



The Compassionate Friends Newsletter

Contact and Chapter Information

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Marietta Chapter Steering Committee

Karen Chambers, Co-Leader
Kathy Kelcourse, Co-Leader
Madeline Flores
Ken Minor
Clare Rovin
Erica Beltz
Lorna Kennedy
Donna Davis
Sharon & Cliff Hower
Louise Hoefler
Linda & Les Sedberry

Marietta Chapter Meetings

Meetings are held the first
Tuesday of each month,
7:00 -9:00 PM

First Baptist Church of Marietta
148 Church Street, Marietta
Main Building on the 3rd floor

WHO ARE WE?

The Compassionate Friends is a nonprofit, self-help organization which offers support to bereaved parents, siblings and grandparents. We are open to anyone who has lost a child at any age and from any cause. The Compassionate Friends was established based upon the following seven principles:

1. TCF offers friendship, understanding, and hope to bereaved parents, siblings, and grandparents.
2. TCF believes that bereaved parents, siblings, and grandparents can help each other toward a positive resolution of grief.
3. TCF reaches out across society's barriers to all bereaved parents, siblings, and grandparents.
4. TCF understands that every member has individual needs and rights.
5. TCF reaches out to the bereaved primarily through our community of local chapters.
6. TCF chapters belong to their members.
7. TCF chapters are coordinated nationally to extend help to each other, and to bereaved parents, siblings, and grandparents everywhere.

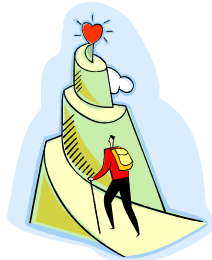
Please note: The Compassionate Friends national website address has changed. The new address is www.compassionatefriends.org. (They have omitted "the" in the new address). If you log in using a favorite or bookmark that you used on the old TCF national website, that will not work.



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.

Kennesaw Mountain Hike

Our August outing was a hike up Kennesaw Mountain. It was an exhilarating experience walking up the mountain in honor of our children. Some elected to ride the bus up, but we all met at the top to take in the view and we tied ribbons of remembrance on branches. The view from the top was awesome, and the fresh air, exercise and sharing was just what the doctor ordered.



Drive 4 Life Walk-A-Thon

Lorna, Louise, Ann and Claudia participated in the Drive 4 Life Walk-A-Thon on September 20 at Chastain Park. This walk was sponsored by **It Won't Happen to Me**, a non-profit organization that is dedicated to reducing car crashes, the number one cause of teen fatalities. About 400 people attended to support the organization and to honor the teens who have died. It was a well organized walk and featured touching photos along the course of teen crash victims. For more information about this organization: www.itwonthappentome.org

TCF Marietta Yard Sale

The Marietta Chapter yard sale was held on Sept 12th and 13th at Ria Coesel's house in Marietta. We had a great turnout. We had everything very organized and people came and bought a lot of items. We made everyone aware of our group and even had some donations. The day was very hot, but we had a great time and that is what matters most. I didn't know that yard sales were so much work! The best part is when you finally get everything unloaded and you can just relax and talk to people. I'd like to thank everyone that donated and came to this yard sale and the one we had in July. It was a great day with great people. Thank you, Ria for providing the space. The money we made will help in the Chapter. *Lorna Kennedy*



Autumn has arrived. While many people welcome this season with the cooler weather, colorful landscape, and family traditions, there are many of us who look to the upcoming months with dread. For the newly bereaved, we wonder how we will survive the upcoming holiday months without our child and we can't understand how the rest of the world can continue to experience joy in the holidays when we feel so devastated from our loss. We also wonder how those who have lost a child or sibling, maybe not as recently, can smile and laugh and even look forward to the holidays.

At our meetings, you may see some smiling faces and even hear some laughter. These are the people who have walked in your shoes and have been where you are, wondering how they would ever smile again, how could other people in the group be happy, and how could they survive the next birthday, anniversary, Thanksgiving or Christmas. Yet somehow, little by little, they find hope, friendship, and even happiness again. There is no magic wand to make that happen, it takes time and support from people who care.

Compassionate Friends is here for that reason, to give and receive support and encouragement, because others were there for them when they walked that dark and lonely road and because they still walk it every day, with each day the steps getting a little lighter with renewed hope.

Please do not be offended by smiles and laughter, but be encouraged by them, that one day you will feel alive again and will take pleasure in honoring your child with joyful memories.

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. Think of it as a birthday present to your child. If you would like to place a birthday tribute to your child in the newsletter, you may do so by emailing it to Louise Hoefler at louiseh831@comcast.net. Please limit your paragraph to a few sentences, so we can include as many as are submitted.

October Birthdays

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

November Birthdays

Lori Witmer Luke Deavers
 Ryan Douglas Romanoski Katherine Marie Wood
 Cloey L Herring Hayden Scott Roberts
 Mary Josephine Blankenship Frankie Brohm
 Sydney Brooke Pollock Christopher Wade Tyler
 Bobby DaBov III Ben Pound
 Lauren Hammond Barry M. Lawrence
 Alexander Douglas Lambert Steven Mark Grimm
 Clayton Thomas Moore

Memories are a legacy of hope and courage, left to help us go on when the giver is gone.



~~~~~ Birthday Tributes ~~~~~



Steven Elwood Boultinghouse

Oct 1989 - Oct 2006

Steven wrote this to his Dad on September 25, 2006. He died on October 10, 2006. I do not know how he got to the point where he would take the risk of dying. I cannot believe he meant to die that night. I will always remember him as the person that wrote this email to his Dad.

Hey dad,

Sorry its been so long since I last wrote to you. I've been real happy lately. I got a new girlfriend, her name is Whitney and she is wonderful. She's blonde and really short haha. I really hope you get to meet her. I go to church a lot now and I've decided to become a preacher maybe even a teacher on modern religions. As you can see my grammar is terrible haha just kidding. I'm really happy if you can't tell. I might even write a book explaining the bible to people who have trouble understanding it. Well, I shaved off my goatee and I looked like I was 12 and now I have a beard growing in. I also found out that I have what people call a flirty personality, and so does my girlfriend yeah we argue a lot haha. I will send a picture of us as soon as i can. i wrecked my car if gran didn't tell you and i was car less for a little while then we found a truck for around 6,000. It's an '02 Dodge Ram and all i got to say is i will never go back to driving a car again. I absolutely love having a truck. I'll try to bring my truck when we come over for Christmas. I better go, i love you a lot.

Steven Mark Grimm

Nov 1989 - Sept 2007

Dearest Son,

How would I have known that Labor Day would be the last we would share? The help you lent in cleaning the garage will never be forgotten. I am truly gifted, son, to have grabbed your dusty shoulder in appreciation and tell you how much I loved you. Happy 19th birthday, son.

Love Dad



If you would like a photo button made of your child, you may submit a favorite photo by email to Glen Cummins at georgiaglen@hotmail.com or bring one with you to the next meeting.

Halloween

It is here, this day of
merriment and children's
pleasure.
Gremlins and goblins
and ghosties at the door
of your house.
And the other children
come to the door of your mind.
Faces out of the past,
small ghosts with sweet,
painted faces.
They do not shout.
Those children
who no longer march laughing
on cold Halloween night,
they stand at the door of your
mind -
and you will let them in,
so that you can give them
the small gifts of Halloween -
a smile and a tear.

~WINTERSUN by Sascha

SEASONS

The change of seasons is difficult. It reminds me that I must change if I am to live again. We can become stuck in our grief, full of self-pity and overwhelmed with pain. I do not believe our children would want us to live the rest of our lives in pain and misery. It is so easy to fall into the "black pit" and never have the strength or courage to crawl out – because crawl out we must...on our bellies. We are different now, with different priorities and goals. We must find a new purpose for going on, and we must accept the changes in our lives – including ourselves, for we are different now.

We cannot go backward, though there are times we yearn to. We must move forward. If we don't, we stay stuck at the point that our world changed. I used to say "ended." Change is difficult. To accept the loss of our child is the most difficult of all. Our comfort comes from believing that the love we share will go on for all eternity and that we will be reunited again – and each day brings us closer. We must learn to live again, love again, feel joy and peace again – or our survival will be without value to ourselves or others.

Renée Little

TCF, Fort Collins, Colorado

Suicide

Once you were rich with life,
you were self-confident
and filled with beauty.
Until a darkness came
to seize your mind,
a force from out of silence,
an ache without a reason,
a pain without a name.
What was this darkness that
would not be conquered?
What force, what reason,
What pain without a name
would use your hands
to take your life away.
Once you were rich with life,
you were self-confident
and filled with beauty.
Now we are left alone
without an answer.

by sascha



To every thing
turn, turn, turn
There is a season
turn, turn, turn
And a time to every
purpose under heaven

Pete Seeger

Thanks Given

Many years after her birth
Having taken for granted her wonderful worth,
We feel it necessary to share a time
That our memories of her come to mind.
Everyone was excited about the day
That each would give thanks in their own way.
That year our daughter's birthday was celebrated
With turkey and mashed potatoes, all were elated.
She was given head-of-the-line honors, not too bad,
And the smile on her face told of the thrill she had.
We sang Happy Birthday Pride then gave thanks
For one of the best moments ever, is where it ranks.
She thanked us for presents and for the fun.
We thanked her for being our special one.
Thanks seemed to be fine later that night,
Yet, not enough was said to make it feel right.
Were we able to re-live that day long ago,
We would have said thanks for the love she showed.
Thanks for the compassion she gave to others.
Thanks for putting up with me and her mother.
We would thank her for laughing at silly cartoons
And at us when we acted like buffoons.
We would thank her for challenging our minds
And thank her for loving people of all kinds.
She would be proud of us for what we do no,
Helping others to work through grief somehow.
She would tell us that the thanks,
For doing our parts,
is given freely from the love for her in our hearts.

Thank you for being our daughter.

By Dan Gardner
TCF, Nashville, TN



We encourage everyone to participate in our chapter newsletter by submitting original articles or poems. If you have read a grief book that you recommend, you could write a short book review.

Please help to keep us up to date:

- If you know someone who would like to receive our newsletter
- If you are receiving our newsletter by mail and would prefer to receive it by email
- If your address or email address has changed

Please contact Louise Hoefler at louiseh831@comcast.net



Fall has always been my favorite season: Shorter, cooler days, drives through the mountains to look at the beautiful colors, raking and jumping in the leaves, football, bonfires, camping, walking in the dark crisp air with a scary mummy or a beautiful princess collecting candy from each door, handing out candy to the sweet little scary faces that come to my door, getting together with family and diving in to the turkey and other delectable goodies prepared, waking up at 5AM to get a jumpstart on Christmas shopping with all the big after Thanksgiving sales. All the things that make the fall so special to me are also the exact things that made it so painful after Anna died.

The shorter days meant less light and my days were dark enough already. Cooler days just seemed to reflect my loneliness. Driving anywhere just seemed to bring on the tears – don't know how I saw to drive through the tears. I couldn't see the beautiful colors because my world was colored with pain. No energy to rake or jump, I stayed exhausted. No desire to go to football games, build fires or camp – my only desire was to have her back. Halloween became its' own monster. I couldn't understand the fun in dressing up as a ghost or bloody, mutilated body parts or to put tombstones up in the front yard. What's with that anyway? I wanted John to continue to enjoy this holiday and dress up, but oh it was hard to see him wanting to be something that looked like it was "back from the dead"! I was thankful there weren't many trick-or-treaters that year and that none of Anna's friends came to the door. I wasn't sure how I would have reacted to them.

If I thought Halloween was a monster, how was I going to make it through the Thanksgiving BEAST – I mean feast? Thanksgiving is all about family being together (and the turkey of course). I have a large family and all the chairs were taken, so even though we didn't have a literal empty chair, there was a lot empty in me. I'm sure everyone there felt that heavy emptiness, but no one said anything – it was indeed the elephant in the room. I couldn't stand it; no one mentioning her name, but I was so new to this, I didn't know how to bring a ritual into the holiday: I wanted one. I wanted desperately for everyone to acknowledge that absence. Not saying anything just made the burden heavier. When my brother-in-law asked to say the blessing and sounded so really thankful for "our" wonderful blessings, I wanted to shoot him and in my heart I did, but there at the table I just died inside ...again. Needless to say I didn't get up at 5AM to catch the sales, I probably didn't fall asleep till 4. I was anticipating Christmas alright, but it wasn't with excitement, it was with dread.

This is my ninth fall without Anna here. This fall will be very different from those first ones. I have grown some, healed some and have learned something since that first fall. I hope that you will not make my mistakes and that you make some preparations for the holidays. This year the coolness is a relief after the summer heat. The darkness has been replaced by beautiful memories, Heavenly gifts, great love, family, friends and faith. The world is beautiful to me now, though not as beautiful as that one that I get to spend eternity in with all of my family including Anna. Energy has returned and I enjoy outdoor activities again. I love to remember Anna and how she loved being outdoors. John is too old for trick-or-treating this year, but I will love seeing the sweet scary faces come to my door once again and even though it will bring some tears, I will enjoy looking through photos of Anna in all her various costumes and remembering how she loved Halloween. All the "back from the dead" stuff will still be somewhat bothersome to me, but I dismiss it as "they don't know", nor would I want them to. I will boldly give thanks for Anna at the Thanksgiving table and speak her name freely throughout the day as I recall many memories. I will visit the cemetery with Lamar and I will talk to her and tell her how much I love her. I am even excitedly anticipating Christmas this year. I miss Anna, I will ALWAYS miss Anna and I know I will be with her again, but right now, I am here. My son, my husband and my family are here. There is a lot of beauty here and a lot of need here. I hope to recognize and absorb the beauty and make myself available in service to the needs of others.

If this is your first or among your first falls of your grief, please know that my thoughts and wishes for peace are with you. I can't take the pain away, but perhaps I can share some lessons learned. First I have learned and have heard confirmed by so many others that the anticipation of the holidays is much worse than the day itself. Making plans can help lesson some of the anxiety leading up to them. I hope that you can incorporate some rituals into your holidays that will keep you from having to carry the weight of that "elephant" all by yourself. Let your family and friends know in advance that you anticipate the holidays will be painful for you, but that they can help by not being afraid to speak your child's name and not to back away from your tears. If your family asks a blessing or some words of thanks before the Thanksgiving meal, meet with the person that will be speaking before hand and tell them not to leave out your child. You may want to light a candle on the table or leave an empty chair at the table. These actions acknowledge the absence and acknowledgment is necessary because it emphasizes the significance of the loss and affirms their continued presence in our lives. Rituals help us to remember our child/sibling in loving, healing ways that honor their lives. They give us something to do when we don't know what to do. They are symbolic actions that give expression to that which is too deep and too big for words. Rituals can be a special service that you plan or something as simple as spending a little time in the photo album. My rituals are simple: saying her name in prayer, visiting the cemetery and making certain there are English peas on the table.

I hope you will find some rituals that speak to you, your child/sibling and the relationship you share.



Upcoming Events

October

Invitation from Linda Eroh

I am planning an event for October. This will be a celebration of the life of my son, Steven Boultinghouse and of Mark and Debbie Grimm's son, Steven Grimm. This **Celebration of Life** will be held at Hobgood Park at 6688 Bells Ferry Road in Woodstock on Sunday afternoon, Oct 12th. The time is still not definite but will be about 3 or 4 PM. There will be a band, food will be available by a vendor and we plan to have a couple of speakers and literature on suicide awareness and prevention. I will send out the flyer when it is complete. I hope you can all come and bring friends and family. For information, call Linda at 678-907-4348.



Pot Luck Lunch at George and Judy Barrett's

- All are invited to a Pot Luck Lunch at the home of George and Judy Barrett in memory of their son, Lucas Robert on Saturday, October 25 from 12:00 - 2:00 pm at 308 Rainbow Mountain Drive, Ellijay, GA 30536.
- Bring a favorite dish to share. George and Judy will provide the meat dishes.
- Please RSVP (678) 232-4762 so they can have an idea of how many will attend.
- *Note: The Georgia Apple Festival in Ellijay is not the same day, as was originally thought.*



November

Handling the Holidays

We are planning an extra meeting on November 18th (the third Tuesday in November) at 7PM to discuss ways to handle the holidays. We will not have our usual meeting style, instead we will be talking about what makes the holidays so difficult, giving ourselves permission, making a holiday plan, rituals and a discussion about our fears and what others have done that may be helpful. This meeting will be held at our usual meeting place.



December



Save the dates for these important events in December:

- * TCF Marietta Candlelight Remembrance Service Tuesday, December 2nd
- * 2008 Memory Tree Project December 6-7 at the Cobb County Civic Center, Marietta, Georgia
- * TCF Worldwide Candlelighting December 14th at 7 PM, around the world



TCF Candlelight Remembrance Service

Our annual TCF Candlelight Remembrance Service will be Tuesday, December 2nd at 7PM in the First Baptist Church of Marietta. Candles will be provided. Please bring one of your child's favorite holiday foods to share with the group and a 5X7 or smaller photo to put beside your dish with your child's name on it. We will again have a photo slide show presentation. If you wish for your child's photo to be included you can bring it to the October or November meetings or you can email it as a JPEG (must be a JPEG file) to karenmariettatcf@comcast.net. If your child was in last year's presentation you may email to let us know that you want them included again this year and to use the same photo. Please remember to send your child's name, birthdate and date of death with the photo so that it will be included in the presentation. This is a wonderful way to remember our children as the holiday season comes upon us - to begin the season by honoring their lives. The whole family is invited to this special service.

A Special Thank You

**The Marietta Chapter of The
Compassionate Friends**

Wishes to thank Hall Printing Inc.

Of Marietta, GA for printing the

TCF Newsletter

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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©2007

The Compassionate Friends

Chapter Newsletter

For Marietta

c/o

Marietta TCF

P. O. Box 1892

Marietta, GA 30061

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October - November 2008



The Compassionate Friends of Atlanta

8th Annual Memory Tree

Our 8th Annual Memory Tree "In Memory of our Children and Siblings" for the 1st Annual Cobb's Holiday of Trees is underway. Our tree will be displayed at the Cobb County Civic Center, Marietta, Georgia from December 6-7, 2008.

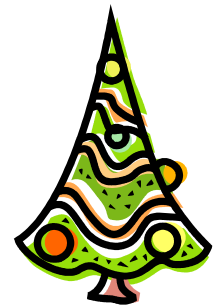
For more information about the event visit www.cobbsholidayoftrees.org

Proceeds from donated trees will benefit March of Dimes and Special Olympics Georgia – Cobb.

The theme for the Memory Tree is "*A Time to Remember*". The tree will be decorated in greens, browns, creams, cranberry and copper. The ornaments will represent "clocks" and include our children's photos. Our children and sibling's names will be inscribed in a book next to the tree.

A sign will be displayed by our tree:

"A Time to Remember"
The Compassionate Friends
"In Memory of Our Children and Siblings"
<http://www.tcfatlanta.org/2008MemoryTree.html>



If you wish to participate in the 2008 Memory Tree Project and include your child's photo with the Memory Tree, please complete the following information: **(Deadline Nov. 1st)**

Name(s): _____ Relationship to Child: _____

Address: _____ City _____ St _____ Zip _____

Telephone # _____ Email _____

Child's Full Name (Both "First" Name and "Last" Name) _____

Child's Date of Birth: _____ Child's Date of Death: _____

Mail Form, picture and check payable to "The Compassionate Friends" to:

The Compassionate Friends,
c/o Jayne Newton
808 Brentway Court