

# The Compassionate Friends, Inc.

## Livonia, Michigan Chapter



**September 2016**  
**Volume 28, Number 9**

**The Compassionate Friends is an international self-help organization offering friendship, understanding, and hope to bereaved parents and siblings.**

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### **Meeting Information**

When: First Thursday of  
each month. 7-9 p.m.  
Where: St. Timothy's Church  
16700 Newburgh Road, Livonia,  
East side of Newburgh, 1/4 mile S. of  
Six Mile

### **Coming Events:**

**NEXT MEETING -September 1-**  
Regular meeting - First time table,  
topic table, sibling table. Topic: Re: If  
your child were to write you a letter,  
what would they say to you?

**Craft Day - September 10 - see page 8**

**September 20th** -TCF Dinner-at  
Brann's Steakhouse (39715 6 Mile,  
Northville, MI) sign up at meeting  
or call Kathy 734-306-3930 or  
katjrambo@wowway.com.

## September Memories

Many of our members have lost children of school age. Even for those whose children died before they could go to school or after they were finished with school, September often brings painful memories. Seeing children with brand new clothes and the latest craze in lunch boxes and book bags, lined up for the bus, brings back memories for all of us.

For some, we see children our child's age, progress to the next grade when he or she will never have that experience. For some, we remember putting our child on that bus, the last minute rush to replace outgrown clothes and buy school supplies.

For some, the pain is from the dreams we had of seeing our child go to school, dreams that our child never lived long enough to bring to fruition. Some of us have younger children who are now "passing" the age of our dead child, who should have been the older brother or sister.

In my case I have one daughter left, and I remember shopping for back-to-school clothes for two. I can't help but wonder what size Colleen would be wearing now. She'd be 12. Colleen rode in one of those little buses because she was handicapped. My mom used to hold her at the front door of her house,

swaying back and forth, saying, "Tick tock, here comes the bus." I often think of that when I see one of those little buses. Even after five years, I still look for #77, her bus

I guess I'm trying to say two things. First, we're all in this together; we experience different variations of the same pain. Second, we all have to expect that moments of nostalgia and longing will be with us. ALWAYS. The pain does dull somewhat with the years, but tears will always spring to our eyes at certain moments. The special days will always tug at our heartstrings in a way that non-bereaved parents will never fully understand. At least we have each other, people who know what we're feeling and do understand our pain. I'm glad we can be here for each other.

*Wayne Loder*  
*TCF Lakes Area, Michigan*

## Twenty-Five Years Later

Somehow it never occurred to me twenty-five years ago on August 11, 1988 that I would see myself in the far distant future writing about this long journey without our Kenneth. I couldn't see surviving more than one day at a time. In the beginning when I saw other Compassionate Friends who were five year survivors it was incomprehensible that they had even been able to go on

*(continued on pg. 4)*

# Our Children Loved and Remembered Always

*This month, we remember the children who are so deeply and sadly missed. Please take a few moments to place them and their parents in your thoughts.*

## **Let Us Remember Them Always**

<i>Child</i>	<i>Parent, Grandparent, Sibling</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Age</i>
Ben	Russi Arden	September 23	34 yrs
Stuart Joel	Marilyn Berman	September 26	38 yrs
Jennifer	Judy Brackenridge	September 13	4 months
Christopher David	Jim and Judy Cappelli	September 29	28 yrs
Michael	Elizabeth (Corky) Casey	September 18	27 yrs
Brandon	Leslie Cisco	September 30	21 yrs
Jeffrey	Linda Clein	September 20	29 yrs
Joshlyn	LaTonya Davenport	September 14	19 yrs
Wayne	Cindy Fortner	September 22	36 yrs
Amy Sandusky	Mary Gilliam	September 23	n/a
Howie	Howard and Hope Gross	September 18	27 yrs
Michael	Dietmar Haenchen	September 10	27 yrs
Craig	Ron and Kim Hale	September 20	26 yrs
Kameon	Jason and June Hedger	September 02	9 mos
Joe, Jr.	Joe and Marlene Hofmann	September 14	35 yrs
Carol	Barbara Jones	September 23	45 yrs
Jill Judd	Cathy and John Kolomyski	September 10	37 yrs
Rebecca	Kay Krajewski	September 16	32 yrs
John Eric	John & Jacquelyn Kuhn	September 07	29yrs
Kayla	Martin Martinez	September 14	11 yrs
Leanne	Connie and Darrel Mayle	September 26	25 yrs
Morgan	Renee McGregor	September 27	20 yrs
Matthew Mullins	Patricia Michael	September 26	31 yrs
Brandon	Marilyn Mootsey	September 20	22 yrs
Greg	Sharon Morganti	September 03	40 yrs
Todd	Judy Nesler	September 03	48 yrs
Rachael	Scott and Sue Reynolds	September 09	19 yrs
Elizabeth(Beth) Ann	Carol Mulkey-Ritz	September 17	48 yrs
Destinee	Paul Sanders	September 17	17 yrs
Kenny	Jeff and Mary Schmitigal	September 06	18 yrs
Kelly Joseph	Roger Shanks	September 18	28 yrs
Carson	Wendy Shiek	September 15	5 months
Ryan Morrison	Dave and Kathy Shinn	September 07	24 yrs
Scott	Frank and Lois Sinagra	September 21	27 yrs
Katie	Dennis and Peggy Still	September 02	31 yrs
Capt. John Spolsky	Norita and Tim Sullivan	September 05	26 yrs
Peter	John Szatkiewicz	September 01	37 yrs
Jason	Jim and Cathy Whitfield	September 21	17 yrs
Jesse	Jeff & Lynn Willis	September 20	22 yrs
Michael	Barbara Wise	September 03	39 yrs

## **Let Us Celebrate Their Births**

Ricky	Diane Arquette	September 09	32 yrs
Jeffrey	Kris Barry	September 27	34 yrs
2 Jourdan	Carrie Bobbish	September 17	17 yrs



Kyle	Steve Boron	September 26	16 yrs
Ronald	Yvette Broda-Kaczynski	September 29	22 yrs
Brandon	Leslie Cisco	September 02	21 yrs
Kianna Tubbs	Sherry Coleman	September 30	23 yrs
Matthew	Dan and Rosanne Courtright	September 20	27 yrs
Heather Nicole Hill	Dana Cowell	September 07	20 yrs
Patrick	Nick and Barb DeRosa	September 06	24 yrs
Brian	Denise and Christopher Falzon	September 18	19 yrs
Laura	Neil Hivala	September 20	33 yrs
David	Jan Jacobs	September 23	28 yrs
Annie M. Just	n/a	September 12	51 yrs
Gregory	Pat Knox	September 04	37 yrs
John Jerome	Mary Krill	September 20	44 yrs
Joel	Mary Krill	September 30	52 yrs
Rita	Celia Lowe	September 26	54 yrs
Karlie	Angela Martin	September 30	10 yrs
Sami, Jr.	Sam & Donna Mashni	September 21	25 yrs
Kayla	Scott and Marci Merath	September 01	21 yrs
Matthew Mullins	Patricia Michael	September 23	31 yrs
Felicia Moore	Stacy Moore	September 06	23 yrs
Monica	Karen Morris	September 20	12 yrs
Andrew (Drew)	Dan and Mary Beth Myska	September 19	23 yrs
Matthew	Judy Nesler	September 29	3 days
Brian Patrick	Pat and Janet O'Donnell	September 03	18 yrs
Maxwell John	John and Lisa Pardington	September 14	20 yrs
Eric	David Powers	September 08	18 yrs
Jason	Kathy Rambo	September 13	19 yrs
Michael Reilly, Jr. (Mickey)	Michael & Karen Reilly	September 07	51 yrs
Anthony	Karen Sapienza	September 05	22 yrs
Dennis	Dennis and Sophie Speer	September 18	26 yrs
Sharday	Vincent & Cynthia Taylor	September 19	26 yrs
David	Paul and Barbara Widzinski	September 03	16 yrs
John	Jackie Wireman	September 14	28 yrs
Kristen	Dennis and Cindy Wolff	September 01	24 yrs

### New Members

*We welcome new members. We are so sorry for the circumstance that has brought you here. Although we have no easy answers, we can offer you understanding through our common experiences. We also know how much courage it took for you to attend.*

Mike and Allison Lucan whose beloved son, **Bradley**, Born 4/05; Died 6/14; 20 years

Jim and Debbie Vincentini whose beloved sons, **David**, Born 5/23; Died 7/19; 22 years and **Nicholas**, Born 5/4; Died 4/05; 25 years

### Love Gifts

**A Love Gift** is a gift of money to Compassionate Friends. It is usually in honor of a child who has died, but may also be from individuals who want to honor a relative or friend who has died, a gift of thanksgiving that their own children are alive and well, or simply a gift from someone who wants to make a donation to help in the work of the Livonia Compassionate Friends. The money from Love Gifts is the main source of income for the Livonia Chapter, and allows the chapter to send out newsletters, rent meeting space, and reach out to those newly bereaved. See new Love Gift form on back page.

PLEASE FORWARD LOVE GIFTS TO: THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS,

C/O: RHONDA TEMPLE, 25164 Hanover St., Dearborn Heights, MI 48125

♥ Mary Himm – “in memory of my beloved daughter, Maureen”

♥ Sherry Coleman – “In memory of Kianna and Nathaniel”

♥ Jerry & Judy Tyrrell – “In memory of Shawn. We miss you so much. Love you”

♥ Sue Reynolds – “In memory of Rachael. It's been two years since we've seen your beautiful face and heard your laugh echo throughout the house. You are forever loved. Mom, Dad, Becca, Jacqlyn & Twinkie”



But here we are; twenty-five visits for every occasion and anniversary to the lake where we took his ashes. Death day, Birthday, Father's Day, Mother's Day, any day at all. Scatter our roses, release our balloons, drink in the beauty of nature while silently contemplating and communing with his presence. We never say much, we don't have to, we know each other too well.

There have been lots of changes since that terrible day; joys of new grandchildren, a great grandchild. Other sorrows and leave-takings of precious family members and friends. Life having its way.

We go on, we live, we laugh, we cry. But never for a moment do we forget to bring Kenneth's precious memory forward with us in all of our celebrations, sorrows and everyday situations that make us recall his laughter and funny sense of humour. We look at his pictures, hear certain songs, see a reflection of him in a smile, eyes, hair, eyebrows, lips, DNA all over the place!

As August 11 is the anniversary of Kenneth's death, so October 30 is the celebration of his birth. Kenneth would have turned 49 this year. It seems impossible to equate that age with the fun-loving, happy 23 year old he will forever be.

And so we go on twenty-five years later. Some things have changed: the acute pain of new grief softens into the rosy scar of an old battle wound. Sometimes it unexpectedly screams like the phantom pain from a severed limb, but only some times. Most times that dull ache is overcome by the joy and thanksgiving of having this loveable, quirky, all too human among us. The circle is unbroken. Thanks be.

*In loving memory of Kenneth Bruce Simmonds*

*He went fishing for the last time on the banks of the Thompson River.*

## Suicide and Stigma

My son, Philip, died in August 1994, when he was 26 years old. He died by suicide, influenced by a genetic illness, bipolar mood disorder. I well remem-

ber how I flinched inwardly when people began referring to Philip's having "committed suicide." It seemed to diminish my wonderful son, to make him into what he never was: a kind of criminal. I wanted people to remember the beauty of his soul, yet what they focused on was the shocking way in which he died.

So it has been personally important to me to learn that TCF has made a change in the language it uses related to suicide. TCF now uses the terms "died by suicide" or "died of suicide" in all publications and presentations. The new, emotionally neutral language helps lift the burden of stigma from all of us whose children or siblings died by suicide. It gives us strength and helps us heal.

If your child or sibling has died in one of society's less "acceptable" ways — by suicide, murder, alcoholism, from a drug overdose, AIDS or sexually transmitted diseases or in prison — do know that TCF does not accept society's stigmas.

There is no room for blame or condemnation when all our hearts are aching for the children we no longer have. We honour your child and your grief, no matter the cause of death.

Similarly, if you are a parent or sibling who may feel "other" in our oft-judgemental society, please know that you will not be "other" in TCF. We welcome you with understanding and compassion, whatever your age, your race, your ethnicity, whether you are rich or poor, married or single, gay or straight, whatever your religion or lack of religion. We welcome you.

And if you have endured the most terrible tragedy, if you have had more than one child or sibling die or have lost all your children or siblings, you are welcome. Many people are terrified that we are "contagious" because the worst nightmare has become a reality in our lives. They don't want to believe what we know: that neither we, nor they, can keep our children safe and alive. So they avoid us. And they especially may avoid you who

have had more than one child or all your children die, because the horror of what has happened in your lives terrifies them. We welcome you, and we honour your courage and want to be helpful to you in your healing. We offer our compassion and understanding to all parents and siblings and other family members who are on this very difficult journey into healing. May the unconditional acceptance one finds in TCF someday be mirrored in a wiser and more tolerant society .

*Kitty Reeve,*

*TCF/Marin & San Francisco, CA.*

*July 2013.*

## Dear Parents

I suspect you are wondering how you will ever make it through this loss. You feel an overwhelming load of grief that you wonder if you will be able to survive, or at least maintain your sanity. It is absolutely horrendous. I do not know of any experience that is as wrenching and tearing as the death of your child.

Death first visited me when I was eight years old. My father just fell over dead of a heart attack. My mother died a year and a half later. I have lost a step father, a step mother and a father in-law to death. But of all these experiences, none has been as profoundly grievous as the death of our son. Nothing in my life has ever caused me to feel so ripped apart as the death of our son.

I remember driving home alone from the hospital the day he died....I remembered only because I could not stop sobbing.

I remember the burial; I could not stop sobbing there either. I remember a year later attending the memorial service for the child of a friend of ours; Marilyn and I fell apart and went to pieces all over again. We said to each other, "Will we ever get over this?" No. You don't ever get over it. You don't ever forget. In time you move beyond the pain, yes. In time you come to believe that you will survive and not lose your mind. In time you feel restored and whole again, yes.

But you will never forget the loss of your child. I think that is good. We can move beyond, but we cannot forget; we do not want to forget. I think that is the way it must be.

It also must be that you wander sometimes aimlessly through the wilderness of anguish before you reach the promised land of peace and healing. It will take time. More time than we like to think. Each of us grievers needs to wrestle with the demons and dragons and despair of crazy thinking before we can begin to feel any kind of restoration and return to a sense of wellness. Pay no attention to those who would have you “get it over with” or “pull yourself together” or “get on with your life”. Grieve your loss as you must, not as others dictate.

God knows I feel with you in your loss. I want you to believe that the feelings you feel are normal even though they may frighten you and cause you to think that you are losing your mind. In all this, love yourself. Embrace yourself; and if you have a spouse embrace each other. Share your feelings. Be patient with yourself and each other. And you will slowly move through the valley of the shadows and finally step into sunlight once again. There are many of us who share your feelings. And even though you may not know us, believe that we walk with you in spirit on your journey.

*Dr. William Miller is a writer and pastoral counselor.*

*His son Karl Andrew, died when he was 3 days old.*

*Lovingly lifted from TCF, SWMB*

## If Only They Knew

If only they knew that when I speak of him, I am not being morbid. I am not denying his death. I am proclaiming his life. I am learning to live with his absence. For twenty-six years he was a part of my life, born, nurtured, molded and loved—this cannot be put aside to please those who are uncomfortable with my grief.

If only they knew that when I sit quietly, apparently content with my own company, I am not self indulgently

unhappy, dwelling on things which cannot be changed; I am with him. I am seeing his face, hearing his voice, remembering his laughter, recalling his excitement and joy in life. Please allow me this time with him, as I do not begrudge you your time with your children.

If only they knew that when I sometimes weep quietly, I do not cry in self-pity for what I have lost. I weep for what he has lost, for the life he loved, for the music that filled his very being, and for all he still longed to hear; for the poetry which moved him to tears, for the beauty about him that daily fed his soul, for the exhilaration and excitement of flying the skies, of searching for his God in the vast space of the universe. For all that he loved and lost, I cry.

If only they knew the feeling of deep grief, the emptiness, the dull pain, the endlessness of death. If only they understood the insanity of the platitudes so freely spoken—that “time heals”, that “you’ll get over it”, that “it was for the best”, that “God takes only the best”—and realize that these are more of an insult than a comfort, that the warm and compassionate touch of another means so much more.

If only they knew that we will not find true peace and tranquility until we are prepared to try to stand in the shoes of others. We will not be understood until we learn to understand compassionately and we will not be heard until we learn to listen with hearts as well as minds.

*Jan McNess,  
TCF Victoria, Australia*

## Memorials

After the death of a valued companion we seem to have a deep need to preserve their memory. We write about them; we collect objects that hold meaning about them; we gather people together to tell stories about them; we make their favorite food; we create jewelry that contains their cremains; or we write their name in the sand.

Makeshift monuments pop up where a tragedy has occurred—a cross

perhaps with flowers at the side of the road. The German word for monument is which means “thought object”. There is a loud shout that goes along with these monuments. “Think about it! Look what just happened. Every time you drive by here, remember and learn from this.” It seems to be the responsibility of those who loved and lost to hold the torch so others can see what is no longer here.

We name buildings, build lasting monuments, place plaques on objects, establish ongoing memorial gifts, as a way to honor, to appreciate, to educate about, or to continue the work of the one who died. Memorials can be grand, expensive and conspicuous, or they can be simple and draw little attention. They can be public or private. The individual meaning is what makes an object a memorial.

Memorials are also created as a way of coping with overwhelming grief. The word memorial literally means to remember. A parents whose child has died may find great comfort in getting a tattoo of their baby’s footprint or tattooing their baby’s name where others can see it and inquire about it, thus assuring that their child will always be remembered, and that the child will always be with them. Our infant loss group will soon unveil a memorial path that contains bricks with their baby’s names inscribed for all to see.

*Our Parents of Murdered*

Children group created a beautiful garden with a wall containing names of their loved ones who died a violent death.

I still have my mother’s coffee cup filled with powdered cream and sugar beside her memorial folder in our dining room. I look up and smile and greet her every morning. Her whistle still hangs on the dresser knob in my bedroom. She hoped at least I would not forget her and I haven’t .

Memorials help us to look back and move forward. We can safely continue on because we remember.

What we remember lives on.

*Pat Schwiebert, R.N.  
pat@tearsoup.com*

# SIBS

## Kaleidoscope

He shattered his life into a thousand pieces, casting a kaleidoscope of light and shadows.

To you he may have seemed broken, but to me he was beautiful.

I remember...

The brightest blue, the laughing eyes of a child at play.

Charcoal gray, the suit of a young boy, handsome and full of dreams.

Ivory white, smooth keys beneath the talented hands of a youth, searching for a song.

Muddled orange, the bouncing ball passed fleetingly from hand to hand in a teenager's game.

Olive drab, the uniform of a young man seeking meaning, seeking himself.

Yellow, the speeding car that symbolized the beginning, the end, freedom and capture.

Dull red, day in and day out, the shirt of a man paying a price of wasted days.

Shadow black, a place deep within.

A man too young to die was lost where no loved one could reach to shine the light.

Empty, the world without him in it.

For a while it seemed that life had lost all color.

Now, though, when it seems my world is filled with shadow black, I will think of a clear and bright blue, And I will try to remember a child's laughter.

*Stephanie Rice,*

*Robert's sister*

*TCF NE CT Chapter*

## Ugly Club

I guess I am a member of the "ugly club" because something ugly happened to me....both of my sisters were taken from me in one year. My oldest sister was suffering with Alzheimer's, so I expected her to leave us soon. But it was cruel the way she died: not knowing anyone. I wish I could have been there because she was always there for me, since she was 19 years older than me. She was a second mother to me.

My other sister was 12 years older than me. Being the youngest in the family, it is hard to watch your siblings get sick and die. I lived with her for 10 years after we both lost our husbands. So we became very close. We were both so different but enjoyed living together. After she was diagnosed with cancer, she only lasted a year. I really thought she would beat it like I had done 3 years before her.

Loosing a sister takes a part of you, but they leave so many memories behind to soothe one. Therefore we have to overcome the ugliness of unnatural death and go on with our lives.

I know they would have wanted me to live life in the fullest like they did.  
*Charlene Williams,*



## Autumn

In the fall

When amber leaves are shed,

Softly—silently

Like tears that wait to flow,

I watch and grieve.

My heart beats sadly in the fall;

'Tis then I miss you most of all.



## Need to Talk to Someone Between Meetings?

### TELEPHONE FRIENDS:

The people listed below have volunteered to take your calls:

Linda Houghtby - Long term illness - (734) 591-3062

Catherine Walker - Loss of Only Child - (248) 921-2938

Dave and Charli Johnston - Suicide - 734-812-2006

Joe Hofmann - Drug related death - 734-331-9919

Bob Vitolins - A father's grief - (313) 882-8632

Dana and Brandy Bumstead - Loss of an infant -(313) 447-8144

Kathy Rambo - Sudden Death - (734) 306-3930

**Remember that our chapter has a Facebook page. It is a closed page, so you just need to search for The Compassionate Friends of Livonia, Michigan and ask to join.**

### TCF CHAT ROOM

[www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org)

The chat rooms are moderated and are open at different times. There is one open most evenings from 10-11 p.m. They are all moderated which means that all the chat rooms have a trained facilitator in them.

**National Mailing Address:** PO Box 3696, Oak Brook, IL 60522; Phone: (630) 990-0010; Toll Free: (877)969-1101; Website: [www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org)

### OTHER TCF CHAPTERS IN OUR AREA:

**Ann Arbor:** Mike Fedel: MikeFedela2@gmail.com; 734-998-0360 ; 3rd Sunday, 2:30 to 4:30 pm - First Presbyterian Church (Vance Room)1432 Washtenaw, Ann Arbor

**St. Clair Shores:** 2nd Wed. Kathy Joerin ; 586-293-6176, KJMac21@aol.com

**Detroit:** Kellie West Outer Drive Methodist Church,12065 West Outer Drive, Detroit ; 2nd Wed., 6:30 - 8:30; 734-660-9557.

**Troy:** St. Paul's Methodist Church, 620 Romeo, Rochester, MI 3rd Thursday7-9; Tina@586-634-0239

**Pinckney TCF Chapter:** The Christian House of Prayer, 9949 McGregor Road, Pinckney, MI; 2nd Monday of the month, 6 - 8 pm; Jimmy Batchelor - 734-277-9705

**Tecumseh TCF Chapter:** First Presbyterian Church, 211 W. Chicago, Tecumseh, 4th Sunday of the month, 2-4 pm, Rose Hatchett, 517-270-3308.



## The Fall of Fall

What is it about the season  
That takes me back in time.  
Everything I do,  
I find you are on my mind.  
Haunting dreams find me  
At night when I try to sleep  
And every little detail is replayed,  
And the sadness falls so deep.  
Something about the close of summer  
Seems to bring it back  
Making it so hard to move onward and  
stay on track.  
Something about the dying and fading  
of the trees  
Brings my heart to sorrow, with the  
falling of the leaves.  
How I long to stop it, to keep the fall  
away  
But time marches on, and summer just  
won't stay.  
I know with the fall, winter's not far  
behind  
Another lonely season, and the memo-  
ries flood my mind.  
I cry my tears of sorrow, and pray for  
spring to come  
A rebirth of the earth, and the warm-  
ness of the sun.  
It makes the memories softer and gen-  
tler to recall  
But now my life is saddened with the  
nearing of the fall.

*Sheila Simmons*

*In memory of her son, Steven  
TCF Atlanta Online Sharing*

## There Were No Strangers

There is a tenderness among bereaved  
parents, a gentleness far beyond  
“normal” interactions with people  
in everyday life. We speak softly to  
each other and silently acknowledge  
our mutual vulnerability and fragility.  
That doesn't mean we might not hurt  
each other from time to time through a  
misunderstanding, but it seems to me,  
the hurt is never meant to be. We have  
hurt enough already.

Somehow, there is forgiveness among  
bereaved parents, forgiveness that  
comes from knowing we are just strug-  
gling human beings trying to make the  
best of our lives that will have, for-  
ever, an empty hole.

There is a quiet beauty among be-  
reaved parents, a beauty that comes  
out of the experience of being hit with  
such pain and love all mixed together  
that words completely fail us.

There is courage among bereaved  
parents, the courage to get up, get  
dressed, and face another day.

We look to each other for the tender-  
ness, the forgiveness, the beauty, and  
the courage. How often we say,  
“I'm so glad to know you... but I wish  
we had not met like this.” And then  
we often add, “But, would I...could  
I... have ever felt so close if it wasn't  
for the pain?” Strange, isn't it, how  
there are hidden gifts in the middle of  
unspeakable agony?

The closeness of bereaved parents  
and siblings is universal. I just re-  
turned from the National TCF Confer-  
ence in Washington, DC, where 1,500  
people, from all over the world and  
every walk of life, attended. It didn't  
take a name tag to identify each other.  
Formal introductions weren't neces-  
sary. The question, “What do you do  
for a living?” never came up. The  
words most often spoken were, “Tell  
me about your child (or brother or  
sister).”

There were no strangers. Even if you  
were not there... you were there. The  
invisible link ... is love.

*Alice Monroe*

*TCF, Mesa County, CO*

## Our Many Special Days

The beginning of the school year each  
fall seems to signal the coming holi-  
days. The commercial market starts  
stocking school supplies just after the  
Fourth of July; shortly thereafter, by  
late summer the school supplies are  
crowded out by all the paraphernalia  
of Halloween! A glimpse of Thanks-  
giving whizzes by and it is an all out  
affront on the Christmas season. After  
the death of our child we stumble  
around each year looking for the  
appropriate way of handling these  
seasons that once had so much joy to  
them.

But the calendar holidays are far from  
the only “Special Days” that bereaved

parents face. Our child's birthday and  
death date are especially hard days but  
also are the days relating to their ill-  
ness or other events that relate to their  
death date and funeral or memorial.

The most obvious days are not always  
the only hard days to live with. Rainy  
days, snowy days, starry nights can all  
trigger tugging emotions. Tuesday for  
laundry day may be the hardest day  
all year long. No bereaved parent will  
have the same feeling of a special day  
or have the same special day because  
our children were different people to  
each person. Because of this, like in  
everything else in our grief work, we  
have to allow space for each other's  
“bad” days. Each passing year after  
the death of our child finds us relating  
to special days differently each year. It  
is a continuing process never to return  
to that which used to be. As the years  
pass and we work hard at our “grief  
work” we will heal but that does not  
mean being like we were or doing the  
things we used to do. We are an evol-  
ving new person learning to live again.

*Gerry Hall*

*TCF Central, MO*

## Don't Steal My Grief

Don't try to make me feel better,  
By quipping your cute jokes.  
Don't try to rob me of my pain,  
When I need it as my cloak.  
I know you probably think,  
You're doing me a favor,  
But what you don't understand,  
Is that my sadness is my savior.  
Don't try to steal my right,  
To express my grief in my own way.  
You see, I lost my child,  
And grief is the price that I must pay.  
I need to feel the hurt and pain,  
As it beats inside my chest.  
Don't try to steal my grief,  
When it's the only feeling I have left.

*Faye McCord*

*TCF, Jackson, MS*

*In loving memory of my son, Lane*

“When your mind cannot find an  
answer, open your heart and ask for  
peace.”

*Sascha*

TCF Livonia Chapter  
Brenda Brummel  
10531 Calumet Trail  
Gaylord, MI 49735

September 2016

If any of you would be willing to get the newsletter via the internet,  
*please email me. Thanks, Brenda Brummel*

LOVE GIFTS

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

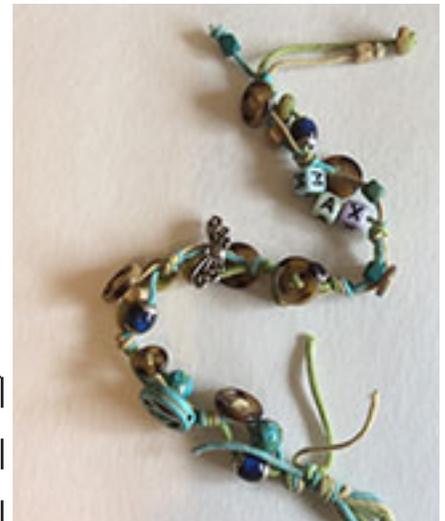
Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Love Gift Donation of \$\_\_\_\_\_ in Memory of \_\_\_\_\_

Message: \_\_\_\_\_

Direct my gift to: \_\_\_\_\_ Outreach (Printing, postage, phone , web  
\_\_\_\_\_ General Fund (90% local; 10% national)

Mail to: Rhonda Temple, 25164 Hanover St., Dearborn Heights, MI 48125



September Craft Day

Our monthly craft day will be held on September 10, 2016 at the home of Kathy Rambo's from 10 am until 1:00 pm.

We will be making memory bracelets using string, charms and buttons. If you have some special buttons from your child's shirt or clothing and would like to use them, please bring them along. There will be a sign up sheet and examples at the Sept. Chapter meeting. Any questions, call Kathy at 734-306-3930 or Gail at 734-748-2514. Cost: \$3.00