



**THE
COMPASSIONATE
FRIENDS
CINCINNATI-EAST CHAPTER**

**PROVIDING AN EXTRA MEASURE OF CARE FOR BEREAVED PARENTS,
GRANDPARENTS & SIBLINGS**

July, August, September 2011

Chapter Leader: Joel & Carol Terbrueggen (513) 271-6809
Newsletter Editor: Annette DeCamp (513) 886-1634
Regional Coordinator: Dean Turner (614) 402-0004

Treasurer: Joe Trevino (513) 731-1714
Librarian: Diana Trevino (513) 731-1714
Website: www.tcfcincy.com

This newsletter comes to you from our support group known as THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS. We want you to know we care about you and understand your suffering. We are all united by the tremendous pain caused by the death of our loved ones. We wish you had not become eligible to join and are here to help. We do invite you to attend our meetings, even though sharing your intense grief with others can be difficult. We will provide you with a place to come and talk or just listen, a place to come and cry or console those who are crying, and above all, a place to come and be understood. If possible, bring a friend or relative with you to the meetings to give you extra support. Please realize, you are not alone and together we will make it through this intense part of our lives.

**We Need Not Walk Alone...
We Are The Compassionate Friends.**

**GREATER CINCINNATI-EAST CHAPTER
ST. TIMOTHY'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
8101 BEECHMONT AVE.
CINCINNATI, OHIO 45230**

The TCF group meets on the first floor of the building, in parish hall. Enter the building at the west entrance. From Ohio take I-275 East, from KY. At I-471 take I-275 East, to the Five Mile Rd. exit (#69). Go north to Beechmont Ave. Turn right and go 1.2 miles (five lights) and turn right into St. Timothy's Episcopal Church parking lot.

**Meets the fourth Tuesday of the month at
7:00 p.m. (Except for December)**

**GREATER CINCINNATI-WEST CHAPTER
FRANCISCAN TERRACE OF ST. CLARE CENTER
80 COMPTON RD. (HARTWELL)
CINCINNATI, OHIO**

Take I75 North, turn left on Galbraith, right on Vine, and left on Compton at Hardee's. Go to 2nd parking lot adjacent to the Franciscan Terrace at St. Clare's Center. Meeting located in meeting room next to swimming Pool adjacent to outside Gazebo and Statue of St. Frances. For those coming South on I-75, turn right On Galbraith and follow as above.

**Meetings are held at 7 p.m. the first Monday
of the month (unless that Monday is a holiday,
then the meeting is held on the second Monday).**

MISSION

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

The Compassionate Friends National Office

P.O. Box 3696

Oak Brook, IL 60522-3696

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(877) 969-0010

The Compassionate Friends (TCF) is a national nonprofit, self-help support organization which offers friendship and understanding to families who are grieving the death of a child of any age, from any cause. There is no religious affiliation. There are no membership fees or dues, and all bereaved family members are welcome. Founded in England in 1969, it was established in the U.S. in 1972, with 501I (3) not-for-profit incorporation in 1978, under which provision our 600 local chapters also qualify. The mission of TCF is to assist families in the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child and to provide information to help others be supportive.

**Greater Cincinnati-East
Steering Committee**

Chapter Contact –

Joel & Carol Terbrueggen

Treasurer – Joe Trevino

Newsletter – Annette DeCamp

Librarian – Diana Trevino

Love Gifts – Joe Trevino

Website Manager – Tim Vinson

Additional Members – Carol McGary

Marsha Lohbeck

Dianna Mitts

Telephone Friends

Ann Hall 859-356-5232

Grandson – Kyle – Drowning

Jackie Guthier 513-474-5810

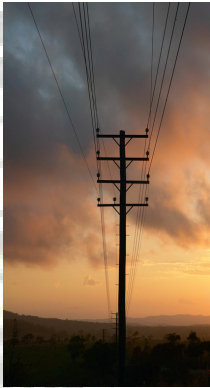
Grandson – Kyle – Stillborn

Marsha Lohbeck 513-236-5827

Son – Keith – Suicide

Tim Vinson 513-943-1322

Daughter – Heather – Auto Accident



*On days when you just need someone, remember
the telephone friend list. We are here for you!*

*Are you ready to be a telephone friend?
Contact Carol Terbrueggen (513) 271-6809*



*Grief is neither a sign of weakness nor a lack
of faith, it's the price we pay for love.*

D. Sims, Footsteps



*Grieving is as natural as crying
when you are hurt, sleeping when you are
tired, eating when you are hungry, or
sneezing when you nose itches!
It is nature's way of healing a broken heart.*

Rabbi Earl Grollman (Calhoun, Michigan TCF Newsletter)



LOVE GIFTS – The Compassionate Friends Groups (TCF) depends entirely on voluntary contributions from individuals and organizations to meet Chapter expenses. Please consider making a monetary contribution in your child's name to the Cincinnati-East Chapter of TCF to help defray our expenses. Also, check with your employer to see if it has a foundation or fund that matches charitable contributions. You may be able to get a match of funds to your donation. Donations are tax deductible, please request a receipt if needed. If you have any questions or want to make a donation, contact Joel or Carol Terbrueggen (513) 271-6809, or mail donations to Joe Trevino, 2355 Section Rd., Cincinnati, OH 45237

**On behalf of all the members of the East-Chapter, we would like to thank all of those who
donated Love Gifts in the months of: April, May and June
(A donation list will be in the next Newsletter, so sorry for the delay. Annette)**

Religion and TCF- The Principles of The Compassionate Friends state that TCF reaches out to all bereaved parents across the artificial barriers of religion, race, economic class, or ethnic group. Further, TCF espouses no specific religious or philosophical ideology. Despite our nondenominational status, many writers indicate that they have found comfort in their faith, and some have shared their anger and loss of faith. The opinions and beliefs expressed in letters, articles and poetry are those of the contributors.

MEETING REMINDERS:

**GREATER CINCINNATI-EAST CHAPTER
ST. TIMOTHY'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
8101 BEECHMONT AVE.
CINCINNATI, OHIO 45230
Meets the fourth Tuesday of the month at 7:00PM
(Except for December)**

**Next Steering Committee Meeting – TBA
At the Anderson Township Kroger on Beechmont
Ave in the Cafeteria area 6:30pm**

We hope to see you there, your input matters!

WHAT DOES TELLING OUR STORY DO FOR US?

- ❖ Heals
- ❖ Nurtures
- ❖ Gives meaning to the life of our loved child/sibling/grandchild
- ❖ Gives meaning to our lives
- ❖ Helps and even heals others



Upcoming Meetings:

**July – Guest Speakers:
Ron & Barbara Woprice**

**August – Guilt and Regret
Facilitated By: Dianna Mitts**

September – TBA

Mark your Calendars! October 25, 2011

Susan Carlson from the West Chapter will facilitate the second half and share her Artwork.

You don't want to miss this inspiring presentation!

If you haven't been receiving e-mail notifications about meetings, and would like to receive them, please send your e-mail address to Joel Terbrueggen at joelt@cinci.rr.com

Who, then, can so softly bind up the wound of another as he, who has felt the same wound himself?

--Thomas Jefferson

More Meeting Information:

What is the memory board? Many of us feel our child (children) around us as we gather to remember them and our memory board gives others a visual of the dear sweet part of us we are missing. The memory board is displayed at each meeting and kept with our supplies until the next meeting. **It means so much to put a face with a name. Would you please share a picture of your child with us? Please bring in any photo (up to 5x7) to place on the memory board.**

If you would like to make a little snack to share with the group it would be greatly appreciated. Please tell us if you are remembering a special day for your child so we may celebrate with you.

Would you like a "Picture Button" made of your child? Please bring a photo to the meeting and see Marsha Lohbeck, **she will cut** and press your picture into a beautiful button for you.

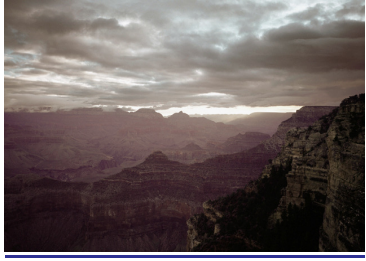
There is no charge, but donations for supplies are graciously accepted.

Actual Button size 2 ¼ inches.

Our Librarian, Diana Trevino maintains the library cart with an exceptional selection of reading material and some DVD's covering all stages of grief and that are available for check-out at each meeting. Please see her to check-out the selection of your choice or go over reading material available, she will be happy to help you.

Would you like to make a submission for the Quarterly Newsletter? Poetry, letters and thoughts are always needed and I (Annette DeCamp) would be honored to remember your child in a future Newsletter. Please see me at any meeting or e-mail your submission to: adecamp@roadrunner.com. We welcome any ideas or suggestions for the Newsletter. If I have made any errors, omissions, incorrect dates, misspellings, or any incorrect information, I apologize and ask that you please notify me: Annette DeCamp (513) 886-1634

Please visit our chapter website at: www.tfcincy.com Tim Vinson posts new chapter information and shares our children's photos on this very special site reaching thousands of visitors each year. Please e-mail him directly tvinson@aol.com to have your child's name added to the candle page with a flickering flame next to it and your child's photo added to the tribute pages. If you have questions about the website, he would be glad to speak to you at any meeting.



BECAUSE

Because you can't feel me,
doesn't mean I'm not there.

Because you can't see me,
doesn't mean I'm not near.

Because you can't hear me,
doesn't mean I don't speak.

Because you can't see me,
doesn't mean I'm out of reach.

Because I am dead,
doesn't mean I'm gone.

Beth Oldani, TCF Arlington Heights, IL



A TRIBUTE

I think of you in silence,
But my feelings seldom show,
But how it hurts to lose you
Know one will ever know.

I hope there is eternal life,
so we can meet again.

I not only lost my brother,
I lost my very best friend.

The reason you left so early
I'll never understand why.

I just wish I'd known you were never coming back,
Cause I would have said good-bye.

Marta King, TCF Concorde, NH



ON MEMORY

When you remember me, it means that you have carried something of who I am with you, That I have left some mark of who I am on who you are. It means that you can summon me back to your mind even though countless years and miles may stand between us. It means that if we meet again, you will know me, and hear my voice and speak to me in your heart.

For as long as you remember me, I am not entirely lost.

Frederick Buechne

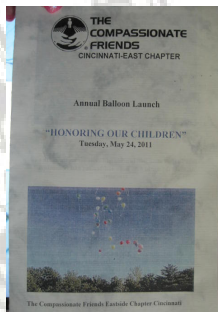


On May 24, 2011 we gathered together to remember and honor our children. Our requests and prayers were heard to hold off the storms that had been threatening our area all day. The weather was BEAUTIFUL!!

Our messages of love floated above in a clear sky..... Our thoughts of children no longer with us pressed on our hearts.....it was an emotional, wonderful tribute.

The Steering Committee would like to thank all of those who attended, shared and brought items for everyone to enjoy at the Annual Balloon Release.

You each made it the memorable event that it was!



We had a few questions at this release and wanted to assure you that we have researched the possible dangers to the environment and plan accordingly to keep the Balloon Release environmentally friendly as well as a pleasant, memorable event for our members. Here are **just a few** of the behind the scenes questions and facts we have considered when planning this event:

Q. Are latex balloons biodegradable?

A. Yes, 100%. Latex is a natural product of rubber tree sap and it breaks down when exposed to the elements of nature.

Q. How long does it take for a latex balloon to biodegrade?

A. Decomposition time for balloons is about the same rate as an oak leaf (approximately 6 months).

Q. Why not use Mylar balloons, they last longer?

A. Mylar is a synthetic, metalized plastic/nylon material which is recyclable, but not biodegradable.

Q. Why not use the pretty metallic ribbon?

A. Metallic ribbon and balloons conduct electricity and may come in contact with power lines when released.

Q. Isn't latex a plastic?

A. No, the often used phrase "latex balloons and other plastics" is improper and has caused much confusion.

Q. Does helium hurt the environment/atmosphere?

A. Helium is non-toxic, non flammable, and has no harmful effects on the earth's environment.

If you have any questions, concerns or ideas you would like to share, please contact Carol Terbruggen :
carolt@cinci.rr.com

That First Summer Vacation



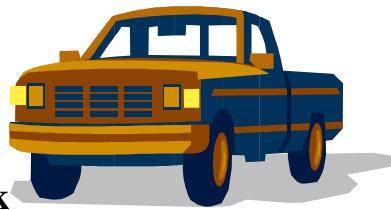
Summertime is here and along with it you may be planning a vacation. If you have recently suffered the death of your child, that first vacation can be very difficult. Here are some suggestions to help you through your first vacation and to help you plan around your grief:

- ❖ Be gentle with yourself. Don't expect too much on your first vacation. Remember, as bereaved parents, the first time we do anything without our kids is tough whether it be going to the movies, shopping or on a vacation.
- ❖ Plan to do some grief work because you will, planned or not. Give yourself time enough on the trip if you have a bad day so that you can just do what you feel like doing.
- ❖ Know that your child will be on your mind day and night, just as he or she is at home. Our grief goes with us.
- ❖ Plan to do something your child would have loved to do, but did not get a chance to. Plan this in his or her memory.
- ❖ If you plan to visit relatives for the first time since your child's death, remember they mean well, even if they seem insensitive with their remarks. They have not lost a child and can't see through your eyes.
- ❖ If you have other children, remember them. They are also having a hard time coping on this vacation. Plan some activity that will be especially fun for them.
- ❖ Be especially careful to communicate with your spouse. Plan a vacation that is suitable for both of your needs. Remember you are both grieving for the same child, but we all grieve differently and in our own way.

If you have been maintaining your child's gravesite and feel guilty about leaving it unattended, let a family member or friend see to it while you are away. You need not feel guilty and it could fill a need for one of your family members or friends, allowing them to help.



~excerpts from an article by Dianna Hammock, Central Coast, CA



The Old Yellow Truck

Several weeks ago I sold my old, rusty yellow pickup truck. I placed an ad in the Baltimore Sunday paper which read:

*For Sale—1978 Toyota pickup truck,
119 K miles—as is \$450. Call.*

Someone called, paid me \$400, and drove away—all in the same day. I should have been happy to get rid of it; but instead I ended up feeling depressed. If I could have advertised the truck in our TCF Newsletter, the ad would have read:

For sale (regretfully) 1978 Toyota pickup truck used by college student when he was home for weekends or semester breaks. Provided safe transportation through a snowstorm on his last New Year's Eve. Four-speaker stereo radio with rock music stations preselected. Ashtray clean except for old bank receipts. Truck used by father for hauling things while thinking about son. Priceless..... Don't call.

It has been 18 months since my son died, and yet it is still difficult to part with certain things—even things that did not belong to him. This is a problem with which we are all faced. What to keep? What to let go? The practical side of us says these things are no longer needed, so we should get rid of them. The heart says my son owned these things or used them; they bring back memories, so we should keep them. There is not a right or wrong answer as to what we keep or what we let go. I reassure myself by noting that these memories of my son didn't leave with that old yellow truck. They will remain locked in my heart forever.

*Gary Piepenbring
TCF, Penn-Maryland Line Chapter, Maryland*



11:11

At night before I fall asleep
I lay in bed and pray.
Thankful to have made it through another day
but there's an ache that will not go away.

It's a feeling of both loss and pain
there are still times when I sit and stare.
My happiness seems to have been misplaced,
I can't find it anywhere

For most of your life, those numbers were there
what was the meaning of those elevens?
Since you are gone, I've found the answer.
It's your way of saying "hello" from heaven.

It continues to be sad and incredibly unfair
to have buried a son of twenty seven.
But what more could we want as parents
than to know our child has gone to heaven.

For some time after you died, those numbers
brought pain.

Now I can't wait to see them again.
When I'm lucky enough to see those elevens
I place my hand to my heart, my eyes to the
heavens.

For Brennan
8/11/**-11/05/**
By Tom Murphy

Grandparents Day is September 11, 2011



Grandparents Credo

We are the grieving grandparents, the shepherds of our children and grandchildren's lives.
Our grief is two-fold and at times, we feel powerless to help.
We seek to comfort our children in the depths of their grief.
And yet, we need the time and space to face our own broken hearts.
We have been robbed of the special tender touch a grandparent shares with a grandchild ...we
have lost a symbol of our immortality.
As we walk by our child's side, we both give and draw strength.
We reach into their hearts to comfort them.
And when they reach out to us in their distress, we begin the journey to heal together.
We continue to be their guardians.
We allow traditions to change to accommodate their loss.
We support the new ones, which symbolize the small steps on their journey.
It is in their healing that our hearts find comfort.

TCF website



A Grandparents Point of View

The death of a child is the most tragic thing that can happen to anyone. It affects so many lives—family, friends, and even strangers. I lost my grandchild through death, and only a grandparent can understand the love a grandparent has for a grandchild and the loss that is felt when the child dies. For a grandparent, it is a double loss. Not only is your grandchild gone, but you also watch your child die each day. The hurt is so deep and the questions so many. You feel helpless as a parent. You can't kiss the hurt away as you did when she was a child. You have no answers for her questions, for you don't understand the many feelings that you are experiencing yourself. Each day you hope and pray for a little ray of sunshine to show on her face. You search for a little something to say or do that will comfort her. It seems that there is no end to suffering. As time goes slowly by, the healing process begins. In time, a ray of hope will show on her face and a smile will make her eyes light up again. She will turn to you for what little comfort you can give her. There will always be a part of you that is gone but in time you can learn to live with the part that is still here.

Ruth Eaton, TCF Savannah, GA



TCF Cincinnati-East Members Attended Regional Conference



Marsha Lohbeck, Dianna Mitts, Debbie Fannin and I had the opportunity to attend the Frankfort Regional Compassionate Friends conference, "Words of Wisdom, Hearts of Love," held in Frankfort, KY. March 25-26. It was a time to meet folks, from many chapters, both locally, and as far away as England, Holland and Nova Scotia. Once again, we came together "from all walks of life, from many different circumstances" but the bond that unites us, is one journey; the journey of seeking ways to cope and share our stories with those who truly understand. I left Frankfort feeling the continued strength and courage in my journey and the realization of how "normal" I am.

The conference offered many different presenters, keynote speakers and workshops, too many to highlight, but whether you are early in your bereavement or much further along, there was something for you. I felt particularly inspired by Mitch Carmody, author, writer, artist, public speaker and bereavement facilitator. His book, "Letters To My Son, a journey through grief" has been sold worldwide. Mitch speaks from the heart and certainly touched mine.

I was equally touched by the songs and lyrics from Alan Pedersen, the award winning songwriter, recording artist and performer. He combines his own experience through the loss of his daughter Ashley, who was killed in an automobile accident in Colorado and countless other bereaved families that he has connected with over the years. Alan's message is simple, "we were put on this earth to love them for as long as we live, not for as long as they lived."

I hope you consider, one day to attend a regional conference. You will not be disappointed.

Carol Terbrueggen
TCF Cincinnati-East
May 2011



Seeking Answers in the “Spirit World”

When my Michael died I understood why millions of people spent their life savings on “readings,” “spiritual advisors,” and any means needed to connect with the spirit world. What wouldn’t I have given for one more conversation! The need to talk to him one more time was overwhelming.

I had experimented with tarot cards, tea leaf reading and palm reading years before my Michael died so I may have felt a little different than those who had not already had some involvement in that realm. Michael and I had played with tea leaf readings. We both had vivid imaginations and could see images, like looking at clouds, if you can clearly make out an image in the clouds, you can read tea leaves. We also played with tarot cards together, we were silly and it was fun. Neither of us took it too serious as we both believe that only God can know our futures. After I had read everything written by John Edward, Michael did too. We were both fascinated with the possibility that his gift was the real deal.

I do believe that some people have an unexplainable gift, but those people are few. In an acute state of grief it is hard to exercise caution when someone is promising that chance to connect with our child “one more time.” I did not reach for the tarot cards when my Michael died I avoided anything to do with making a spiritual connection. I did, like many, ask Michael for a sign but I didn’t seek it or try to make it happen with the exception of when John Edward was in Cincinnati I had been telling Michael to bug him and make him contact me....that did not happen. I had read in one of his books how one spirit was so persistent that he had to make contact with that family.....I wanted a repeat. I did pray for clarity of vision and perception to be able to recognize any sign I may be given. I had already read about “Photo Orbs” and didn’t really pay any attention to it until my Michael died. I notice them now in pictures and can’t help but wonder who it is and if it may be one of the signs I am supposed to notice. If you have not read anything about Photo Orbs, google it, you may find it very interesting. We have had moments at home when our animals get fixed on one spot and even if we call them they will not break their gaze. It is eerie but now I just whisper “hi Michael.” It could be so many different people, we have lost dear family members and friends over the years but my heart won’t let it be anyone but my Michael.

Each one of us continues to seek answers to the multitude of questions we are left with after the death of our child. We seek comfort through prayer, grief literature and some look to the stars. Each one of us will travel many different paths on this grief journey as we struggle to wrap our head around the pain of losing our child. There are no rights or wrongs, follow your heart, your grief and what ever instincts are still intact but stop.....try to think.....exercise caution if it is going to cost you a small fortune to follow that path, you may want to reevaluate the need. Talk to someone first you trust that will see your needs and will be able to give you the pros and cons of going through with your plan. You could also try to write the pros and cons yourself but remember we don’t realize we are in a fog sometimes and are not always in a proper state of mind to make the bigger decisions (again, we do not always know this). I wish you clarity and the ability to see the signs through your own personal journey.

Annette DeCamp
TCF Cincinnati-East
April, 2011

If you are interested in reading material from Mediums/Psychics, you may enjoy the following authors as they offer a wide range and variety to choose from: John Edward, Sylvia Brown, James Van Praagh, Stephen Piper, Judy Hall

A few inspirational authors: God-The Bible, Kevin Marakey, Mitch Albom, Don Piper, Trudy Harris,

If you enjoyed this article, you may like the following free websites:

www.tarot teachings.com Tarot Card information

www.cafeastrology.com Astrology information

www.palmreading.info How to Read Palms

www.teausa.com Tasseography – Reading Tea Leaves

(click on the “reading tea leaves,” on the left side of the screen)

For the Photo Orbs, you must explore yourself, way too many sites and opinions to point you to just one.



Our Beloved Children Remembered



Lighting a candle, cherishing a birth.....

July

*Ryan Burnside
Michael Hornschemier
Tom Hornschemier
Emmelia Jean Wells-Hughes*

*Karen Kappelman
Logan Anthony Perkins
Billy Joel Rountt
Patrick Simminger*

*Danny Andrews
Shelly Turner
Rob Whitaker*

August

*Gaye Louise Gruhler
Tony League
Dustin DeMoss*

*Tim Cohen
Brent D. Keeton
Brennan Thomas Murphy*

*Angie Carter
Stephan Schumacher
Janet Woprice*

September

*Alex Bibler
Chris Holland*

*Hugh Byrnside
Kelly Denise Boyer*

*Chanda Nicole Riley
Sheena Marie Miles*



Lighting a candle, remembering a life.....

July

*Hugh Byrnside
Gayle Louise Gruhler
Gerald Nolan "Michael" Gillis*

*Emmelia Jean Wells-Hughes
Kevin Mitts
Shelley Turner*

Janet Woprice

August

*Xavier Bainum
Claire Boyd
Jerrica Nevaeh James
Marc Dotson*

*John Douglas
Angie Carter
Logan Anthony Perkins
Billy Joe Rountt*

*Stephan Schumacher
Mark Steidle*

September

*Chris Holland
Aron Morgan*

*Charles "Chuck" Gould III
Michael Anthony Haggerty*

*Daniel Trevino
Jay Triggs*

The Birth and death of our loved ones are always very difficult. Please remember to include these families in your thoughts on their very difficult day. It would be nice to give these families a phone call or send them a card saying, "I am thinking of you". For addresses or phone numbers, you may contact: Joel Terbrueggen at (513) 271-6809 or joelt@cinci.rr.com

To Our New Members:

Coming to those first few meetings is the hardest thing to do. But you have nothing to lose and everything to gain. Please remember, nothing is required of you. There are no fees or dues. You need not speak a word, if you chose. We are here to comfort and support you because, "we have been there." We have all had parts of our hearts torn apart, yet our wounds get a little smaller with the loving touches, friendly smiles and kind reassuring words from each other.

Try not to judge your first few meetings as to whether or not TCF will work for you. At your first meeting you were probably hoping that TCF could get you over your terrible pain and depression, loneliness, guilt and anger and all the other faces of grief. I know I did! Instead you meet other parents who are still coping with forms of grief after months or even years but there are some parents who are truly "OK." It's a process and takes time as we rebuild our lives, one piece at a time. Each meeting may provide a piece, with which to rebuild, eventually you will find the road to recovery, as we did.

To Our Long-Time Members:

We are deeply saddened when we have to welcome new members to our circle, knowing there are parents, grandparents and siblings hurting as much as we did when we first started coming to TCF. It reminds us of the deep loss and pain we felt as we walked through the doors at St. Timothy, for the first time. We need the help and support of our long-time members to help these families. Will you consider coming to a meeting to help listen, and talk with newly bereaved family members, as often as you are able?

Please remember your first meeting of The Compassionate Friends, as you began your grief journey, there were those who listened and hugged us and cried with us. If two years or more have passed since the death of your child, and you feel that you ready to give back, please consider a place of service in our chapter. There is a job for everyone, please give me a call, 513-271-6809.

Thank you from all of our children.....
Carol



REGISTRATION

NEW RENEWAL CHANGE OF ADDRESS TODAY'S DATE _____

LAST NAME: _____ FIRST NAME: _____ SPOUSE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____ E-MAIL: _____

DECEASED'S NAME: _____ DATE OF BIRTH _____

DATE OF DEATH: _____ CAUSE OF DEATH _____

RELATIONSHIP TO THE DECEASED:
 PARENT GRANDPARENT SIBLING OTHER (_____)

I DO I DO NOT WANT THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER BY U.S. MAIL

I DO I DO NOT WANT THE E-MAIL LINK VERSION OF THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

PLEASE MAIL REGISTRATION TO: JOEL TERBRUEGGEN, 5910 CHEROKEE DR. CINCINNATI, OH 45243

In Closing by Annette:

When we attend our first Compassionate Friends meeting we meet people and almost always ask "how long has it been?" I know when I met people who were 5, 10 and even 15 years into their grief journey I wondered why they were still there. As I got to know some of these people I learned that it was just not about their own personal grief anymore, it grew into something more. Friendships and the desire to help others who are reeling from the shock and the reality that their child has died keep many of us faithfully attending each monthly meeting. We want to help ease their pain any way possible, even just lending an ear or passing the tissues. I shared how I came to join TCF with a new friend recently and thought I would share a little more with you. Just a little insight.....we are each different and attend our first meeting at different times during our grief.

This is my personal experience: I was a brave little trooper for the first year, really just numb but I didn't know that then. It was three weeks before I went to my doctor and asked for sleeping pills.....the nights were awful. I lost myself in the Food Network and cooked.....a lot! I muddled through the days going through the motions and trying to be there for my husband and other sons. I had no real joy in my life and a smile was rare. I cried when no one was home or shut myself in the bathroom...the shower was my favorite spot, no one could hear me.....yes, I turned into a closet crier, trying to spare my family from seeing the train wreck that I had become (little did I know I wasn't fooling anyone). It was a year before I looked at my husband (Michael's Step Dad) with tears in my eyes and said " I need help, (my slow tears turned into labored sobbing) I am just not getting better.....I am going through all the motions, I get up, do my hair, put my face on, work, make dinner, do laundry but I am BROKEN inside." "I hurt worse than if I was physically struck in the chest." He looked at me....lost, concerned....just didn't know how to act, what to say, how to help me. He put his arms around me, hugged me and said "honey get help, go see a counselor, see if they can help you." I saw Catherine for my allotted 10 visits and by the 6th visit we were talking about the Compassionate Friends and when I was going to attend a meeting. We were making a plan. A friend of mine had already sent me information on the group but, I was in denial.....I didn't need to sit around with a bunch of people and talk about Michael I could talk about him just fine without a support group. The reality was no one wanted to talk to me about Michael anymore, I should be better now. I needed medication or a drink (yes, I had a friend who told me to start drinking, it would help ease my pain). So it was just shy of two years before I went to my first meeting. It was April 2008, and the two year anniversary was coming up in July. It was very hard getting out of the car, but I did. I walked in and Carol (chapter leader) walked up to me at the sign in sheet and asked if I had lost a child (I didn't call first, I just showed up) I think I let out an exasperated sigh, and said yes..... and I thought to myself.....I mean, like really....can't you tell I lost my son.....don't I wear it on my face.....I felt like it was a tattoo on my forehead for the whole world to see, it seemed like such a stupid question. I didn't say a word for that first meeting.....I just cried at all the stories and tragedy in that room. It was exhausting and I didn't want to come back and I thought I might come to a few meetings and I told my Mother that very thing. I know I sure as heck won't be here after 3, 4 or 5 years. On the 6th or 8th meeting I was able to say Michaels name and that he died in a car accident. It was very hard for me to talk in group.....and I am a talker! I get that butterfly pillow, it's my turn and I choke. I am now approaching Michael's 5th year Anniversary and I am still here..... now new members will gasp or look at me like I have two heads when I say 5 years and wonder why..... I am still here.

It was near the end of 2009 when I became the Newsletter Editor. My friend Tim Vinson, who had been trying to get me to come to a meeting was a member of this group and had already told the Steering Committee that after a little time they needed to invite (pull) me in and that I would be perfect for the Newsletter.....looking back now.....they were sneaky.....**I say with a smile**.....dropping hints about struggling with each issue... needing someone to take it on....etc. etc. etc. My first issues were full of mistakes and typos but I found encouragement from each member of the Steering Committee and I am very pleased with where it is now. It was very healing for me. So hard at first reading all the poems and tragic stories finding articles that fit.....but it helped me....it eased my pain and gave me purpose. Maybe, just maybe, I was helping someone out there who was crying in the shower so no one would hear.

So that's how I started with the Cincinnati-East Chapter and why I came through the doors at St. Timothy's. I would love to share your personal story if you would like to share it, it might help someone else walk through those doors and find the kindness, support, friendship and compassion we have experienced.

So much love.....Big Hug.....Annette

**On behalf of the Steering Committee, until we see each other again, we wish you peace,
love and the ability to allow a few smiles to cross your face**

**THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS, INC.
GREATER CINCINNATI-EAST
5910 CHEROKEE DR.
CINCINNATI, OH 45243**

DATED MATERIAL—PLEASE DELIVER PROMPTLY

July, August, September 2011

When you need help.... the following organizations provide information and support for those coping with grief:

The Compassionate Friends (National Office)

P.O. Box 3696

Oak Brook, IL 60522-3696

630-990-0010 – Toll Free 877-696-0010

<http://www.compassionatefriends.org>

A national, self-help support organization for those grieving the loss of a child or sibling.

FernSide

Bethesda Professional Building

4360 Cooper Road, Suite 101

Cincinnati, OH 45242

<http://www.fernside.org>

513-745-0111 (M-F 9:30am – 4:30pm EST)

Grief information, resources, and support for grieving children and their families.

RENEW: Center for Personal Recovery

P.O. Box 125

Berea, KY 40403

<http://www.renew.net>

859-986-7878

A grief counseling center for individuals and families that are experiencing a loss, with a specialty in grief recovery counseling for traumatic deaths.

www.tfcincy.com – Our local East Chapter

<http://www.griefnet.org/> - GriefNet online grief support community

<http://www.growthhouse.org> – Information on death and dying issues

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