



**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

March 2010

RIM COUNTRY CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

VOL. 4 NO. 3

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

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CHAPTER NEWS

If you have never attended a meeting or have not attended in a while, we welcome you to attend at ANY time. We all know how difficult it is to walk through those doors.

Please know that you will find a safe place to talk about your children with people who all understand the pain of losing a child. You can just sit and listen or feel free to tell your story. Talking is never required. You will be welcome no matter how your child died, how long it has been or at whatever age they died.

We are trying to cut down some of the costs associated with printing our monthly newsletter. If you would like to receive our monthly newsletter by email instead of the printed version, please send us a note at info@rimcountrytcf.org

Also, we are still looking for a newsletter editor. If you have any interest in helping to produce our monthly newsletter, we would love to have you.

We are planning to spend about 3 hours on **Saturday morning, March 13th** cleaning up our Adopted Highway Section (mile marker 238 to 239). We will be buying lunch at the Rye Creek Restaurant for anyone who comes out to help. So invite your friends and family. We'll be meeting at 9:00AM and cleaning up the Northbound lane. Heading south on 87, you can turn around at the Deer Creek Village entrance and then find a safe place to park your vehicle. We have a few fluorescent yellow vests but depending on turnout, we may not have enough for everyone. So, please wear something bright.

Our meeting this month will be on **March 9th**. If your child's birthday or "Angelversary" occurs in March, 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.

Wishing you peace

*Those who leave us in the springtime
of their lives, will greet us again in
a land where springtime is eternal.*

Spring is Coming

If you are newly bereaved and looking toward your "first" spring, you may be surprised by some of the feelings you may experience during the next few weeks. We hear so much about the beauty of spring - the new life and the feelings of renewal that are supposed to accompany this lovely time of year.



During my "first" year, I expected that spring would cheer me up, and make me feel lots better. How surprised and frustrated I was when, on one of those truly magnificent spring days as life seems to burst forth everywhere, I was "in the pits." When a friend said to me, "Doesn't a day like this really lift your spirits and make you feel better?" I had to reply honestly that I was having a really bad day --that the sense of loss and emptiness was greatly intensified.

Gradually, I began to realize that my expectations for spring were unrealistically high. I had looked forward to spring with the wrong kind of hope. When we are newly bereaved, we are constantly looking for something to take away the pain and make our lives all right again. Unfortunately, there is no magical event or moment when this takes place. It does happen, but only with time and the grief work which we all must do before we can be healed.

The coming of spring cannot make everything okay again. What it can do, however, is remind us that regardless of what happens in our lives, nature's process will continue, and that can offer us hope. I am looking forward to spring this year. I welcome the sun's warmth, the return of the birds from their winter in the south, and forsythia, the daffodils and the greening of the world. Know that someday you will once again welcome spring. Be gentle and patient with yourself and with nature.

Don't expect too much. Be ready to let a little of the hope that spring can offer into your heart.

-Evelyn Billings
TCF Springfield, MA

Your Gentle Face

Your gentle face and patient smile
With sadness we recall,
You had a kindly word for each
And died beloved by all.

The voice is mute and stilled the heart
That loved us well and true,
Ah, bitter was the trial to part
From one so good as you.

You are not forgotten loved one
Nor will you ever be,
As long as life and memory last
We will remember thee.

We miss you now, our hearts are sore,
As time goes by we miss you more.
Your loving smile, your gentle face,
No one can fill your empty place.

My Angel in The Sky

My angel in the sky,
who comes to me
in dreams at night.
You left me without
a single word,
but when I close my eyes,
your voice is heard.
Telling me you'll be alright,
that you're not scared,
you're in the light.

And now whenever
I need you near,
I close my eyes
and you appear.
You're my angel in the sky,
who comes to me
in dreams at night.
To let me know
that you're alright,
you are with God,
you are in the light.

by Tanya Kendall

"Who You'd Be Today"

Kenny Chesney

Sunny days seem to hurt the most.
I wear the pain like a heavy coat.
I feel you everywhere I go.
I see your smile, I see your face,
I hear you laughin' in the rain.
I still can't believe you're gone.
It ain't fair: you died too young,
Like the story that had just begun,
But death tore the pages all away.

God knows how I miss you,
All the hell that I've been through,
Just knowin' no-one could take your place.
An' sometimes I wonder,
Who'd you be today?

Would you see the world? Would you chase your dreams?

Settle down with a family,
I wonder what would you name your babies?
Some days the sky's so blue,
I feel like I can talk to you,
An' I know it might sound crazy.
It ain't fair: you died too young,
Like the story that had just begun,
But death tore the pages all away.

God knows how I miss you,
All the hell that I've been through,
Just knowin' no-one could take your place.
An' sometimes I wonder,
Who you'd be today?
Today, today, today.
Today, today, today.

Sunny days seem to hurt the most.
I wear the pain like a heavy coat.
The only thing that gives me hope,
Is I know I'll see you again some day.
Some day, some day, some day.



Thoughts At A Parent's First TCF Meeting

What am I doing here? Who are all those people? They can't all have lost children. Well, maybe I'm not the only one after all.

I'm Sure they aren't all bereaved parents. Some of them are actually laughing and smiling. If they have lost a child, they didn't love theirs as much as I loved mine or they would never laugh again.

Uh-Oh, they want me to go into another room, one with a smaller group – and they say I'll have the opportunity to talk about what has happened and my feelings. No Way!

What if I should cry? In front of all these strangers? I'd be the only one, I'm sure I won't say anything. And why should I listen to all these other parents? They can't help me. I'll never come back. I definitely won't say anything.

Wait a minute! That mother is crying- and she's saying the very things I've been feeling and thinking. There's another one. I feel as though they've been the old proverbial fly on the wall and have observed what I've been through. They're saying what I've been feeling and some of them are crying and nobody thinks there is anything wrong with it. They are simply offering them a box of Kleenex.

Well at least no one has said, "It was God's will," and they haven't offered me any foolish advice. We were advised by the "old timers" not to take anything home that we didn't bring with us since we've got all we can handle right now. I'll try to be glad there is an understanding place where we can bring our pain and people will listen.

It's strange. I don't want to be eligible to come to this place, but these parents seem to be the only ones who understand.

Well, maybe I'll give it another try.....

Mary Cleckly
TCF- Atlanta, GA

Inner Tempest Stilled

by Beenie Legato

Sometimes I sense a little flutter.
Like a shadow swiftly slipping by.
Or I hear a silent, gentle murmur.
Like a soft whisper from out the sky.
Sometimes... I hear you call my name,
Or clearly see your face before me.
And I feel that you are with me still.
Then peacefully... I come to know

As I am thinking happy thoughts of you
You, my son, are thinking of me too.
Loving memories fill my aching heart.
As dreaming dreams of what could be.
Or might have been, if you were here.
Until the piercing pain of losing you
Comes tumbling down on trembling fear.
And clearly once again I hear you say,

"But Mom... What if I had never been.
You could not then in LOVE remember me."

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!

Death of a Child
by Sandy Eakle



Sorry I didn't get to stay.
To laugh and run and play.
To be there by your side.
I'm sorry that I had to die.

God sent me down to be with you,
to make your loving heart anew.
To help you look up and see
Both God and little me.

Mommy, I wish I could stay.
Just like I heard you pray.
But, all the angels did cry
when they told little me goodbye.

God didn't take me cause He's mad.
He didn't send me to make you sad.
But to give us both a chance to be
a love so precious .. don't you see?

Up here no trouble do I see
and the pretty angels sing to me.
The streets of gold is where I play
you'll come here too, mommy, someday.

Until the day you join me here,
I'll love you mommy, dear.
Each breeze you feel and see,
brings love and a kiss from me.

To All Parents
by Edgar Guest

"I'll lend you for a little time a child of mine," He said.
"For you to love the while he lives and mourn when he is dead,
"It may be six or seven years, or twenty-two or three,
"But will you, till I call him back, take care of him for me?"

"He'll bring his charms to gladden you, but should his stay be brief,
"You'll have his lovely memories, as solace for your grief,
"I cannot promise he will stay, since all from earth return,
"But there are lessons taught down there I want this child to learn.

"I've looked the wide world over in my search for teachers true,
"And from the throngs that crowd life's lanes I have selected you.
"Now will you give him all your love, nor think the labor vain,
"Nor hate me when I come to call to take him back again?"

I fancied that I heard them say: "Dear Lord, Thy will be done!
"For all the joy Thy child shall bring, the risk of grief we'll run.
We'll shelter him with tenderness; we'll love him while we may,
And for happiness we've known forever grateful stay.

"But should the angels call for him much sooner than we'd planned,
"We'll brave the bitter grief that comes and try to understand."



In the Springtime of Your Grief



Spring has fragile beginnings; a tiny shoot of green that emerges from the cold earth, a hint of pastel against the brownish grass, a bud that awakens with the morning sun. Sometimes spring comes so quietly we almost miss it, but once it begins, it is impossible to ignore the daily growth and change. The morning sun brings sounds that were not there before. The breeze carries warmth that invites us to venture outside of ourselves. A promise is released with the budding and blossoming surrounding us. Hope emerges for the beginning of a new season; change is in the air.



What we experience in the springtime of the year is what we can experience in the springtime of our grief. There begins to be a growing radiance. The radiance is not just around us; it is within us. A gradual warming of the heart silences the chill of intense pain. The natural unfolding of the grief process moves gently to remind us that we will survive. Life is changing and growth emerges through the changes. The song of our hearts that seemed off key begins to experience a harmonious blend of the past and the present. The songs of the birds invite us to join them in a celebration of a new life. In the springtime of our grief, there can be a new song for us to sing. It will be a song we composed through the heartache of loss.



Optimism for a better day may awaken us one morning. Hearing laughter and discovering it is coming from within ourselves gives us promise for today. Dreams and hopes for a better tomorrow shine brightly with the morning sun. Surviving the winter of our grief with the openness to embrace change is a decision to embrace loss and integrate its impact into the fabric of our lives. It can be a willingness to explore new possibilities that create a different landscape to behold.



We can make a decision that we will begin to appreciate what we still have, not just focus on what is missing. We will know when we have made that decision. Something buds; something opens. The harshness of winter is softened with new life and new growth. It is not something we can force; it is something that unfolds when the time is right. The springtime of grief arrives with no dramatic entrance, no flashing lights. The stillness of the beauty unfolds and captures our attention. It is happening around us, but it is also happening in us.

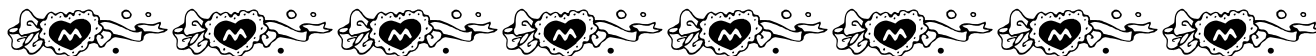


If spring has already crossed the path of your personal journey of grief, rejoice! But, if the chill of winter remains in your heart, be encouraged; spring is on its way. Look for it, expect it and it will be yours to experience around you and in you!



— Judi Fischer
Cleveland, Ohio
Bereavement Magazine





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 _____

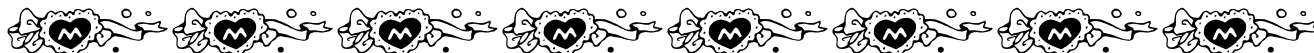
CHILD'S NAME _____ M or F (circle)

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 ...

MARCH 2010 LOVE GIFTS

**Patty Irvin in memory of son WILLIAM "BILLY" FRANK MANNING
The DEK Foundation in memory of DALTON WILLIAM KNAUSS
Jack & Barbara Gooch in memory of Granddaughter KAITLYN (KATIE) GOOCH
Carol Cavanaugh in memory of Daughter LAURA LEIGH HAMMOND**

MARCH 2010 MEMORY PAGE

**KENNETH CHARLES HARTNELL... Son of Ben & Laura Hartnell
DALTON WILLIAM KNAUSS... Son of Bill & Marilyn Knauss
CORY JAMES CLARK... Son of Chuck and Robbin Clark
ASHLEY ALLEN... Daughter of Tracy Allen
COREY SCOTT GIBBONS... Son of Charles Gibbons
RUSSELL BRANDON WEAVER... Son of Gaye Stidham
LAURA LEIGH HAMMOND... Daughter of Carol Cavanaugh**



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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...
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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.