



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

*Rim Country Chapter
P.O. Box 3482
Payson, AZ 85547*

A national non-profit, self-help support organization offering friendship, understanding, and hope to families grieving the death of a child of any age, from any cause.

NOVEMBER 2008

RIM COUNTRY CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

VOL. 2 NO. 11

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.

CHAPTER NEWS:



Thank you to all who attended and brought food & goodies to the picnic/butterfly release. It was a nice turnout. The weather was a bit cool for the butterflies so next year we'll plan it about month earlier. Still everyone enjoyed the day. Our next event is the Annual Candlelight Memorial Walk at Green Valley Park. Invite your friends and family for an evening of remembrance. The date is December 14th 6:30PM to coincide with the worldwide candlelight ceremony. More details to follow.

OUR NEXT MEETING is Tuesday November 11th

Payson, Arizona Meeting Info

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

E-mail Address

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CompassionateFriends.org

Regional Coordinator:

Gene Caligari 480-361-1877

TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Coming to your first meeting is the hardest thing to do. But you have nothing to lose and everything to gain. Try not to judge your first meeting as to whether or not TCF will work for you. The second, third, or fourth meeting might be the time you will find the right person—or just the right words said that will help you in your grief work.

TO OUR OLD MEMBERS

We need your encouragement and support. You are the string that ties our group together and the glue that makes it stick. Each meeting that we have new parents **THINK BACK...** what would it have been like for you if there had not been any “oldies” to welcome you, share your grief, and encourage you? It was from them you heard, “your pain will not always be this bad; it really does get softer.”

Common Bond

By Michele

We have a common bond
A silver lining that binds each heart
It unites us in the end and teaches a brand new start
We've each experienced heartbreak
Like a rushing river's flow
We've felt such tears of sorrow
And we become afraid to just let go
Overwhelmed by such grief
That reveal great aches in our soul
Wondering why love hurts so much
As we loose our sense of whole
Our sunny days become cloudy
Our nights bring on a chill
We pray for a bright tomorrow
As we try to just get over that hill
We try to stay busy
Busy enough to forget our pain
And put that smile upon our face
And wonder if we're insane
We understand each other
Without ever saying a word
And with one small touch
We know that we were heard
I'm grateful you have a loving family
In whom you can rely
I'm happy you have someone
To hold you when you cry
I'm grateful to the Lord
That in his love we can depend
And I pray for each of you daily
That your hearts will truly mend
Although our lives have changed
And the pain will some what subside
I'm truly grateful for this group
With hugs and support to be your guide
This thread that binds our hearts
A bond that will not fray
I thank you all for sharing
In your special way
My words so small I give as a gift
To this group so proud and strong
But remember when all is said and done
God bless you all life long



JUST FOR TODAY



Just for today
I will be happy!
Just for today
I will search for and find
A new beauty to gladden my heart
As in the days of my long ago.

Just for today
I will put yesterday with its pain behind me
And bask in the warmth of today.
I will lift up my eyes to sunshine,
Let my fingertips touch
The glad rays of a new day.
My peace shall not be of yesterday or tomorrow,
My peace shall be of today!

WE ARE ONE WITH YOU



We are your children absent from view, In the place where all answers are revealed to you.
We remember your moist eyes, filled with love when we were born,
And how you carefully unwrapped us, counting fingers and toes.
Whether we left you the day we were born, soon after, or at age 2 or 9 — even 16 or 35 —
We want you to know that in another place we are alive.
We're as far away as the stars, yet close enough to gently kiss your cheek each night.
Through the seasons we watch you as you stumble through the snow or try to enjoy a new spring.
We're a light, aromatic breeze that blows through your hair,
We wish to tenderly breathe joy and laughter back into your life.
Your shoulders are bent over from the terrible burden you bear; you're missing us is heavy, we've
noticed every tear.
We stopped counting your tears after a million, knowing more would appear.
We still feel your love and remember your nurturing care.
We're so close to you, whispering in the wind, the "I love you's" we hope you can hear.
So dear Mother, dear Dad, we now have full knowledge and know you are so sad.
Together, we, your children, hold each others hands, and stand united in golden warmth, bright
light and love.
We are together, not alone here, but we also remain with you.
We're really very near.
We love you, We are one with you. We await your arrival.
We'll be here smiling, with our arms open wide, to welcome you to the wondrous world where we
reside.



LIFTS TO THE HEART

PREPARING FOR THANKSGIVING

By: Elaine Stillwell
Bereaved Mother
Rockville Centre, NY

Many of us who are grieving feel that Thanksgiving is a useless and painful holiday because we do not feel very thankful with our terribly hurting hearts. Maybe we could prepare our hearts for Thanksgiving by peeking into them to find at least one and maybe even more blessings that we could count at this special time of the year.

After I lost my two oldest children, 19 year old Peggy and 21 year old Denis, in the same car accident, I learned that the tiniest thing that could ease my heart's burden was indeed a blessing! Discovering these "lifts to the heart" may help you prepare your heart for Thanksgiving. Sometimes amid all the pain, we forget what we could be grateful for. Take an "inventory" of your heart. Perhaps you could be thankful for:

THE STRENGTH TO GET UP EACH DAY

—even if it is not fun. Grieving takes 10 times the energy to get through a day. Exhaustion can be one of the hardest parts of grieving.

THE LOVE OF ONE SPECIAL PERSON

—whether it be spouse, child, or friend giving us encouragement and support. I call my husband "my blotter" because he picks up all my tears and says, "It's okay."

SOMEONE NEEDING OUR LOVE

—a person giving us reason to live, to nurture, to plan for, to hug.

A SPECIAL HOBBY OR INTEREST

—an activity that consumes our time and keeps our mind busy. It could be reading "grief" books to survive, writing our thoughts in a journal, making crafts, playing the piano, listening to music, planting a garden, walking along the beach.

A JOB

—that keeps our attention and makes hours, days, weeks, and months pass quickly.

PICTURES

—that makes special moments treasures and keeps our happy memories very much alive.

THE YEARS

—we had with our loved one.

SOMEONE REACHING OUT TO US

—in a special way. It could be a new friend, a fellow employee, a support group.

MUSIC OR POETRY

—that soothes our soul.

A PET

—that makes us laugh, listens to our troubles and never tells anybody, who allows us to cry and needs us. I could never "repay" my 15 year old Labrador retriever for his untiring devotion!

CLERGY AND DOCTORS

—who try to help heal us.

A LINKING OBJECT

—something that belonged to our loved one and brings joy to our hearts, such as a ring, bracelet, watch, jacket, book, golf clubs, garden.

FAVORITE RECIPES

—of our loved one that brings smiles to our faces. It's French Toast for my Denis and Angel Food Cake for my Peggy!

THOUGHTFUL RELATIVES AND FRIENDS

—who have tried to understand our needs and not frustrated us with a “time and schedule.”

TRADITIONS OR RITUALS

—that bring a moment's peace to our hearts. Going to the beach, watching a football game, lighting a candle, hanging a Christmas stocking, coloring Easter eggs, attending church services — whatever touches your heart.

NATURE

—a pretty flower, a sunset, a gorgeous mountain or ocean view—to stir the love of beauty in our hearts.

CARDS

—with just the right message—to let us know someone cares about us or remembers our loved one in a special way.

THE PHONE

—to heal us when we're feeling low and need to talk to someone else.

BOOKS

—to bring a soothing message to our weary hearts and to give us a “thought” to carry us for the moment.

PRAYER

—to our loved one or to our God or both to send us strength to keep us going through the “Valley of the Shadow.” Talking to our loved one helps our hearts. Including them in our plans makes them a part of the occasion. I always put Peggy and Denis “in charge” of the weather for our special events like weddings and parties. They do such a good job that friends ask for their help too. In addition to the weather, Peggy and Denis are great at finding parking places.

TIME

—that gives back to us what we lose through wisdom and memories.

**May your Thanksgiving be filled with reasons to be thankful!
Having loved and having been loved is perhaps the most wonderful reason of all.**

FOREVER CHANGED

Can you see the change in me? It may not be so obvious to you.

I participate in family activities. I attend family reunions. I help plan holiday meals.
You tell me you're glad to see that I don't cry anymore.

But I do cry. When everyone has gone—when it is safe—the tears fall.
I cry in privacy so my family won't worry.
I cry until I am exhausted and can finally sleep.

I'm active in church. I sing the hymns. I listen to the sermon.
You tell me you admire my strength and my positive attitude.

But I'm not strong. I feel that I have lost control, and I panic when I think about tomorrow...
Next week... next month... next year.

I go about the routine of my job. I complete my assigned tasks. I drink coffee and smile.
You tell me you're glad to see I'm "over" the death of my loved one.

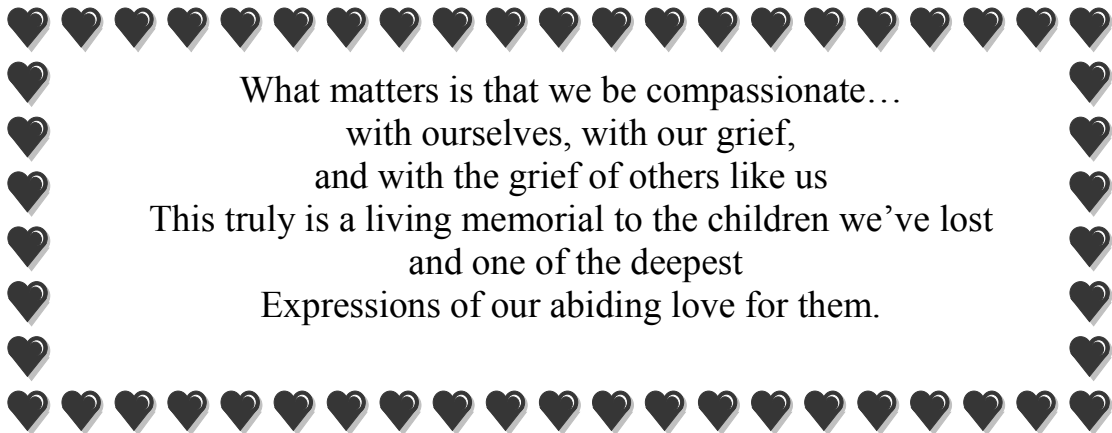
But I'm not "over" it. If I get over it, I will be the same as before my loved one died. I will never be the same.
At times I think I am beginning to heal, but the pain of losing someone I loved so much
has left a permanent scar on my heart.

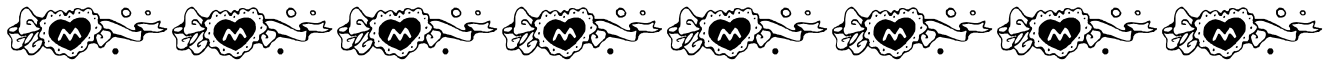
I visit my neighbors. You tell me you're glad to see I'm holding up so well.
But I am not holding up well. Sometimes I want to lock my door and hide from the world.

I spend time with friends. I appear calm and collected. I smile when appropriate.
You tell me it's good to see me back to my "old self".

But I will never be back to my "old self". Death and grief have touched my life.
And I am forever changed.

Rhonda Wilson, Asheboro, NC





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 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 25th 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 _____

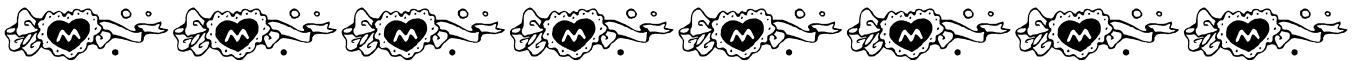
CHILD'S NAME _____ M or F (circle)

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 November. 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.



NOVEMBER MEMORY PAGE

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

AARON KELLY GARDNER...son of MaryAnn Gardner, was born on 11/2/1976

JAMES GILLEN GRAHAM...son of Robert Graham, died on 11/19/1988

WILLIAM FRANK MANNING...son of Patricia Irvin, was born 11/7/1969—died 11/28/1991

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

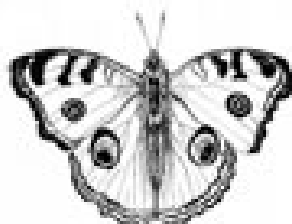
E-mail us at info@rimcountrytcf.org or call us at 928-978-1492 if you receive this newsletter and do not wish to receive it or to change an address or add an address.

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. 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 circumstances.



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.