



The Compassionate Friends Newsletter



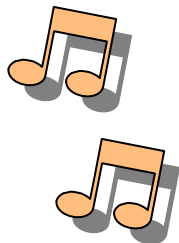
Alan Pedersen Concert November 3, 2009

We are happy to announce that singer and songwriter Alan Pedersen will be sharing his music with us at our November meeting. Alan's 18 year old daughter, Ashley was killed in a traffic accident in 2001. In his effort to heal the wound left by his daughter's death, Alan has been writing songs in Ashley's memory and performing them all around the country, and speaking to families who have suffered the loss of a child. His music is uplifting and inspiring for bereaved parents and his songs have brought comfort to many of us.

Please come to our meeting on November 3rd at the First Baptist Church, 148 Church Street, Marietta at 7:00 PM and show your support for his efforts. We promise you won't be disappointed.

Alan's web page is:

www.everashleymusic.com.



A life is like a song we write
in our own tone and key
Each life we touch reflects a note
that forms the melody
We choose the theme and chorus
of the song to bear our name.
And each will have a special sound,
no two can be the same.
So when someone we love departs,
in memory we find
Their song plays on within the hearts
of those they leave behind.

Contact and Chapter Information

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Marietta Chapter Meetings

Our meetings are held on the
First Tuesday of each month
First Baptist Church of Marietta
148 Church Street, Marietta
Main Building on the third floor

7:00 - 9:30 PM

October - November Birthdays

Birthdays are given special recognition at our monthly meetings. We have a birthday table set up where parents and siblings are invited to bring in photos and other memorabilia to share with the group. There is also an opportunity to share a short story or memory of your child with the group before breaking up into our smaller sessions. Many also like to bring in a cake or other favorite snack to celebrate the birthday of their child or sibling.

We also invite you to share a special story, picture, or both for the Birthday Tribute section below if your child's birthday is in the upcoming months. If you would like to place a birthday tribute to your child in the newsletter, you may do so by emailing it to Louise at tcfmarietta.louise@hotmail.com.

October Birthdays

Michael Bertocchi Jr.	Patrick Hu Shelby Powers
Steven Boultinghouse	Jivoni Alexander Quinones
Brian Arthur LaForce	Michelle Ala Reeves
Ryan Morresa	Kasey Marie Vanek
Noelle Parr Nation	Katherine Marie Wood

Thanks for the Little While

By Darcie D. Sims, Ph.D



Thank you for life, for its good times and bad.
 Thank you for love, even when I can't feel it.
 Thank you for the love (used to share
 For the arms that held me tight.

Thank you for my family
 In faraway places,
 In different times.

Thank you for the songs we sang,
 For the dreams we saved,
 For the smiles we shared.

Thank you for the strength that eludes me just now.
 Thank you for the weakness that sends me to my knees.
 Thank you for the searching, the reaching, the hoping.

Thank you for the bonds of memory that hold me in place,
 Even when I don't believe in it anymore,
 Or...forget what it is all about.

Thank you most of all,
 For having been blessed with the love I have known,
 Even now when I fear I will forget it.

Thank you for memory and
 For filling it full measure for me.
 It wasn't nearly long enough, but it will have to do.
 Thanks for the moments we danced.
 Thanks for the little while.

*Death leaves a heartache
 No one can heal --
 love leaves a memory
 No one can steal.*



November Birthdays

Dakari Kalayn Baker	Shireen Kachwalla
Mary Blankenship	Alexander Lambert
Frankie Brohm	Cathleen Ann Lavelle
Sydney Brooke	Barry M. Lawrence
Bobby DaBov III	Clayton Thomas Moore
Luke Deavers	Ben Pound
Diana Garrett	Hayden Scott Roberts
Steven Mark Grimm	Ryan Douglas Romanoski
Lauren Hammond	Christopher Wade Tyler
Cloey L Herring	Lori Witmer



In Memory of Cathleen Ann Lavelle

Growing up with Cathy, we'd build obstacle courses out of big boxes and cushions. We played until exhaustion, until we had to eat, or until someone got hurt—stopping by choice was never an option. We were close and we would provoke each other. Among our earliest words was “instigator,” and we knew that after a fight you wanted to say that the other person was the instigator. I bring this up because one of the qualities about Cathy that stands out is that in her life she took that early understanding about not starting fights and turned it around—she became someone with a unique ability to instigate beautiful, extraordinary moments for other people. She had an extraordinary gift of transforming a routine day into a wonder.

From the five days we were lucky to spend with her before she passed, I can tell you some things that she wants to share with everyone. They have to do with living in the moment, and approaching life with inspired enthusiasm. This may be hard to believe if you didn't know her, but Cathy was not going to let us spend those last moments with her in grief and anger.

When we arrived at the hospital last Thursday night. Cathy was in the intensive care unit, from where just two days earlier she telephoned my wife Jennifer to wish her a happy birthday. This was both a great surprise and a typical gesture from Cathy. Cathy was so good at surprises that she even became competitive at it—she loved being the first to wish you a happy birthday and would call you early that morning or even at midnight. When I graduated from junior high school, on the last page of my yearbook my grandmother had written, “If anyone wishes you more luck than I do, let them sign on the next page.” The next time I opened the yearbook there was another page inserted at the end, on which Cathy had written, “I wish you more luck than she.”

At the hospital, Cathy cried with us for a few seconds, and said the hardest part for her was that she had never given up on anything. She quoted something she was particularly proud of, by a friend of hers who said that Cathy was the kind of person who, if she lost her right arm, would see it as an opportunity to become a lefty. She had started to talk about how things might have gone better, but then something amazing happened that would continue over the next five days. She said, “But that's not life now.” She smiled and said, “Life is...” and glanced around her room until she saw a drawing on the wall her son Jace had drawn, a page of intersecting red circles. The picture made her happy and so it allowed her to complete her thought: “Life is Red Circles.”

Cathy said, “I've had a great life,” and she talked about how lucky she felt to share nine years with her husband Tim, to see Jace grow from a baby to a toddler to a boy starting school, to connect with so many amazing friends, to have a family that she loved so easily. She spoke about her travels, to Alaska, Maui, Australia, Brazil, Venice, Guatemala, Rome, Greece, Paris, and more. She said that felt that she had lived far more life in 38 years than most people ever do, and she felt infinite gratitude. She also said, with an amused sense of humor, “For the first time in my life, I've finally found peace.”

Cathy's sense of humor was in full force those last few days. When a nurse asked her “What is your pain level, on a scale of one to ten?” Cathy said “Zero,” and the nurse seemed confused and started explaining the question. Cathy looked at me bemused and started moving her arm awkwardly, as if trying to dislocate her shoulder, and joked, “I could try to get it up to two!”

While her physical pain levels were at times very high, she emphasized that she did not want to be sedated if it meant missing out on being awake and alert with us. Her mind was as sharp as ever. She was reading long novels and crushing us at games of Boggle, writing down double and triple the number of words as we were. I saw that I was losing not only because I was afraid of writing down words that she wasn't afraid of—words like “mortal” and “loss,” but because she was seeing far more possibilities.

Those last days with her were among the happiest, as we were really in each other's presence and happy to still be alive. Cathy expressed that life could end at any time, that nothing was ever guaranteed except the present moment. About her death, she said, “I'm just beating out the asteroid.”

Cathy was always curious to learn about people and to learn about the unknown, and she considered her death another journey, another adventure. We spoke of how little we know about the greatest questions of life and death. She talked about there being more stars in the universe than all the grains of sand on all the beaches of the world, and she thought about the possibility of other universes that our souls might travel to. She believed that we are all more than the limits of our bodies.

At the hospice with Cathy, Jennifer and I rolled her in her wheelchair out to the courtyard, where she asked to be facing the skyline of Atlanta on her right and a stream of water on her left. We massaged her feet and laughed about fashions of the 1970s, disco and Gunne Sacks. We talked about her amazing ability to start a conversation, to create connections that otherwise would not have been.

When Jennifer and I were saying goodbye to Cathy, we hoped we'd be coming back in a few days. We kissed and hugged and then she said, “I want to walk you out.” Until this point Cathy had been confined to her bed and wheelchair, but she got up out of bed and walked with us, holding our hands, walking steadily with a big smile. Her hands were warm and comforting. We got to the station where the nurses were and Cathy made sure that they made eye contact. She said “Hi!,” beaming. The nurses looked stunned for a moment and said Hi back to her, as if they were witnessing a miracle or a crisis.

This was the last time I saw her. And I know this is how she wants us to remember her. The last days with Cathy could have been filled with grief but instead they were her greatest gift—she showed us that when you know your time is limited, you can choose to live it not partially as a fraction of a future but fully, shared with people you love in joy, laughter, and an exuberant spirit. That will always be Cathy...



Written by Chris McDermott, Cathy's brother ~ Orlando, FL

Submitted by Eileen McDermott, Cathy's Mom ~ Marietta TCF



October - November Angel Dates Our Children Loved and Remembered



October Angel Dates



November Angel Dates

Mary Josephine Blankenship	Jonathan E. Holiday
Ryan Logan Bonds	Mark Lee
Steven Elwood Boultinghouse	Anthony James Leingang
Michael Keith Copeland	Noelle Parr Nation
Bobby DaBov III	Vicki Lynn Oxford
Matthew David Redd	Patrick Hu Shelby Powers
Thomas John Freeman	Heather Ann Tully
Olivia Marie Garcia	Lauren Valentine

Cody Randall Ellsworth
 Zack Ferguson
 Diana Garrett
 Rebecca Lynn Grigs
 Lauren Hammond
 John Robert Michael Hosfeld
 Joshua Klug
 Christopher Ray Kolohe Lumpkin
 Luther Griffith Mills III
 DyKeith Ennis-Williams
 Nicolas Lee Werhofnik



Love Gifts

A love gift is a donation to help carry on the work of our chapter. There are no dues to be a member of TCF but we are always appreciative for any contributions.

THANK YOU to those of you who make donations at our monthly meetings. Your contributions help in such a wonderful way to continue the efforts of our chapter.

We would like to extend our gratitude to all who donate for their generous gifts, which allow us to reach out to the newly bereaved and give needed support to the bereaved parents and siblings in our community.

New Members

It is always hard to welcome parents coming to Compassionate Friends meetings for the first time because we are very sorry for the reason you have found us. However, we are glad you found the courage to reach out for help and we hope you find new friends who truly understand your grief.

Please keep us up-to-date on your contact information. Send updates to Kathy or Erica.

Would you like to honor your child by making a donation to the Marietta Chapter of the Compassionate Friends in his or her memory?

Please fill out the information below, clip and mail with your tax deductible donation to:

**Marietta Chapter TCF
 P.O. Box 1892
 Marietta, GA 30061**

Please make checks payable to Marietta TCF.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

In memory of: _____

Please specify if you would like your donation added to the Library account or the General account.

VOLUNTEERS WELCOME !

If you would like to give of your time to our chapter, we warmly welcome volunteers. Volunteer opportunities range from helping to set up a meeting, facilitating meetings, maintaining the library, making phone calls and helping with special events. This is a great way to give back in memory of your child after you have found hope, encouragement and strength from TCF. Making the change from needing and finding help to giving help and support to new parents is another healing milestone. Please contact Kathy Kelcourse at tcfmarietta.kathy@hotmail.com or 770-579-3512 if you would like to help or have any questions.

It Won't Happen To Me

is a non-profit corporation dedicated to reducing the **Number One** cause of teen deaths - **Car Crashes** - through education and awareness. The educational initiatives help teens become safer, more responsible drivers.



The organization strives to make parents aware of the importance of proper training and monitoring of their teens.

This year's Drive For Life Walk-A-Thon will be held at Chastain Park in Atlanta on October 10th. The Walk is held each year to help keep alive the memory of our fallen teens who have died as a result of a teen driving related car crash. Anyone that has lost a son or daughter in a car crash is welcome to participate in this Walk with family and friends. If you would like your son or daughter to be represented along Memory Lane please feel free to contact Bill Richardson at bill@itwonthappentome.org

Registration will begin at 8:30 am and the Walk will begin at 10:00 am. Light refreshments will be available prior to the walk. You can download the application for the Walk from the website www.itwonthappentome.org or you can register directly online. If you register online, you can download a registration form and use the Sponsor sheet to get people to sponsor you on the Walk. You can then turn in your sponsor monies on the day of the event.



*I miss you most of all
When autumn leaves start to fall*

NO SHAME OR BLAME - JUST LOVE

Ria Coesel

Several times I've been asked to start a group for the parents who lost their child to drugs - whether those drugs were prescription drugs or illegal drugs. I know that some of those who'd like to attend such a group are struggling with their deceased child's addiction.

In such a group we would talk open and freely about our experiences having a child using and abusing drugs, living with us at home or on their own.

At this year's conference in Portland I attended the workshop "Death From The Disease Of Addiction" which was a great workshop. I'm in contact with the presenter who lost her adult son who was an addict and who overdosed on heroin and alcohol. She sent me bracelets just for people like me. It's not a secret that my daughter Anke was an addict - her murder is drug related. The bracelets are purple/green and say NO SHAME OR BLAME - JUST LOVE - . Anybody who would like one just let me know and I'll give you one.

For this group, we would stay with TCF of course but could opt to meet another day - maybe at the church if room is available. I have not picked out a day - I'm waiting for responses. You can email me at tcfmarietta.ria@hotmail.com or call me at 770-973-4921.

God's Greatest Work of Art

If a picture is worth a thousand words
And nothing worthwhile is ever lost
Then what is the value of memories
For those who paid the highest cost?

When a parent loses a child
Words become a useless tool
There is nothing to be said to undo the hurt
And feeble attempts are only cruel

A hug heart to heart in warm embrace
Surpasses any useless phrase
Shared tears and shared memories
More healing than funeral sprays

A photograph is a moment in time
And sometimes it can capture our soul
A place we can find solace in memories
To fill an empty hole

The triggered memories are priceless
For in a flood of tears we cannot see
And we must travel inward
to seek one's own empathy

To empathize with ourselves
For the heart can heal all things
We all have what it takes...
A song bird is meant to sing

Our hearts are the greatest gift
That lies within our grasp
To endure the clinging agony
And find some peace at last

We must make new memories
That can only glorify the old
We can use our heart to heal ourselves
Our story must be told

Our grief should not be a secret
Death is not a curse
Living life without Joy
Is an existence so much worse

Brighten up someone else's day
It will illuminate you own
And plant the seeds of destiny
That has a purpose and should be sown

Yes, a picture is worth a thousand words
So share those pictures from your heart
Filibuster your child's life to one and all
They are God's greatest work of art.

- MC/9/09

Mitch Carmody

*Special TCF Workshop – Oct. 13***Into the Valley and Out Again**

Kathy and Patrick Malone will present a special workshop for TCF members during the Oct. 13 chapter meeting of the Atlanta Chapter. The program is titled “**Into the Valley and Out Again.**”

The program will take place at the First Christian Church of Atlanta, 4532 LaVista Road, Tucker, GA 30084. It begins at 7:45 p.m. and runs until 9:15 p.m. Members of other local TCF chapters are invited to attend the workshop. Advance registration is not needed and there is no cost to attend.

Important: The front doors of the church will not be open that evening. You need to drive around to the left-hand side of the church. You’ll see a wooden walk-way across to an open door. That’s where you need to enter.

For many bereaved parents, the utter devastation and tragedy of the death of their child is like a dark valley. “As much as we would rather not, this valley must be traveled,” Kathy said. “This journey often provides us with unique treasures and gifts that allow us to emerge from the darkness with a new sense of purpose.”

Kathy and Pat will share their journey with TCF members in the hope that it will help each of us find understanding, compassion and perhaps even hope as we make our individual journeys.

In addition to being designed for bereaved parents, many family members and friends will find it helpful in understanding what bereaved parents are experiencing. Invite your family and friends to come with you to this workshop. The workshop will begin at 7:45 p.m. and run until 9:15. Plenty of time will be included for questions and discussion. In advance of the workshop, members of the Atlanta Chapter will hold their sharing sessions – from 6:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. Members of nearby TCF chapters are invited to join us for the workshop at 7:45 p.m.

About our Workshop Presenters

Patrick and Kathy’s third born son, Scott, died less than 24 hours after his birth in 1971. A daughter, Erin, was lost in miscarriage in 1974. Their second son, Lance, was killed in a motorcycle accident in 1995 at age 25.

Kathy is the past co-leader of the Gwinnett County, Georgia Chapter and the past regional coordinator for Georgia and the current leader of the North Georgia Mountains TCF Chapter.

Patrick has served on the TCF National Board as treasurer and president, and is a former trustee of the TCF Foundation. Patrick is a co-author of the new book, “*Cracking the Code to Leadership.*”

Kathy and Patrick served as co-chairs of the 2003 National TCF Conference in Atlanta. They may be contacted at malonepk@bellsouth.net.

For additional information about this program, contact Cindy Durham of the Atlanta Chapter at (770) 938-6511 or cindy_durham@bellsouth.net.

Compassionate Friends Online Sharing

The Compassionate Friends offers “virtual chapters” through an Online Support Community (live chats). This program was established to encourage connecting and sharing among parents, grandparents, and siblings (over the age of 18) grieving the death of a child. The rooms supply support, encouragement, and friendship. The friendly atmosphere encourages conversation among friends; friends who understand the emotions you’re experiencing. There are general bereavement sessions as well as more specific sessions. Please check the schedule for dates and times of the sessions. Note: Times posted on the schedule are based upon Eastern Time. http://www.compassionatefriends.org/Resources/Online_Support.aspx

Lending Library

Our chapter offers a lending library with a variety of books on grief and bereavement. We encourage you to browse our library and feel free to check out a book or CD to take home with you. We only ask that you sign out the books and return them in a timely manner so others can have the benefit of the information as well. If you have read a book that was helpful to you and would like to share it with others, donating that book in your child’s name is a wonderful way to honor them. Stickers are placed in these books to note whose memory they are given in.

Looking for a particular grief book? Go to www.centering.org. When ordering, mention you are with The Compassionate Friends and shipping charges will be waived.

Events

Each month we plan a social outing in addition to our monthly meeting in an effort to get together with our TCF friends in an informal setting. We encourage these socials as another means of group support with other bereaved parents and their families and a chance to get out and enjoy some healthy activities. If you have any questions or ideas for future social events, please contact Ria Coesel at tcfmarietta.ria@hotmail.com



New Echota (Frontier Day)

Saturday, October 17 - 10 AM to 4 PM



New Echota Historic Site

1211 Chatsworth Hwy NE
Calhoun, GA 30701

Craftsmen will demonstrate early 19th century skills such as basket making, spinning, weaving, weapons, blacksmithing and stories and music. Tour the historic grounds and buildings as the sights, sounds and smells of frontier life of the 1820s Cherokee Indian Nation return to New Echota. \$3.50-5.00 706-624-1321.

If you would like to carpool, meet at the First Baptist Church (Marietta) parking lot at 9:00 AM.

The Annual Atlanta Walk to Remember Sunday, October 19, 2009

2:00 pm

Concourse Corporate Center, Building 4

Sponsored by the Northside Hospital Perinatal Loss Office
Admission is free ~ Open to the public ~ Children welcome

This is a symbolic walk that includes a ceremony, refreshments, and balloon release.

This is NOT a fundraiser and it is NOT a walk that requires training. The actual walk is approximately 15 minutes.

For more information or to register, click here:

<http://atlantapnl.com/awtr.aspx> or call (770) 442-8995



Bowling at
Marietta Lanes
in August

2009 Calendar of Events

October 6 - TCF Marietta Monthly Meeting

October 17 - New Echota (Frontier Day)

November 3 - Alan Pedersen Concert and
Monthly Meeting

November 21 - Kennesaw Mountain

December 1 - TCF Marietta Candle Lighting
Ceremony and Monthly Meeting

December 13 - Worldwide Candle Lighting

December 19 - Christmas in Helen



Kennesaw Mountain

Saturday, November 21

Join us for a refreshing hike up Kennesaw
Mountain in honor of our children.

Meet at the visitor center at 10 AM.



TCF Marietta Candle Lighting Ceremony

December 1, 2009

Save the date for our annual Candle Lighting Ceremony at our monthly meeting at the First Baptist Church, Marietta. We will have more information in the upcoming meetings and on our website: www.tcfmarietta.org

TCF Worldwide Candle Lighting

December 14, 2009

The annual TCF Worldwide Candle Lighting honors children who have died by lighting candles at 7 PM around the world, creating a virtual wave of light. For more information go to www.compassionatefriends.org



Thank you to Karl Jahn and Omni International for donating their services for printing our newsletters and thanks to Theo Furber and TBF Computing for their help with other computing needs.

See past newsletters on our website www.tcfmarietta.org

TCF CREDO

We need not walk alone. We are The Compassionate Friends. We reach out to each other with love, with understanding, and with hope.

The children we mourn have died at all ages and from many different causes, but our love for them 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, creeds, and relationships.

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 they feel helpless and see no hope.

Some of us have found our faith to be a source of strength, while some of us are struggling to find answers. Some of us are angry, filled with guilt or in deep depression, while others radiate an inner peace. But whatever pain we bring to this gathering of The Compassionate Friends, it is a pain we will share, just as we share with each other our love for the children who have died.

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

We need not walk alone. We are The Compassionate Friends©2009



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Marietta Chapter Newsletter**

c/o

Marietta TCF

P. O. Box 1892

Marietta, GA 30061

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