



# The Compassionate Friends

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

Lubbock, Texas Chapter

APRIL/MAY 2015

VOL. 2, NO. 5



## TCF LUBBOCK CHAPTER MEETING INFORMATION

**NEXT MEETINGS:** **May 5, 2015**  
**June 2, 2015**

**TIME:** 7:00 - 8:30 p.m.

**DATE:** First Tuesday of each month

**LOCATION:** 2092 Dover Ave.  
Lubbock, TX; Behavioral Sciences Bldg.  
Room 105, East side of LCU Campus



**CONTACT INFORMATION:**  
Isabel Villa, Chapter Leader:  
806-218-2397  
Deneis Arriaga, Co-Chapter Leader  
Sharon Kohout, Newsletter Editor  
[TCFLubbock@gmail.com](mailto:TCFLubbock@gmail.com)

[www.compassionatefriendslubbock.org](http://www.compassionatefriendslubbock.org)

TCF Chapter Meetings are open to anyone who has lost a child - at whatever age, from any cause.

## SUPPORT GROUP FOR PREGNANCY AND INFANT LOSS

**NEXT MEETINGS:** **May 15, 2015**  
**June 20, 2015**

**TIME:** 7:00 - 8:30 p.m.

**DATE:** 3rd Wed. of each month

**Contact:** Suzy Emre, 806-441-3612  
[suzylanotte@sbcglobal.net](mailto:suzylanotte@sbcglobal.net)

**Location:** Same as Compassionate Friends  
(see above)

# Remembering Our Children



## *Birthdays*

Kaitlyn Stinebaugh	April 7	Dusty Stanford	May 18
Brian Chase	April 30	Jackson	May 18
Wesley Seaton	April	Keith Hayes	May 21
Mordecai Thomas	May 5	Matthew Meriwether	May 22
Efrain Ruiz	May 18		

## *Remembrance Dates*

Jacqueline Anderson	May 6	Jaydenmarie Rodriguez	May 15
Shayne Kohout	May 13	Jasmyn Peek	May 19



In this universe nothing is ever wholly lost. That which is excellent remains forever a part of this universe. Human hearts are dust. But the love which moves the human heart, abides to bless the last generation.

*~ Ralph Waldo Emerson*

## Now I Know...

I never knew, when you lost your child,  
What you were going through.  
I wasn't there, I stayed away,  
I just deserted you.

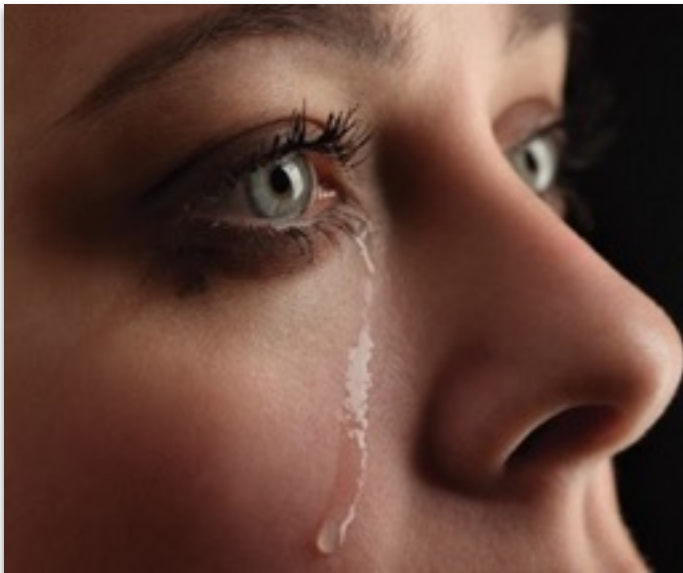
I didn't know the words to say,  
I didn't know the things to do.  
I think your pain so frightened me,  
I didn't know how to comfort you.

And then one day my child died.  
You were the first one there.  
You quietly stayed by my side,  
Listened, and held me as I cried.

You didn't leave, you didn't go.  
The lesson learned is...  
NOW I KNOW!



~Alice Kerr  
TCF Lower Bucks, PA



### Mother Worry

Little by little I am flayed  
Painful tearing of nerve endings.  
This is how it is  
Constant worry  
Constant fear  
Lost so much  
Can't bear the thought of more  
It is a movable feast of panic  
All alone fears engulf  
They sneak up  
Silent cat feet stalking prey~

~Melissa Anne Schroeter  
TCF Rockland County, NY  
Copyright 2012/

“One often calms one's grief by recounting it”  
~ Pierre Corneille

## SUNLIGHT AND SHADOW

By Sharon Kohout

May 10, 2012

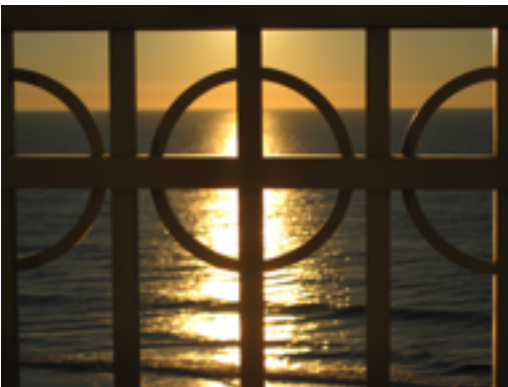
I have been acutely aware for months now that Mother's Day falls on May 13th this year. The date is probably not noteworthy for many, but it has special meaning for me. On this Mother's Day I will be standing in a cemetery in the rural east Texas town of Mineola - facing the gravestones of my grandmother Bessie Leach, my mother Annabelle Saunders Leach, and my daughter Shayne Ann - all of whom died on May 13th. It feels surreal - like I know there is a lesson somewhere in this occasion. The burden will be heavy - I will cry and grieve - but will ultimately thank God for the gifts each of these beautiful women gave me.



I am struck by the tender yet resilient ties that bind our generations and the comfort that these bonds provide. Our lives are shaped not only by the tragedies, but also by the opportunities for healing that these great sorrows provide. As this particular Mother's Day approaches, I have come to a poignant realization. We mothers see ourselves as the "constant gardeners" of our children's lives. But if we will let ourselves be vulnerable we can be the recipients of a most precious gift: a child's great capacity to restore and heal our own hurting hearts.

Images from past and present bring this home to me. It is May 1962 and I am 12 years old. Sound asleep in my bed, I sense my mother crawling in next to me. She is sobbing and I am stunned into wakefulness by her tears and moans. She tells me in halting phrases that my 19 yr. old half sister, Dianne, has been killed in a car accident. My dad has headed to the hospital and my mom is bereft. The picture is etched forever in my mind: I am cradling and comforting my mother while she grieves inconsolably.

Fast forward to Valentine's Day 1988. As I am standing alone in my bedroom in Lubbock, TX, quiet tears are running down my face. It's a difficult holiday because it marks the 3rd anniversary of the day I discovered that my mother had terminal cancer. She died at age 62, just three months after her diagnosis, and I am still mourning the fact that she is not here to see my three children grow and thrive. It just seems too much to bear. My 12-year-old daughter Shayne enters the room and wraps her arms tightly around me. The image of the two of us standing in front of the dresser mirror - crying and rocking together - is a precious one.



November 2010 brings yet another image. My 30-year-old daughter Paige and I are standing in the Atlantic Ocean at Myrtle Beach, SC. I watch Paige's arm wave gracefully in the sunshine while she releases the ashes of her beloved sister Shayne onto a cool breeze. At first I feel wooden. I can't, I won't let go. But I gradually turn my face to the sun and pray and my fingers slowly open. Paige steps through the water to me and cradles me in her arms. My tears mix with the ocean...and the ashes....and the prayers....and I feel that peace will come again.

Most recently, I am sitting in a rocking chair in Austin, Texas....cradling my first grandson, six-month old Jayden, and singing "Tender Shepherd" from the musical *Peter Pan*. Those big eyes stare up at me in wonder and his tiny hand pats my cheek. The healing in those eyes and in those little fingers that begin to wrap around my own is a reminder to me that, even in our darkest moments, there can also be great joy.

And so it goes. Sorrow and joy, shadow and sunlight, holding on and letting go. It's a rhythm that mothers of all generations understand and, ultimately, must accept. But if we look both to the past AND to the future, we may find special gifts of wisdom and comfort in unexpected places.

May Mother's Day bring you one of those special gifts!



## Graduation Time

By Peggy Gibson, TCF Nashville, TN

It's June and graduation time again. Your child would have been among those wearing the cap and gown, walking down the aisle to the ever stirring "Pomp and Circumstance." Now there is a vacant spot in the line. Should you attend? Can you stand the pain? Will people think you are strange?

As always you must follow your heart. So, go if you'd like to and don't hide your tears. It's quite all right to miss your own child while celebrating the achievements of others.

Just remember: That your instincts are the most important ones; that no one else can make this decision for you, and that it doesn't really matter what other people think.

It was your child who died. This is your pain and you have the right to feel it and deal with it in your own way – and may a bit more healing take place in the doing.

## The Gifts You've Given Me

I left the need to know Why behind  
years ago.  
Instead,  
I practice finding peace with the inner  
turmoil,  
accepting the unacceptable,  
living my truth.  
You have given me the gift of uncertainty  
and thus, taught me to live in the Now.

The fingers of your loss have quietly  
shaped me,  
molding away the sharp edges,  
my judgment of others,  
my innocence.  
You have given me the gift of Humility.

You were a child,  
my child.  
Now you parent.  
Invisibly, quietly, from behind the veil,  
you show me the meaning  
of Life.  
You have given me the gift of Awareness.

I am not the same.  
In losing you,  
I found my strength, my sorrow,  
my compassion, my  
Self.  
You have given me the gift of Suffering.

These tears carry knowledge  
that through suffering came  
Understanding,  
and through understanding came  
Forgiveness,  
and through forgiveness came  
Love.

You fluttered in my womb like a  
butterfly,  
and now you flutter in my soul,  
eternally a part of me.  
Eternally giving.

*Sara Therese  
TCF Tucson, AZ  
In Memory of Shawn*



# TCF NATIONAL CONFERENCE UPDATE

**DATE: JULY 10-12, 2015**



## REGISTRATION/HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS

The Compassionate Friends is pleased to announce that Dallas, Texas will be the site of the 38th TCF National Conference on July 10-12, 2015. "Hope Shines Bright ... Deep in the Heart" is the theme of this year's event, which promises more of last year's great national Conference experience. The 2015 Conference will be held at the Hyatt Regency Downtown Dallas.

We have updated the registration form for our 38th National Conference in Dallas, TX on July 10-12, 2015

<https://32844.thankyou4caring.org/sslpage.aspx?pid=300>.

The Hyatt Regency Downtown Dallas, 300 Reunion Blvd., Dallas, TX 75207, is now accepting reservations for TCF's National Conference. To make your reservation, please access the following link, which will take you directly to TCF's reservation portal on the Hyatt's website. Conference attendees are receiving a discounted room rate of \$129. We anticipate a large attendance for the conference, so we encourage you to make your reservation as soon as it is convenient for you.

<https://resweb.passkey.com/go/CompassionateFriends2015>

## WORKSHOPS

If you have never attended a national conference, you may be wondering if there are any workshops for **YOU**... With over 100 workshops from which to choose, we think you will find several! Whether you are newly bereaved, or years down the road, TCF tries hard to make sure we have something helpful to everyone who attends the conference.

Perhaps you want to talk to someone whose loss was similar in circumstances to your own. Maybe you would like to hear from the opposite sex why their grief seems so different from yours. Are you a sibling who needs someone your own age, who has also lost a sibling and understands what it is like to be a "forgotten mourner?" Would it help to find a creative outlet to express your personal grief journey? Maybe it would help if others could share their insights on how to deal with family and friends who don't seem to understand. We have all these and more, just for you.

Each workshop is one hour and 15 minutes long, with a short break in between. Although we have a few professionals who present, most presenters are bereaved parents, grandparents or siblings just like you, who want to help others on this difficult journey by sharing their own experiences. Workshops are usually part presentation, and part interactive discussion time. Some workshops have specific activities on which you will work independently, then share with the group if you wish to (but just like in chapter meetings, you don't **have** to). Some workshops offer handouts, and you may also want to make notes to take home and refer to later. Some presenters have authored books, and these may be available in the conference bookstore.

As noted elsewhere, sibling workshops are only for the siblings. Parents and grandparents are asked **not** to attend sibling workshops, because that is the siblings' "safe place" where they are free to share, listen and learn from other siblings. Understanding the parents/grandparents' deep love and desire to understand and help, we have scheduled a panel discussion for you that addresses this topic. Please respect this request for a little space.

There is a list of our workshops on the registration brochure, and more are being added. A complete bio of the presenter(s) and a more detailed workshop description will be available to you in the conference program book you receive when you check in at the conference. (It might be available online sooner, so watch the TCF website and Facebook pages.) The registration form asks you to list the workshops you are interested in--not as a commitment, but so TCF can choose the appropriate size room for each workshop and so presenters can supply enough handouts for everyone. Please help us out by completing this info during registration.

# RESOURCES

**American Foundation for Suicide Prevention**

[www.afsp.org](http://www.afsp.org)

888-333-2377

**CONTACT LUBBOCK'S Heartbeat: Support Group for survivors of suicide victims**

806-787-1209

**MISS Foundation (pregnancy/infant loss support)**

[www.missfoundation.org](http://www.missfoundation.org)

**National Suicide Prevention Lifeline**

800-273-8255 (TALK)

**Parents of Murdered Children**

[www.pomc.com](http://www.pomc.com)

888-818-7662

**SHARE (pregnancy & infant loss support)**

[www.nationalshare.org](http://www.nationalshare.org)

800-821-6819

**Suicide Grief (online support forum)**

[www.suicidegrief.com](http://www.suicidegrief.com)

**Other helpful websites:**

- ❖ [www.opentohope.com](http://www.opentohope.com)
- ❖ [www.griefnet.org](http://www.griefnet.org)
- ❖ [www.griefwatch.com](http://www.griefwatch.com)
- ❖ [www.journeyofhearts.org](http://www.journeyofhearts.org)
- ❖ [www.bereavedparentsusa.org](http://www.bereavedparentsusa.org)
- ❖ [www.healingheart.net](http://www.healingheart.net)
- ❖ [www.childrenofdome.com](http://www.childrenofdome.com)
- ❖ [www.spacebetweenbreaths.com](http://www.spacebetweenbreaths.com)
- ❖ [www.holdingontolove.com](http://www.holdingontolove.com)
- ❖ [www.centerforloss.com](http://www.centerforloss.com)
- ❖ [www.survivorsofsuicide.com](http://www.survivorsofsuicide.com)

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## COMPASSIONATE LISTENERS

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Should you need to speak with someone and cannot wait until the next meeting, please feel free to contact one of the following volunteers.

Cause of Death	Name	Phone	Email
Motor Vehicle	Isabel Espinoza	806-218-2397	<a href="mailto:villagirlso4@yahoo.com">villagirlso4@yahoo.com</a>
	Deneis Arriaga	806-549-6476	<a href="mailto:deneis.arriaga@yahoo.com">deneis.arriaga@yahoo.com</a>
Suicide	Beverly Colbert	806-773-1375	<a href="mailto:bevcolbert@aol.com">bevcolbert@aol.com</a>
	Sharon Kohout	806-392-1886	<a href="mailto:sharon.kohout@gmail.com">sharon.kohout@gmail.com</a>
Sudden Death	Yolonda Moore	806-535-6551	<a href="mailto:yomoore@yahoo.com">yomoore@yahoo.com</a>
*Father to Father (support for grieving fathers)	Charles Peek	806-698-1803	<a href="mailto:JPeek91474@aol.com">JPeek91474@aol.com</a>
Miscarriage/Infant Loss	Suzy Emre	806-441-3612	<a href="mailto:suzylanotte@sbcglobal.net">suzylanotte@sbcglobal.net</a>

## The Compassionate Friends National Office

PO Box 3696  
Oak Brook, IL 60522-3696  
877-969-0010

[www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org)

Regional Coordinator:

Bill Campbell

972-935-0673

[willied53@sbcglobal.net](mailto:willied53@sbcglobal.net)

## 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. 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 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.

## TCF Mission Statement

When a child dies, at any age, the family suffers intense pain and may feel hopeless and isolated. The Compassionate Friends provides highly personal comfort, hope, and support to every family experiencing the death of a son or a daughter, a brother or a sister, or a grandchild, and helps others better assist the grieving family.

## Calendar

**May 5, 2015 7:00 p.m.**

TCF Lubbock Chapter Support Group

**May 20, 2015 7:00 p.m.**

Pregnancy and Infant Loss Support Group

**June 2, 2015 7:00 p.m.**

TCF Lubbock Chapter Support Group

**June 17, 2015 7:00 p.m.**

Pregnancy and Infant Loss Support Group

**TCF National Conference,  
Dallas, TX**

July 10-12, 2015

*From the Editor:*

It is with great sadness that I report the loss of a dear friend and former member of our local TCF chapter - Lisa Smith. Lisa became a champion in the anti-bullying effort after she lost her daughter, Felicia Ann, to suicide in December 2010. I first met Lisa at a support group for suicide survivors in Lubbock the year following my own daughter's suicide. We were kindred spirits and, with our friend and fellow TCF member, Beverly Colbert, spoke out as a team on suicide prevention and awareness.

Lisa created a campaign called Kindness Matters to spread the word. In the meantime she held down a job, cared for an elderly mother, and mothered her 3 other children (Lindsay, Nathan, and Zachary) and a grandson, Alex. We were all stunned when she was diagnosed with colon cancer over a year ago.

Lisa and I shared in some heavy conversations about death, her desire to be reunited with her Felicia, yet her tremendous sadness at leaving her family and so much unfinished business on this earth. On March 17, Lisa left us after a courageous fight.

I think of her often and she inspires me to continue the work she couldn't finish. And yes, she finally has her arms around Felicia once more. God bless you, Lisa.

Sending love,  
Sharon K.  
(Shayne's mom)



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## LOVE GIFTS

A love gift is a gift of money to The Compassionate Friends - Lubbock Chapter. It is usually in honor of a child who has died, but it can also be from individuals who want to honor a relative or friend who has died, a gift of thanksgiving that their own children are alive and well, or simply a gift from someone who wants to help in the work of our chapter.

The donations below are in support of the Lubbock Chapter newsletter, candlelight service, website and other outreach.

All chapters within The Compassionate Friends are totally dependent on funds from our families. We DO NOT receive funds from our National Office. Everything we need to operate our local chapters is paid directly from our local resources and our local family contributions. Thank you to all who contribute and support your local chapters. Some people contribute in memory of other's children ... this is a wonderful way for others to say,

“I am remembering your child.”

Love gifts to the Lubbock Chapter of the Compassionate Friends should be made payable to The Compassionate Friends and mailed to our treasurer:

Joseph Froelich  
3505 77th Drive  
Lubbock, TX 79423

All contributions are tax deductible.

### *Love Gifts to the TCF Lubbock Chapter*

In Loving Memory of Lisa Smith and her daughter Felicia Ann, from a friend Sharon Kohout, Lubbock, TX

In Loving Memory of Anthony Scioli from his parents, Paul and Sharon Scioli, Lubbock, TX

In Loving Memory of Shayne Kohout from her friends Judy & Frank Graham, Shady Shores, TX

In Loving Memory of David Wragg from his parents, Marilyn & Mike Wragg, Lubbock, TX