 484-408-7314

contact@TCFQuakertownpa.org

website: www.tcfquakertownpa.org

"We should love people and use things, not love things and use people"

Katie Stauffer 2000

Making Mother's Day and Father's Day Special

by Elaine Stillwell, Rockville Centre, NY
Here are a few hints to help you through these days after the loss of a child.

- 1) Pamper yourself-this is a special day in your life. You are a parent forever and your child is your child forever.
- 2) Do what you need to do-what helps you. Grieve your way.
- 3) Be with those who surround you with love, not demands or advice.
- 4) Plan ahead-do things that make you feel good or give you a moment's peace.
- 5) Start new rituals to make new memories.
- 6) Share your thoughts with family members; decide together what the day should include. (If you are alone, find a good friend.)
- 7) Include deceased children in the day-through prayer, lighting a candle, telling stories about them, looking through pictures, planting flowers or a garden, doing a good deed, writing about them, making their favorite recipe.
- 8) Join with another bereaved family to honor this day and have mutual support.
- 9) Start a garden or add to a special garden in memory of your child.
- 10) Use this day to plant spring flowers so you can always see your child in each bloom and each bouquet that you cut.
- 11) Visit the cemetery if that helps your heart on this day.
- 12) Plant a flower or shrub that will come to bloom this time of year.
- 13) Do something special for someone else or something special in your child's name (helping Cancer Care, MADD, a Compassionate Friends' Chapter, Scouting, a nursing home, etc.)
- 14) Listen to music that makes your heart feel good.
- 15) Cook some favorite recipes that your child enjoyed or cooked for you.



- 16) Buy a present for yourself from your child and enjoy the comfort it brings you.
- 17) Write a poem or article in memory of your child, sharing memories or whatever has helped you.
- 18) Attend a family gathering of relatives - their love and support can give you a lift on this day.
- 19) Make a booklet of favorite poems that help your heart, and give copies to dear relatives and friends in memory of your child.
- 20) Take part in a special church ceremony honoring Mother's Day and Father's Day.
- 21) Pray to your child-talking is the best medicine and prayer is simply talking.
- 22) Set aside some special time to grieve, unloading all the frustration and sadness that can envelop you on such a day giving you time to meditate alone.
- 23) Write a letter to your child, telling what's in your heart (perhaps some unfinished business or some new blessing that has enriched your life).
- 24) Allow the tears to flow- crying is healing and allows a release for your feelings.
- 25) Think of a way to "share your child with the world"-making sure his or her memory lives on through scholarships, writing, good deeds.
- 26) Give and get plenty of hugs.

You may also order online at <http://www.tcfquakertownpa.org/register.html>



You are Missed!

**The Compassionate Friends ~ Quakertown Chapter
Annual Memorial Walk & Butterfly Release
Pre-Registration Form * June 8, 2019 (rain or shine)**

Location: James Memorial Park; 1028 Ridge Road; Sellersville, PA

Name (person picking up order at the walk): _____

Phone Number: _____ **Email:** _____ (if we have questions)

Name(s) of those being remembered at the Walk (use the back if needed): _____

<u>Item</u>	<u>Quantity of Items</u>	<u>Price per Item</u>	<u>Quantity x Price = Total Item Cost</u>
Butterfly Only		\$15	\$
SINGLE SHIRT (indicate quantity of sizes below)			
Shirt Only Sizes Youth Small - Adult XL		\$20	\$
Shirt Only Sizes Adult XXL - XXXL		\$23	\$
PACKAGE (indicate quantity of sizes below)			
Package (1 butterfly, 1 shirt) Size Youth Small – Adult XL		\$30	\$
Package (1 butterfly, 1 shirt) Size Adult XXL - XXXL		\$33	\$
Please List Quantity (1, 2, etc.) of Shirt Sizes in each Box. Shirts not available until day of walk.			
<i>Youth Small</i>	<i>Youth Medium</i>	<i>Youth Large</i>	
<i>Adult Small</i>	<i>Adult Medium</i>	<i>Adult Large</i>	
<i>Adult X-Large</i>	<i>Adult XX-Large</i>	<i>Adult XXX-Large</i>	
(Add all lines together) <u>Pre-Registration Cost</u>			\$

Mail Checks to:

TCF Quakertown; c/o Walk
PO Box 1013
Quakertown PA 18951

Payable: TCF Quakertown

Memo: Walk

**Postmark Registration by May
8, 2019 to guarantee items**

ONLY IF NOT ATTENDING WALK

****Shipping: Only Shirts can be mailed.**

Shipping is additional: \$5 for one shirt, \$10 for
2-3 shirts; 3 or more shirts \$20

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Will be mailed after June 8th

Pre-Registration Cost \$ _____

Additional Donation \$ _____

****Shipping \$** _____

Total Enclosed \$ _____

Questions: 484-408-7314 or
contact@tcfquakertownpa.org

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



The Compassionate Friends

Quakertown Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

Serving Bucks and Montgomery Counties



About Our Chapter

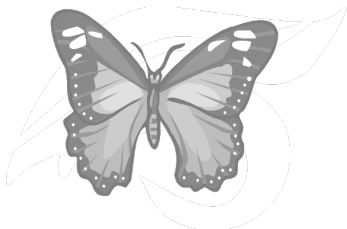
Ginny Leigh-Manuell, Chapter Leader
 Crystal Hunter-Co-leader
 Sherri Albro, Chapter Treasurer
 Gail Blase, Chapter Secretary
 Mary Anne Macko, Assistant Secretary
 Linda Stauffer, Chapter Newsletter & Website
 Theresa Sitko, Memorial Garden Director
 Theresa Sitko
 Barbara Reboratti, Chapter Delegate
 Carol Graham, Hospitality
 Lynette Lampman, Remembrance Cards
 Mary Catherine Nederostek, R Cards
 Brittni Fonder, Remembrance Cards
 Crystal Hunter
 Bob Albro

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.



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



OUR CHILDREN REMEMBERED for May

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

- 5/1 – Patrick Pettie**, son of Doreene Pettie
5/4 – Ardyth Cope, daughter of Carol Cope
5/8 – Justin Powis, son of Jennifer & William Powis
5/11 – Rebecca Cloud, daughter of Richard & Diane Cloud
5/16 – Brian Wensel, Jr., son of Brian Wensel, Sr.; grandson of Leroy & Dawn Wensel.
5/17 – Craig Zakeosian, son of Mike Zakeosian
5/20 – Mia Rose Montevidoni, daughter of Matt & Kelly Montevidoni
5/20 – Kevin O'Donnell, son of Doris & Steve Yurchak
5/23 – Walter Petite, Jr., son of Doreene Petite
5/22 – Matt Dille, son of Patti & Joe Dille
5/24 – Aidian Bacchus, grandson of MaryLou Miller
5/25 – Kristy McCoy, daughter of Arlin & Dona Moyer
5/26 – Ryan Kintzly, son of Tammy Devine
5/27 – Rob Tarr, son of Robert & Susan Tarr
5/29 – Joseph Oglialoro, son of Mike & Becky Oglialoro; grandson of Rose & Joseph Oglialoro and Gary & Vickie Shoudt.
5/29 – Eric Santayana, son of Debi & Walt Schimpf
5/31 – Brittani James, daughter of Christine James; Jack & Polly James; granddaughter of Nancy James
5/31 – Sebastian Carey, son of Christine Carey



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gony. And I am missing her incredible, joy and zest for life, her strong faith, beautiful smile and her wonderful heart. As I close I remember when I was pregnant with Kyra, I took two helpings of food because I said I'm eating for two. Now I will try my best to live life to the fullest and be all that I can because now I'm living for two. Just as her living made me want to be a better person, her dying will make me a better person if I allow it, because I now carry her with me. I will strive to do and see life the way she would have if she could have stayed here longer.

Julie Short

TCF Southeastern IL



42nd National Conference Registration Open

The 42nd TCF National Conference will be held in Philadelphia, on July 19-21, 2019 at the Philadelphia 201 Hotel. "Hope Rings Out in Philadelphia" is the theme of this year's event, which promises more of last year's great National Conference experience. We'll keep you updated with details on the national website as well as on our [TCF/USA Facebook Page](#) and elsewhere as they become available. Plan to come and be a part of this heartwarming experience.

Conference Registration

Pre-registration Rates (ends June 15th), Adult - \$125.00, Senior (65+) - \$115.00, Military with ID - \$75.00, Full-time College Students (with ID) - \$60.00, Full-time College Students (with ID) - \$80.00, Child - \$80.00

Our Children Remembered for May

Loved...Missed...Remembered on the Anniversary of
their death

- 5/4 – Jennifer Wenhold**, daughter of Jeff & Wendy Wenhold
- 5/5 – Nancy Hall**, daughter of Charles & Patricia Hall
- 5/6 – Calvin Gross**, son of Karen Gross
- 5/7 – Brandon Crosby**, son of Tracy & Mark Ehleben
- 5/7 – Colleen O’Connell**, daughter of Jay & Barbara Keeley
- 5/7 – Tony Kulp**, son of Mary Ann Kulp
- 5/7 – Derick M. Lawley**, brother of Tara Lawley-Bergey
- 5/8 – Brian Leigh-Manuell**, son of Ginny Leigh-Manuell; brother of Jennifer Wills; grandson of Paul Johnson
- 5/9 – Skylar Kauffman**, daughter of Heather Gebhard & Eric Kauffman; granddaughter of Pam Gebhard; Carol & Spencer Kauffman
- 5/9 – Allison Reboratti**, daughter of Barbara & Eduardo Reboratti
- 5/11 – Anthony Bonino**, son of Robert & Susan Bonino
- 5/11 – James Donnelly, Jr.**, son of James & Alice Donnelly
- 5/12 – Selena Gebert**, daughter of Donna Gebert
- 5/15 – Donna Lee Stichter**, daughter of Don & Carol Collis
- 5/15 – Joseph Jenkins**, son of Dennis & Allison Jenkins
- 5/15 – Adrian Paul**, son of Joyce Mann & Kurt Pfitzer
- 5/17 – Jeremy Nase**, son of Carol Nase
- 5/18 – Joe Discher**, son of Martha & Art Discher; brother of Wendy Park
- 5/18 – Kaitlin Murphy**, daughter of Pat Murphy
- 5/20 – Michael Rabadi**, son of Essam & Anne Rabadi



- 5/20 – Dan Slaughter**, son of Lori Slaughter
- 5/21 – Joseph Bello, Jr.**, son of Gloria Bello; brother of Sharon Kronmiller
- 5/21 – Blake Sharp**, son of LuAnn & Harry Hebrank
- 5/22 – Katie Leck**, daughter of John & Anita Bardsley
- 5/22 – Ross VanHouten**, son of Brenda VanHouten
- 5/23 – Matt Trauger**, son of Mary Anne Macko & Mike Hamilton; Jim Trauger; grandson of Dolly Bibic
- 5/23 – Dayna Irwin**, daughter of Ken & Patricia Irwin
- 5/24 – Ryan McMullen**, son of Kathleen & John McMullen
- 5/25 – Trevor Baelz**, son of Marsha Leary
- 5/26 – Andrew Delp**, son of Robert & Sheryl Delp
- 5/28 – 1st Lt. Matthew Gaffney**, son of Phillip & Kathleen Gaffney
- 5/30 – Carly Bradley**, sister of Kasey Bradley
- 5/30 – Kyle Silver**, grandson of Jeanne Hofmann
- 5/31 – Jonathan Krist**, son of Robert & Peggy Krist



** RAFFLE BASKETS **

We are already receiving messages that you want to donate an item for the raffle baskets. AMAZING!

This year, unfortunately, we do not have someone to coordinate and make baskets. To continue this awesome tradition, we are asking if anyone wants to be the raffle basket coordinator.

Until we hear from someone who can commit to this, here is how raffle basket donations will work.

- 1) All baskets must be "hefty" -- not just one item. We say about \$100 but understand sometimes the baskets can easily be more or less than that. Think THEMES! Think about what you would want to win. Ask friends for donations.
- 2) Basket must be wrapped (like picture) and Dollar Tree has those bags!
- 3) As of the April newsletter, all completed baskets must be brought to the park Saturday morning by 10am (we are there as early as 7:30/8:00am. This is to give the volunteer staff time to organize and be prepared for the start at 12:00pm. If this changes, it will be communicated in future newsletters and on social media.
- 4) With the basket, attach a list of what it is in, approximate value, and any other important information that staff may need to know.

Thank you for helping us make the raffle baskets a success.

Refreshments for March

Our sincere thanks for the refreshments in April: Carol Graham, for sons Peter and Adam Graham. Gail Blase, for their daughter Katey Theresa Sitko, for her brother Patrick Pettiere

If you would like to sponsor refreshments or bring some to a meeting in remembrance of your loved one, please call our Chapter Info Line 484-408-7314. .

A special thank you to Lynette Lampmann, Brittini Fonder, Jennifer Pini and Mary Catherine Neiderstock for the Remembrance cards that you receive. They do this in memory of their children/ siblings: Shawn (Lynette), brother, Jason (Jennifer) brother Christopher (Brittini) and son Josh (Mary Catherine). 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 addressing our monthly newsletters for mailing. They do this in remembrance of their daughter, Tracy.

Plaque orders

It is time to order your Memorial Garden Plaque! This order will be applied to the wall in May 2020. Orders are due December 20, 2019. The cost is \$135 if paying by check or Pay Pal Friends & Family. If you pay Pay Pal Goods & Services, the cost is \$145.

To order, follow this link:

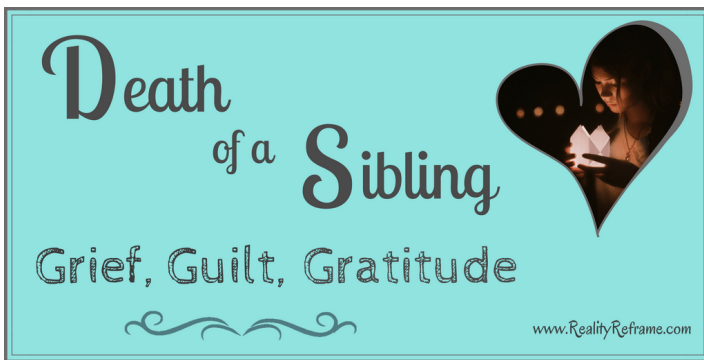
<https://forms.gle/b8pcekg9c6szaRpy8> It is also listed in the email sent out with the newsletter and on social media.

You can pay via check or PayPal. All the directions are listed on the order form.

For those who receive the paper newsletter, if you do not have access to the internet, please call the chapter so we can mail you a form. You may also pick up the form at the Memorial Walk or support meeting.

Questions can be directed to MemorialGardenTCF@gmail.com.





If you're anything like me, you grew up in a fairytale surrounded by siblings who stood 10 feet tall. You grew up with parents who were as brave as superheroes. You grew up naïve to the world around you.

Don't get me wrong; I was well aware of what the news never failed to talk about. I knew mothers and fathers could lose their battles with cancer. I knew children could be kidnapped. I knew houses burned down, and car accidents happened almost every day.

But, I had created a world where my family was untouchable, where nothing could ever happen to them because they were mine.

Five years ago, a police officer knocked on our front door. It was 10 pm, and I had just gotten ready for bed.

"There's been an accident. You need to come to the hospital right away."

By this point, I had seen enough TV shows to know this was not what you wanted to hear from a police officer, especially not at 10 pm, and especially not when your older brother still hadn't made it home.

I lost a brother that day. I lost a cheerleader, a mentor and a best friend. The safe space I had created so easily disappeared, and I was left to tackle the world without the one person who had always paved a path before me.

There's no word to describe the loss of a sibling. If you lose a spouse, you're a widow or widower. If you lose your parents, you're an orphan. But if you lose a sibling, you just become the girl who lost her brother.

My therapist described it as losing a limb. If someone tells you it gets better with time, the person's lying to you. Yes, cuts get better and wounds do heal, but when you lose an arm, it's foolish to await the day it "gets better." You simply

learn to live with one arm.

I learned to do the things I know he would have liked. I learned to listen to the songs we sang together in the car without breaking down in tears. I learned — and am still learning — to function normally without him just a phone call. However, "normal" has lately been like a blanket too short for a bed. Sometimes it covers you just fine, and other times it leaves you shaking in the cold. I've come to find the worst part is I never know which one it's going to be when I wake up.

It's been almost five years since that day. Some days the ache is a little less than before, but other days it makes me want to lock myself in my room. And some days, I still feel like I am stuck.

There is no statute of limitations on grief. There is no time limit to waking up crying, or having to leave the grocery store because you see your sibling's old friends. There is no special cure for those dull aches in your heart that don't seem to ever go away.

But, coming from a sister who thought she would never find the light again, know there will come a day when the thought of that loved one brings a smile to your face instead of leaving you gasping for a breath you cannot find.

There will come a day when you find yourself talking about your sibling and you do not feel uncomfortable. There will come a day when the universe sends you a sign to let you know your sibling is doing OK.

And there will come a day when the 19 years you were's able to have with your sibling becomes enough for the 19 more you'll never have. There is no other love like the love for a brother, and no other love like the love from a brother. And if you're lucky to have a brother who was also your best friend, that love is going to cover you during the best of times and hold your hand through the worst.

This article was written by Kady Braswell

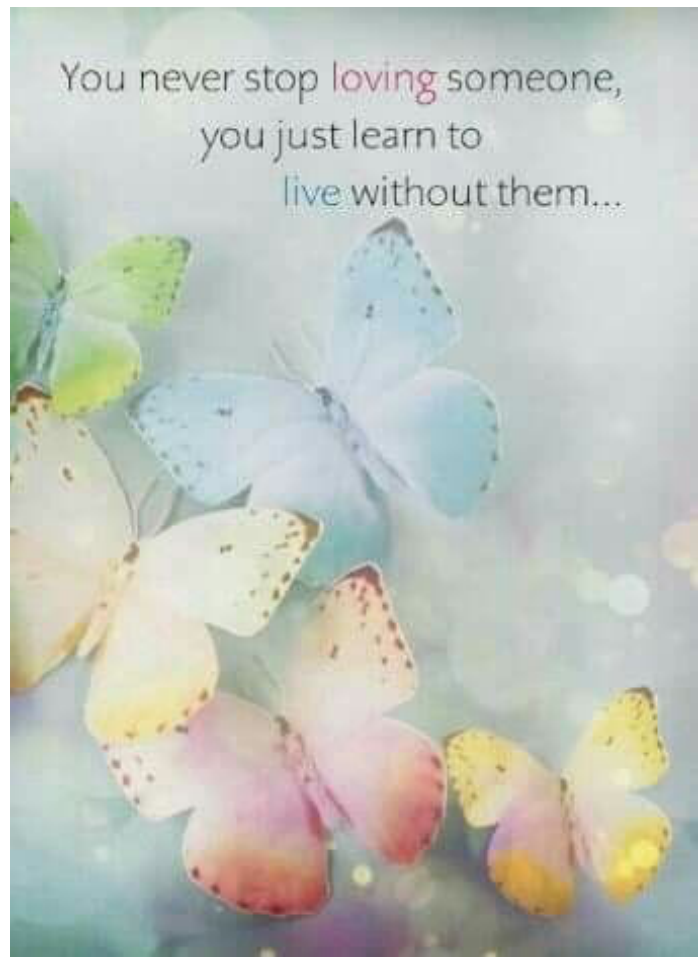
We would like to send a special Thank You to the following donors;

Mary Ann Kulp in memory of her son Tony.
"Another birthday (4-25) – miss you every day.
Love, Mom"

The Smith Family in memory of their son, Eric Robert Smith.

"Eric, we miss you so very much. Thanks for all of the signs. "

Don Croisette in memory of his daughter, Jacquelyn Dahms.
Jeanne E. Hofmann in memory of her grandson Kyle Silver's birthday. "Not a day goes by that I don't think of you, miss you and love you."



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 Day) _____

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

Love Gift Message:

Your Name: _____

Email or Telephone: _____

Address: _____

Checks payable to
TCF Quakertown Chapter
PO Box 1013
Quakertown, PA 18951

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



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

Next Meetings : May 14, June 11



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.

