



**THE
COMPASSIONATE
FRIENDS**
Rim Country Chapter

Rim Country Chapter
P.O. Box 3482
Payson, AZ 85547
(928) 978-1492

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

August 2010

RIM COUNTRY CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

VOL. 4 NO. 8

MISSION

The mission of The Compassionate Friends is to assist families toward the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child of any age and to provide information to help others be supportive.

Payson, Arizona

Meeting Information

2nd Tuesday of the month -
Doors open at 6:15PM
Meeting Begins at 6:30 PM

Ponderosa Baptist Church
1800 N. Beeline Hwy
(Just South of Home Depot &
the Roundabout)

Chapter Website

www.RimCountryTCF.org
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info@rimcountrytcf.org

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CompassionateFriends.org

Regional Coordinator:

Gene Caligari 480-361-1877

Last month, I went to visit family in Colorado. While at a golf event, a butterfly began circling around me for probably 15 or 20 minutes stopping only occasionally to land on my Compassionate Friends bracelet that I was wearing. It was truly remarkable. I always love when I see a butterfly come past and just for a moment I think it's Dalton simply passing by to say hi. To many people, it was just a butterfly cruising by but to me it was so much more.

The Compassionate Friends embrace the butterfly as one of our symbols--a sign of hope to us that our children are living in another dimension with greater beauty and freedom, and that we may be able to build a new life after the death of our beloved children. Since the early centuries, the butterfly has symbolized renewed life. The caterpillar signifies life here on earth; the cocoon, death; and the butterfly, the emergence of the dead into a new, beautiful and freer existence.

So, speaking of our symbol, we finally have a date scheduled for this years **Butterfly Release**. Please mark you calendars for **August 28th at Rumsey Park**. We will have a potluck lunch around noon and release the live butterflies at 1:00PM. It will be a really nice event to honor our children. Stay tuned for further details.

Our regular meeting this month will be on **August 10th at 6:30PM**. If your child's birthday or "Angelversary" occurs in August, please bring your child's favorite treat to share. Feel free to also bring a picture or remembrance of your child to display.

Wishing you peace, *Bill*

For the Newly Bereaved.....

There is no detour around bereavement. There is no short cut in the mourning process. It must be worked through. As you are empty, so is the world around you. You are living a nightmare. You think, "I have touched the bottom of despair. I can't go any farther".

You do go farther.....you may cry hysterically, or you may remain outwardly controlled, showing little emotion. Reactions are varied and contradictory. Not all questions have answers. Unanswered whys are parts of life. You reject the overtures of your friends. How dare they talk of your future when you know life holds nothing for you? Your heart is breaking ---- and they offer you clichés. Accept their companionship, but you need not take their advice. Do what is best for you.

Grief is universal. At the same time it is extremely personal. Heal in your own way. Of course, your weeping will not bring back your loved one, but that's why you cry --- because you cannot bring your beloved one back to life.

Mental health is the recognition of pain and the attempt to live with it. This depression is not weakness; it is part of the mournful work of saying "good-bye" to your beloved. You are more aware than before of what is significant and what is trivial.

From *Living When a Loved One Has Died*, by Rabbi Earl Grollman

We are a self-help support organization that is dedicated to assisting parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles and siblings toward the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child. We also aim to provide information and education to extended family, friends and coworkers desirous of being supportive to our Chapter members.

We gather to listen, to care, and to understand the process of grieving as we start our recovery process and attempt to heal. Our greatest strength as bereaved families is the unity we find in shared experiences which can lead us out of isolation, give us a place to "belong", and offer us hope that together – we can make it.

Suffering forces us to change.

We don't like change and most of the time we fear it and fight it.

We like to remain in emotionally familiar places even through sometimes those places are not healthy for us.

On occasion, the suffering is so great that we have to give up.

*We surrender the old and begin anew.
Often it is the pain we experience that leads us, not only to a different life,
but a richer and more rewarding one.*

Dennis Wholey

There is brokenness
out of which comes the unbroken.

There is a shatteredness
out of which comes the unshatterable.

There is a sorrow beyond all grief
which leads to joy,

And a fragility out of whose depth
emerges strength.

There is a hollow space too vast for words
Through which we pass with loss.

Out of whose darkness
we are sanctioned into being.

- Rashini -

smallest wingless

Dear one we've been waiting for you.
Thrilled, beside ourselves you've arrived.
White coats came in heads held low.
Talked for a bit, shuffled outside.

We closed the curtains, held each other and cried.
Said hello at the same time we said goodbye.

Smallest and wingless
Leaving as soon as you arrived.
Sadness is just love wasted
with no little heart to place it inside.

We closed the curtains held each other and cried.
Said hello at the same time we said goodbye

- [Craig Cardiff](#) -

Summer Grief



Summer grief is like a slow and humid summer's day full of heat and flies and dark greens. This kind of grieving is slow to build, long to stay. It takes its time to rise to the surface. It sits there for days, just sits there. Gets hotter. Stays hot. Just won't go away.

The summer grief heat wave can last for weeks. No easy release. No fast build up and no fast outburst. Just steady heat scorching everything day

in day out. Scorching heat like desert heat. Even the nights don't cool off.

It feels like nothing is moving, but the heat won't go away. It feels like nothing is moving, but the grief and the aching heart won't go away. It feels like the grief is just sitting there, burning like hot desert sun. Just sitting there.

Summer grief needs company. Company which can handle a long walk without many words. Company which loves to sit and watch the sun setting quietly. Friends and family who will let us know that we are loved. Without needing much in return. That this too shall end. Even this slow and steady heat.

How long can this last? How long will this last?

And then the grief season changes. More stages of grief. Grief finds another way to make itself felt. Yet another way.

Ulla Mentzel, M.A.

Are you There?

by Diane Robertson



Misty breeze wraps about my shoulders, thinly clad.
I shiver not, despite the coolness on my skin.
Comfort, I now feel.

Is it you my precious Angel?
Are you there? I cannot hear your quiet voice,
But bird song fills the air

From high treetops to grassy marsh.
I wonder – is it you, Dear? Are you there?
The roses in your garden bloom large,
And varied in hue from crimson deep, to barely pink.
I cup the velvet bud, its fragrance soothes a troubled
mind.

This must be you, my little girl. Are you there?
Are you the fiery autumn maples,
Or the star-like flakes of snow?
Are you the sparkle in the water of the lake that we both
loved,
Or, perhaps, the warmth I feel in the sand beneath my
toes?

Though your quiet voice I cannot hear,
Nor can I see again your sparkling eyes,
Or feel your dainty hand laid gently on my own,
You are here.

For memory's book will never close –
Each lovely sound, or sight, or scent,
Another page from special times that we have shared.
Oh, yes! You are here child – everywhere!

Summerwind

The one who owns summer is not here,
Not here to know the tender summerwind,
Not here to share the glowing and the song.
The one who owns this summer did not live,
Not live to touch the richness of this day,
This in summer when you are alone.
Weep to the summerwind,
Weep and love again the one you remember.

Sascha Wagner,
The Sorrow and the Light

Living After a Child Dies



While death is something that affects us all and no one is immune, during the course of our lifetimes we don't expect our children to die before us. Dealing with the death of a child is a very difficult issue. As most of you know, the death of a child is like losing part of ourselves. Losing something that feels irreplaceable. Bereaved parents often equate it to losing a limb.

Research tells us that the average person will have to make funeral arrangements at least three times during their lives. We will attend funerals of people with whom we are very close as well as those to whom we are not very attached. We all go through life knowing we will most likely bury our parents. We also know that we might bury our spouses, our relatives, and our friends. However, there is

one form of death that we don't expect. We never expect or anticipate having to bury one of our own children.

The death of a child is not a part of the cycle for which we are prepared. We hope and we pray that it will never happen to us. Why does a child die when he or she has lived such a short time? Why is a child's life ripped away in their prime? Why at a time when they haven't even had a chance to live a full life?

The death of a child can be the most difficult form of grief to deal with. It causes us to confront our deepest fears and examine our strongest beliefs. We never give thought to burying our child. It just isn't the natural order of things. When a parent dies, we lose our present; when our spouse or partner dies we lose our present; when a child dies we lose our future: all that we had hoped for, not only for our child, but for ourselves as well. It's painful to say good-bye to our child as well as to all the dreams we had for the future.

Children can be one of our greatest teachers. If adults listen, a lot can be learned. There is something about a child's perspective that can be really comforting. Just before his death a terminally ill six-year-old hugged his mother and said, "Don't worry, Mommy; it is okay for me to die because I won't be in pain anymore and I will be in heaven living with God." The words of this six-year-old were filled with wisdom. Healing from a child's death can take a very long time. Many things might re-open the wound, for instance, seeing a boy or girl the age of your child; watching someone else's child grow up, or just sitting next to a child in a place of worship can all be excruciating. As can the question of "How many children do you have?" It is hard to know how to answer that question. Do you answer, "I have three children but one is dead," or "I have two" and not mention your deceased child? There is no right or wrong answer; it is okay to decide each time, depending on the situation.

Certain days are obviously going to be more difficult. Birthdays, graduations, vacations, or other anniversary dates or holidays can be very painful. You hurt so much because you loved so much. These are normal grief reactions to losing your beloved child.

When a child dies parents often don't know if they will survive; the pain is so great that it feels like they may die of a broken heart. One mother said, "I wondered if I would ever be able to feel anything again except anger and sadness. I am so glad to say – yes, eventually I found hope and joy again, but it was a continuous journey with ups and downs." Grief is hard work. Finding a support group such as The Compassionate Friends can be an important lifeline. Being with people who understand the intense pain that is being experienced can be very helpful in the healing.

The death of a child is devastating, but it also can provide an opportunity for an individual to become a "wounded healer." When a person has healed from their wound, they can be there for someone else who is just at the beginning of their grief. Many people who have had a child die give back to others by just being there.

When dealing with the pain and grief of a child's death, take time to do the work of grief. Grieve in the way that best works for you, talk about your feelings, be gentle with yourself, and remember that this is not a path that has to be walked alone. There are loving and caring people who are willing to be there with you. Reach out, get support, and know that only the strong know when to ask for help.

By Howard R. Winokuer, PhD, LPC, NNC, FT
Heidi Horsley, PsyD, LMSW< MS

The Butterfly In Our Lives

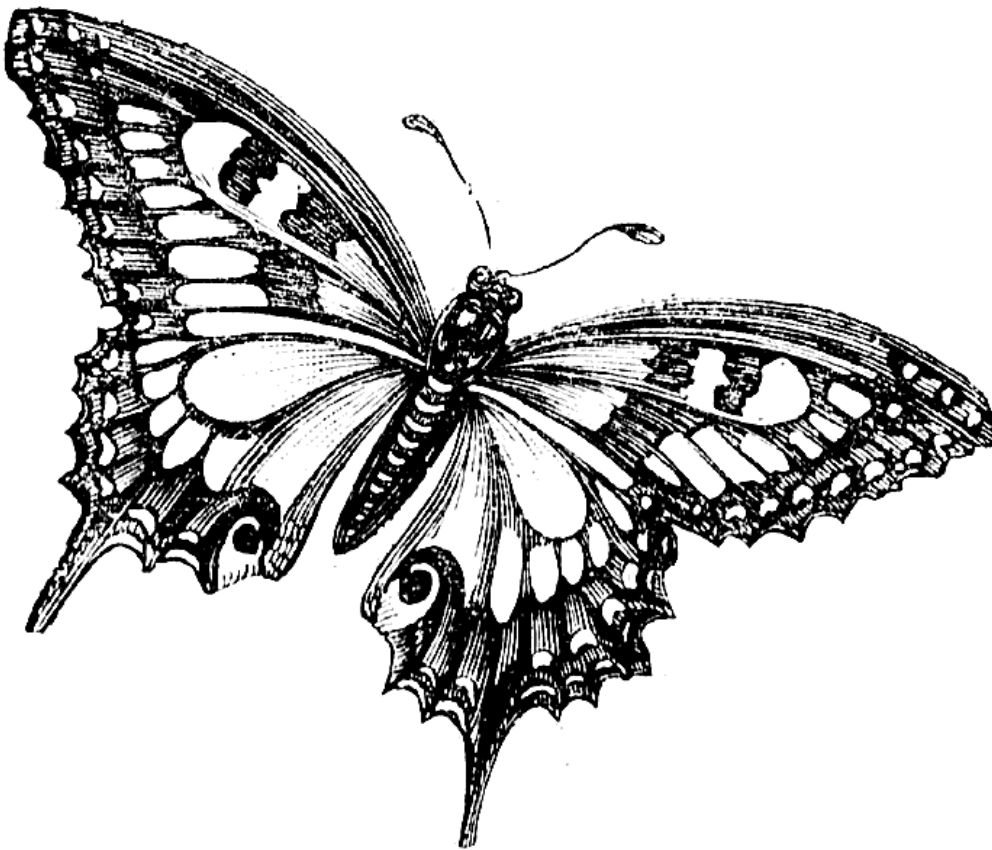
We often hear of the butterfly representing the lives of our children who have died. Their spirit lives on and our memories live on, often in fleeting movements. But I think the butterfly's life cycle metamorphosis could just as easily represent our own lives. We seem to fit the four stages.

THE EGG

When we are small, we are protected, changing, living in a somewhat small and safe world-much like a butterfly egg attached to a leaf somewhere.

THE CATERPILLAR

The caterpillar is much like our lives before death of our child or children. We go through the day doing what we need to do. We grow a lot and we change somewhat slowly. We devour many things in daily life- work, church, Little League. And then the child is gone. We change!



THE COCOON

After death of our child, we shut our selves off from so much because of our grief. We often encase ourselves in the blanket of grief and depression because that is what protects us from the horrible pain. We don't want to be a part of life because of all the painful memories. There are reminders out there which cause pain.

THE BUTTERFLY

The pain lessens and we begin to heal as we work through the grief process, we begin to see a ray of light -a little color. Some of the weight is removed. We break open our cocoon and begin to reach out ever so slightly and touch life again, just to see if it will hurt too much. As we discover the brighter days and brilliant colors of life we become more like a butterfly. We are free to once again be a part of life, and we can move about more easily and begin to take some nectar from life.

Compassionate Friends Credit Card

The Compassionate Friends is happy to be able to present The Compassionate Friends Capital One Visa Platinum Card, a charge card designed to help The Compassionate Friends raise funds and awareness, while allowing us the opportunity to remember our children, siblings, and grandchildren in a different way than ever before.

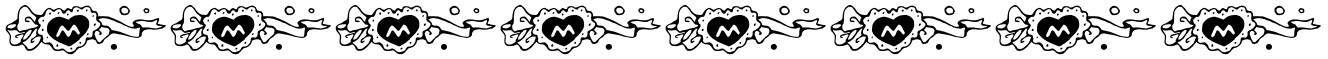
After you've been approved for and receive your card, upon making your first purchase, ***The Compassionate Friends will receive a \$50 donation.*** In addition, when you use the card elsewhere, TCF will receive a percentage of every purchase. This can range from 1% to 2% and, as a bonus, when you purchase at select merchants using this card, the organization will receive up to 10% of the cost of everything you buy (these include over 300 online merchants and over 480 participating in store retailers--national chains such as Rite-Aid, Starbucks, Pizza Hut, and Barnes and Noble).

We have three great branded designs to show your support of The Compassionate Friends. When you use one of TCF's designs, every time you pull out your card and make a purchase, someone will learn about The Compassionate Friends. This is great public awareness for our organization!

You have all the benefits of a Capital One Visa Platinum card--and the contributions from your card may be tax deductible (please consult your tax advisor regarding how tax laws may apply).

But, this isn't just any credit card. Here are some of the benefits of The Compassionate Friends Capital One Visa Platinum Card (for details, view the [Complete Guide to Credit Card Benefits](#)) at compassionatefriends.org:

- Extended warranty program
- 24-hour roadside assistance
- 24-hour travel and emergency assistance
- Auto rental insurance
- Return Protection
- Travel accident insurance



LOVE GIFTS AND DONATIONS

A love gift is to **"REMEMBER THE LIVES OF OUR CHILDREN."** Since TCF has no membership dues, we rely upon tax-deductible donations for funds to pay the chapters expenses: printing and mailing of our newsletter, books for our lending libraries, our phone message line and information packets sent to newly bereaved families and professionals in the community. Books donated for our libraries and volunteer work for your chapter also qualify as "love gifts." Make your checks payable to The Compassionate Friends and mail to: PO Box 3482 Payson Arizona 85547. **Love gifts received prior to the 23rd of each month will appear in the following month's newsletter.**

MEMORY PAGE

If you wish to have your child remembered on our Memory Page, please complete the form below and Mail to PO Box 3482, Payson Arizona 85547

PARENT(S) NAME(S) _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP _____

PHONE _____

CHILD'S NAME _____ M or F (circle)

DATE OF BIRTH _____ DATE OF DEATH _____

Enclosed is a love gift in memory of my child to help defray costs of the Rim Country Chapter:

_____ \$5 _____ \$10 _____ \$25 _____ Other **THANKS!!!!**

The anniversary of your child's birth and death are often extremely painful days. We ask that you keep in your thoughts the parents who are observing such days. In this newsletter is the memory page update. If you haven't sent one in yet, please take a moment to fill it out and send it in. We would like to share your memory days with you.

Our children ... always loved, missed, remembered ...

AUGUST 2010 MEMORY PAGE

- KEITH PATRICK CALDWELL... Son of Patty Behm**
- JADE DANIELLE BROOKS... Daughter of Stacy Brooks**
- HAL STEVEN PEACHER... Son of Carol Cavanaugh**
- LACEY OLDLAND... Daughter of Mark & Lynn Gardner**
- MICHELLE LYNN HEATH... Daughter of Chuck and June Heath**
- AUSTIN MOFFETT... Son of Barry & Lauree**
- MILA CASSIE PHILLIPS... Daughter of Keith Phillips**
- SARAH ELIZABETH SALWITZ... Daughter of Michael & Georgia Salwitz**
- RANDY K WOOD... Son of Sue Scovel**
- JASON VINCENT TAYLOR... Son of Tom & Chris Taylor**

AUGUST 2010 LOVE GIFTS

Jack & Barbara Gooch in memory of KAITIE GOOCH
Carol Cavanaugh in memory of HAL STEVEN PEACHER



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***We Need not Walk Alone.....
We are The Compassionate Friends.***

E-mail us at info@rimcountrytcf.org or call us at 928-978-1492 if you would like to submit articles, be added to or removed from this newsletter mail list or to correct information.

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

**We need not walk alone...
We are The Compassionate
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We reach out to each other with love, with understanding and with hope. Our children have died at all ages and from many different causes, but our love for our children 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 circum-



stances.

We are a unique family because we represent many races and creeds. 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 we feel helpless and see no hope.

Some of us have found our faith to be a source for strength; some of us are struggling to find answers. Some of us are angry, filled with guilt or in a deep depression;

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 our children. We are all seeking and struggling to build a future for ourselves, but we are committed to building that future together as we reach out to each other in love and 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 grieve as well as to grow.