



# The Compassionate Friends

Supporting Family After a Child Dies  
Lubbock, Texas Chapter

APRIL/MAY 2014

VOL. I, NO. 9

## TCF 2014 National Conference: Chicago, Illinois July 11-13



The Compassionate Friends' National Conference is a chance to gather with other parents, siblings and grandparents from all over the U.S. and indeed, the world. Going to this conference can be a life-changing experience. For your information, [here](#) is information about registration, including a list of workshops available.

## TCF Adds New Spanish Facebook Page: Los Amigos Compasivos/USA

The Compassionate Friends has added a new Facebook Page, Los Amigos Compasivos/USA, for our Spanish language members grieving the death of a child, sibling, or grandchild.

A number of TCF chapters offer Spanish language support and the national organization also provides support via nine Spanish language brochures, a Spanish language website located on TCF's national website at [compassionatefriends.org](http://compassionatefriends.org), and now the new Facebook Page. The Spanish language Facebook site will have many of the same features of TCF's national Facebook Page, which now has reached over 60,000 members. There will be posts related to grief, discussion boards, an area for photographs to be placed in memory of our children, and much more. Visit this new site on Facebook.

## LUBBOCK CHAPTER MEETING INFORMATION

**NEXT MEETING:** May 6, 2014

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

**DATE:** First Tuesday of each month

**TOPIC:** Healing Rituals

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



### CONTACT INFORMATION:

Isabel Villa, Chapter Leader:

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Sharon Kohout, Newsletter Editor

[TCFLubbock@gmail.com](mailto:TCFLubbock@gmail.com)

For more information, click on these [Frequently Asked Questions about Chapter Meetings](#).

*The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen, nor touched, but are felt in the heart.*

*~Helen Keller*



## REMEMBRANCE DAYS



*Jacqueline  
Anderson  
May 6*



*Shayne Kohout  
May 13*



*Jaydenmarie  
Rodriguez  
May 15*



*Jasmyn Peek  
May 19*

## BIRTHDAYS



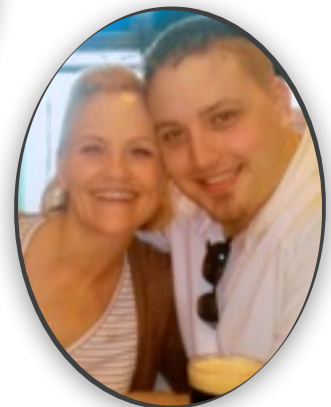
*Brian Chase  
April 30*



*Dusty Stanford  
May 18*



*Keith Hayes  
May 21*



*Matthew Meriwether  
May 22*



## THRESHOLD

Every year I am shocked by spring.  
Here it comes suddenly, like a curtain  
made of colorful print material, dropping,  
transforming the land.

Each year  
I feel like I haven't been paying attention.  
One morning I wake  
and my world is gaudy with color  
giddy – like someone shook the champagne  
and it spilled, its effervescence  
waking the flowers early, drunk and in love.

There is no memory of the neon leaves of fall  
Winter's wind has pushed on.  
I'm glad it's gone.  
It had become a guest who stayed too long,  
A bore that drove me to my room.  
Each year when the azaleas bloom,  
I remember another spring.  
That one wore a pall.  
The rain would not stop. It poured into the  
open grave of my son.  
It poured deep into my heart. I was sure it  
would never, ever,  
stop.

It did,  
though I sometimes wished it hadn't.  
I was stuck between forgetting  
and remembering.  
Remembering won.  
Now I see his face in the azaleas  
The bloomed that spring  
while he died.

I no longer hold it against them.

*-Fay Harden*





## ANTICIPATING MOTHER'S DAY

Before we lost our children to death, Mother's Day was a happy time. We each reflect back on Mother's Days past.....gifts, cards, special memories and one day set aside to acknowledge the best in our relationship with our treasured children.

With the death of our child, this dynamic was forever transfigured. Now, instead of looking forward to this day, we grasp at anything that will keep our minds away from it. Yet the anxiety still creeps into our minds and hearts; our stomachs churn and tears fill our eyes at the most inopportune moments. The dreadful countdown begins in late April and lasts for nearly three weeks.

This is the fifth Mother's Day I have endured since the death of my son. Each year I have the same, desperate anxiety, yet each year the day is a bit easier to handle. Each year the anticipation is far worse than the day itself.... "borrowing trouble" as my dad would say. Since my son is my only child, I do not have the comfort of other children nor do I have the need to put on a happy face. Instead, I am able to choose what I will do without feeling the burden of guilt.

While my first Mother's Day was filled with tears, subsequent Mother's Days have been more subdued.

The choice to embrace or ignore Mother's Day is yours alone. Many bereaved mothers adopt a new perspective which honors their child and still gives normalcy to their family.

Mother's Day is bittersweet for us. The pain is part of the love that we will feel for our children for eternity. We wouldn't trade one treasured moment for a cosmic reduction of our pain.

Some of us plan the day carefully. Some of us just "go with the flow." Some of us weep; some of us work. Some of us read, some of us revel in this special moment set aside just for mothers. Each of us makes a choice that is based on our own truth.

The day itself is not nearly as overwhelming as the buildup of anxiety and sadness which precedes it. I have found this to be true of all holidays, birthdays, death anniversaries and special occasions. I am trying to live in the moment. When the moment of Mother's Day happens, I will decide what I should do. I refuse to let others pressure me. I refuse to become maudlin over greeting card commercials and heart-grabbing point-of-purchase marketing efforts. I will not be manipulated by the agenda of others.

But on Mother's Day, as on each day of the year, I will think of my son, remembering the child he was and the man he became. I will honor his life by doing the best I can with what is left of my life. I will remain in the moment and treasure my memories. And for this mother, that is enough.

*-Annette Mennen Baldwin  
In memory of my son, Todd Mennen  
TCF, Katy, TX*

## *Grandparents Remembrance:*

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, and 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.

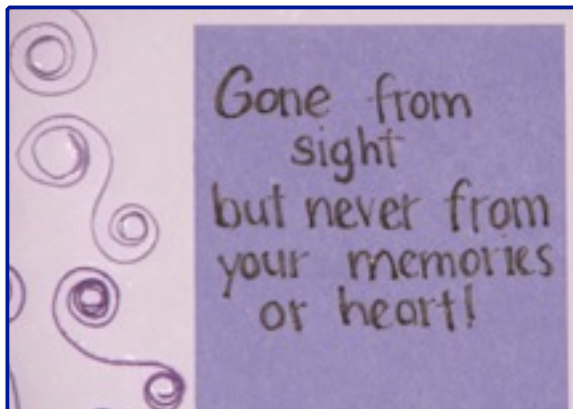
*-Susan Mackey  
TCF Rutland, VT*



## *Playing in the Shadows*

We grew up together,  
Big sister, little brother.  
I took care of you  
Until you were old enough to care for yourself.  
Though you didn't say it,  
I knew you loved me.  
We played in the sunlight, you and I;  
Remember the games of "Mother-May-I" and "Hide-and-Seek"?  
Sure we had our fights  
As all siblings do,  
But through it all we never lost  
Our love for each other.  
Now you're gone.  
I'll never see you again  
except in the memories  
of those sunny days.  
You will forever be sixteen--  
Far too young to die.  
You had your whole life to live.  
I'll always grieve, but I must go on.  
Still, without you,  
I play alone in the shadows.

*-Cheryl Larson  
TCF Pikes Peak, CO*



## 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 6, 2014

TCF Lubbock Chapter Meeting

### June 3, 2014

TCF Lubbock Chapter Meeting

### July 1, 2014

TCF Lubbock Chapter Meeting

### July 11-13, 2014

TCF National Conference, Chicago IL

### July 10-12, 2015

TCF National Conference, Dallas, TX

### *From the Editor:*

Rituals are planned activities, symbolic in nature, that help us through times of chaos. At this time of year, with the anniversary of my daughter Shayne's death in May, and her birthday in June, I am especially aware of the healing power of rituals. They give us something to do when we don't know what to do.

I'm sure we all have these special things that we do to remember our children, grandchildren, brothers and sisters. When the initial shock after the death of a child passes, we are left with a whole lot of pain and sadness....perhaps feeling like we live in a world where we no longer belong.

If you would like to share any of your special rituals, please come to our May 6th meeting. Or email your ritual and we can add it to our next newsletter. ([TCFLubbock@gmail.com](mailto:TCFLubbock@gmail.com)) We can share it anonymously if you like. But if your ritual has helped you survive, chances are it will help someone else as well.

Peace to you,

- Sharon K.  
(Shayne's Mom)

**WE NEED NOT WALK ALONE**

The Compassionate Friends (TCF), Lubbock Chapter has no individual membership fees or dues, and all bereaved family members are welcomed. However, donations are encouraged to support the monthly chapter meetings, the monthly newsletter, and outreach activities to families on the South Plains who have lost a child.

Please consider a love gift to continue the work of TCF Lubbock.  
All donations are tax-deductible.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

In memory of:

\_\_\_\_\_ Relationship \_\_\_\_\_

Make check payable to:           The Compassionate Friends, Lubbock Chapter

Mail check to:                    Joe Froelich, Treasurer, TCF Lubbock  
  3505 77th Drive  
  Lubbock, TX 79423