



**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

January 2010

RIM COUNTRY CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

VOL. 4 NO. 1

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 -
6:30 PM—8:00 PM
Ponderosa Baptist Church
1800 N. Beeline Hwy
(Just South of Home Depot
& the Roundabout)

Chapter Website

www.RimCountryTCF.org
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Regional Coordinator:

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CHAPTER NEWS

Many thanks to everyone who attended our Green Valley Park Candlelight Walk and the December Candlelight Remembrance Service & Dinner. From the feedback I've heard, both events were very well received. We sure appreciate everyone's participation and help in setting up & cleaning afterward. It made for two wonderful evenings.

As we start 2010, our steering committee will begin making plans for events to be held throughout the year. We would love to hear from you if you have any ideas or suggestions. If you are interested in serving on the steering committee, we would love to have you. We are also looking for a newsletter editor. If you have any interest in helping to put together our monthly newsletter, we would be glad to talk with you, work with you, train you; what ever it takes to help you help us.

Our meeting this month will be on **January 12th**. If your child's birthday or "Angelversary" occurs in January, you are welcome to bring your child's favorite treat to share. Feel free to also bring a picture or remembrance of your child to display.

May you find Love, Hope and Peace in 2010

Bill



A New Year's Wish

I wish you gentle days
and quiet nights.
I wish you memories
to keep you strong
I wish you time to smile
and time for song.
I wish you friends
to give you love,
When you are hurt and lost
and life is blind.
I wish you friends and love and
peace of mind.

Sascha Wagner



New Year Goals

The holidays are over and I bet you're glad about that. You did make it through though, and by now maybe some of the stress of that powerful time has left you. Next year you will find you learned from this year, no matter how many years it has been and I hope it will be easier for you, too, in the years ahead.

If you made New Year's resolutions, I hope they included:

- To try to take it one day at a time.
- To forgive yourself for whatever it is you feel you did wrong.
- To figure out ways to resolve your anger so you can let go of it.
- To concentrate on and value what you have let go as much as what you have lost.
- To let those you value know how important they are to you.

These are important steps forward. Try to be good to yourself in the New Year...

Mary Cleckley, TCF, Atlanta GA



New Year

The New Year comes
When all the world is ready
For changes, resolutions-
Great beginnings.
For us, to whom
That stroke of midnight
means
A missing child remem-
bered,
For us, the New Year
comes
More like another darkness.
But let us not forget
That this year may be the
year When love and hope
and courage
Find each other somewhere
In the darkness
To lift their voices and
speak:
Let there be light.

by Sascha Wagner

HAPPY NEW YEAR??

Happy New Year," my friends wish me. And I mimic them back, "Happy New Year to you too." But what I'm really thinking is... "Are you CRAZY ????" How could I possibly have a happy year when I have lost my child? No, they're not crazy, many of my friends just don't know what it's like to lose a child. And what I really wish for them, is that they never know what the years are like for me now.

For us, tragedy has come into our lives, and the years are never the same as before. It's possible that our priorities change, our relationships change, and our daily lives change. Each of us faces the changes in our lives and finds ways to cope. There is no right or wrong way to cope with our grief, just our own individual way to make it through the years, often with the help of others.

Without our child, our lives morph into a new dimension... and a new direction. My life now includes many moments of spiritual reflection, perhaps yours does too..... When memories of our child consume us, when we long for just one more day with our child, when we get "pennies from heaven," when we catch a glimpse of a shadow across the room, when we feel the brush of a kiss on our cheek....

Each year, I have managed to find moments of peace that comfort my soul..... moments of joy that brighten my day..... and moments of love that will last forever.

As you face this new year, I wish you moments of peace, joy and love....forever.

Wintersong

*Season of lights, season of love and
peace*

Season of shadow, season of memories

*Season of warmth & joy, season of
secret tears;*

Give us the courage to laugh again

Give us the vision to hope again

Give us the power to love again

For all our new seasons

And all our new years

*By Sascha Wagner,
from her book "Wintersun"*



The Holidays Are Behind Us

It is the new year. The holidays are behind us. We did with them what we could. Whether they were a time of sorrow, a time of joy, or a combination of each, they are now a part of our memories. In a strange way, as a memory in our hearts and in our minds, our child's place is there amongst all the other memories of the season. There is hurt along with the memory, but also thankfulness for the memory.

Now we look out on a winter landscape. The earth is cold, the land sharply defined. Yet underneath the hard crust, the great energy and warmth of our earth is guarding and providing life to all that grows.

We may personally know the coldness and hardness of a grief so fresh that we feel numb; a grief so hurtful that our body feels physically hard; our throats tight from the muscles pulled by tears, shed or unshed; our chests banded tightly by the muscles of a mourning heart.

If we are not now experiencing this, our memories recollect so easily those early days. Yet, as we live these days, like the earth from which we receive our sustenance, we, too, in our searching, find places of warmth and change and love and growth, deep within.

Let our hearts and minds dwell in these places and be warmed and renewed by them, and let us have the courage and love to share them with our loved ones, to talk about even that first dim shape of new hope, or of new acceptance, or of new understanding, or of new love.

These are the new roots, born of our love of our child, forming and stirring within, gathering strength so that our lives, at the right time, can blossom once again and be fruitful in a new and deep way.

Marie Andrews
TCF, Southern Maryland

Beatitudes for Those Who Comfort

- Blessed are those who do not use tears to measure the true feelings of the bereaved.
- Blessed are those who do not always have a quick “comforting” answer.
- Blessed are those who do not make judgments on the bereaved’s closeness to God by their reaction to the loss of their loved one.
- Blessed are those who hear with their hearts and not with their minds.
- Blessed are those who admit their uncomfortableness and put it aside to help the bereaved.
- Blessed are those who do not give unwanted advice.
- Blessed are those who allow the bereaved enough time to heal.
- Blessed are those who continue to call, visit, and reach out when the crowd has dwindled and the wounded are left standing alone.
- Blessed are those who know the worth of each person as a unique individual and do not pretend that they can be replaced or forgotten.
- Blessed are those who realize the fragility of bereavement and handle it with an understanding shoulder and a loving heart.

By Jackie Deems
From *Bereavement Magazine*, May 1989

A New Year’s prayer A Jewish Prayer

I remember in this solemn hour, beloved child, the many joys you afforded me during your lifetime.

I recall the days when I delighted in your physical and mental growth and panned your future.

Tho death has taken you from me, you are not forgotten.
Your spirit is enshrined in my heart.

Oh, Heavenly Father, I thank you for the precious gift which Thou did entrust to my keeping and which in thy definite wisdom, Thou has called back unto Thyself.

Tho few were the years wherein I rejoiced with my child,
Many are the blessing that he brought into my household.

Teach me to live more nobly and to extend my love and devotion to other children in thankfulness for the privilege of having had and loved this child, tho but for a few brief years.
Thus may his soul be bound up in the bond of life and his memory remain an inspiration to me.

Amen

—*From the Gates of Prayer Union Prayer book*

Resolutions for Bereaved Parents

I will grieve as much and for as long as I feel like grieving, and that I will not let others put a timetable on my grief.

I will grieve in whatever way I feel like grieving, and I will ignore those who try to tell me what I should or should not be feeling and how I should or should not be behaving.

I will cry whenever and wherever I feel like crying, and I will not hold back my tears just because someone else feels I should be "brave" or "getting better" or "healing by now."

I will talk about my child as often as I want to, and that I will not let others turn me off just because they can't deal with their own feelings.

I will not expect family and friends to know how I feel, understanding that one who has not lost a child cannot possibly know how it feels.

I will not blame myself for my child's death, and I will constantly remind myself that I did the best job of parenting I could possibly have done. But when feelings of guilt are overwhelming, I will remind myself that this is a normal part of the grief process and it will pass.

I will not be afraid or ashamed to seek professional help if I feel it is necessary.

I will commune with my child at least once a day in whatever way feels comfortable and natural to me, and that I won't feel compelled to explain this communication to others or to justify or even discuss it with them.

I will try to eat sleep and exercise every day in order to give my body strength it will need to help me cope with my grief

I will know that I am not losing my mind and I will remind myself that loss of memory, feelings of disorientation, lack of energy and a sense of vulnerability are all normal parts of the grief process.

I know that I will heal; even though it will take a long time I will let myself heal and not feel guilty about feeling better.

I will remind myself that the grief process is circuitous-that is, I will not make steady upward progress. And when I find myself slipping back into the old moods of despair and depression, I will tell myself that 'slipping backward' is also a normal part of the grief process and these moods, too, will pass.

I will try to be happy about something for some part of every day, knowing that at first, I may have to force myself to think cheerful thoughts so eventually they can become a habit.

I will reach out at times and try to help someone else, knowing that helping others will help me to get over my depression.

Even though my child is dead, I will opt for life, knowing that is what my child would want me to do.

Nancy A. Mower
TCF, Honolulu, HI

This Can Be A Constructive, If Not Happy Year

Happy New Year???? How can it ever be happy again? How will I ever make it through another year of this torment? When we are hurting and so terribly depressed it is hard to see any good in our New Year....but we must try.

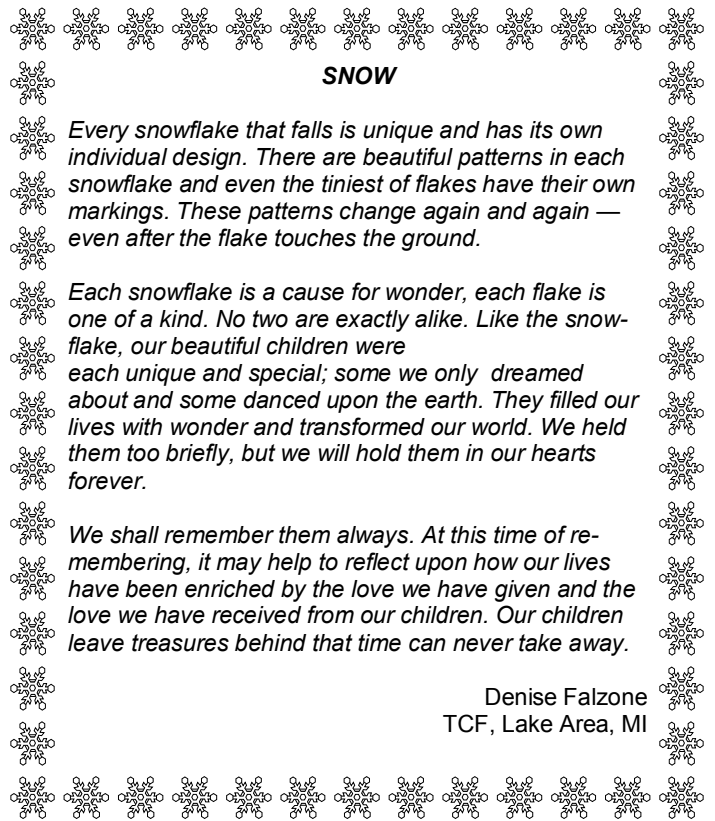
First, we must hold on tightly to the idea that we will not always be this miserable, that we will someday feel good again. This is almost impossible to believe but even if we don't believe it.....we must tell ourselves over and over again that it is true.....because it is! Many parents whose children have died in the past will attest to this. Remember, also no one can suffer indefinitely as you are suffering now.

Second, we must face the New Year with the knowledge that this year offers us a CHOICE...whether we will be on our way to healing this time next year or still be in the pit of intense grief. We must remind ourselves that if we choose to be on our way to healing by the following year, we must work to get there and that work entails allowing ourselves to go through our grief, to cry, to be angry, to talk about our guilt, to do whatever is necessary to move towards healing.

Third, we must look for good in our lives and find reasons to go on and accept the fact that our continued suffering will not bring our child back. Many of us have other children and a spouse for whom we must go on. Most importantly, we have our own lives that must be lived. Most of us know that our dead children would want us to go on!

No, this coming year may not be a happy one, but it can be a constructive one. Through our grief we can grow and become more understanding, loving, compassionate and aware of the real values in life. Let us not waste this New Year.

—Margaret Gerner
Arthur's mother
Emily's grandmother
St. Louis, MO BP/USA



New Year's Day Felt Different This Year

Yes, I survived New Year's Day and yes my grief over Cameron's sudden accidental death has gotten softer.

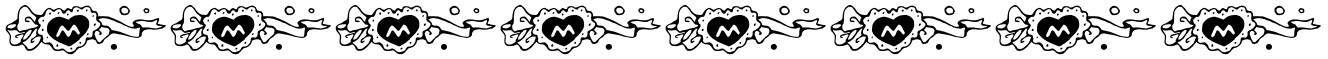
When I was new to this journey known as grief, I heard people say, "Time heals." "Your grief will reach a tolerable level," and "grief gets softer as time goes on." I could not imagine that any of these statements could be true. I just couldn't see myself getting to that point. I thought people were just saying those things to make me feel better, however, it turns out they were right.

My son, Cameron, died June 4, 1999 in an automobile accident. While I dreaded the holidays especially Christmas, I really did not dread New Year's Day. I'd heard a lot of talk about the new millennium. Some people looked forward to it, while others feared it would cause all sorts of computer glitches. I'd even heard Cameron talk about the new millennium. I am not sure what he thought would happen, but I didn't think too much about it, so when I woke up on January 1, 2000 and immediately started crying my first thought was that Cameron hadn't lived in this year. Time was truly moving on without Cameron. I felt so sad!!! The pain and grief was too intense.

This is the 5th New Year's Day without Cameron and this year it was O.K. Yes, I still miss Cameron but I didn't feel the gut wrenching pain I felt on that first New Year's Day after his death.

Yes, this New Year's Day was definitely better and my grief has become softer with the passage of time.

—Martha Honn
Cameron Smith's mother
Southern IL Chapter BP/USA



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 ...

JANUARY 2010 MEMORY PAGE

- JULIA WRIGHT... Daughter of Rachel Bryant**
- RODNEY WAYLAND LUMADUE... Son of Carol Cavanaugh**
- CORY JAMES CLARK... Son of Robbin & Chuck Clark**
- SHAWNDRA RAE FREEBURG... Daughter of Tony & Kim Freeburg**
- BARBARA JEAN GRAHAM... Daughter of Bob Graham**
- JAMES GILLEN GRAHAM... Son of Bob Graham**
- DALTON WILLIAM KNAUSS... Son of Marilyn & Bill Knauss**
- SARAH ELIZABETH SALWITZ... Daughter of Georgia & Michael Salwitz**
- VICTOR ZAMORANO... Son of Karen & Claudio Zamorano**



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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.

Newsletter printing & mailing donated by Able Steel Fabricators in memory of Cory James Clark

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

**We need not walk alone...
We are The Compassionate
Friends.**

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.