



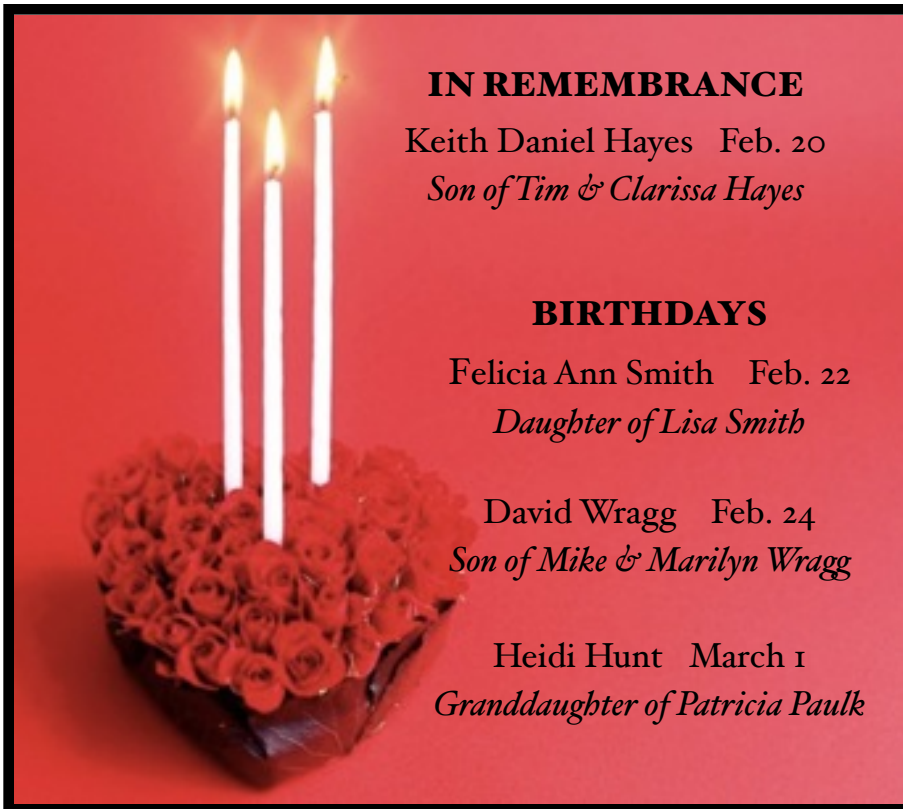
The Compassionate Friends

Supporting Family After a Child Dies
Lubbock, Texas Chapter

FEBRUARY 2014

VOL. I NO. 8

HONORING OUR CHILDREN



IN REMEMBRANCE

Keith Daniel Hayes Feb. 20
Son of Tim & Clarissa Hayes

BIRTHDAYS

Felicia Ann Smith Feb. 22
Daughter of Lisa Smith

David Wragg Feb. 24
Son of Mike & Marilyn Wragg

Heidi Hunt March 1
Granddaughter of Patricia Paulk

I cannot carry this burden alone,
the road is too steep and the pain
is too great.

I shall only get to the top of the
hill if I am able to lean on a firm
shoulder whose strength lies in the
reality of the feet which
bear its weight.

The sharing of grief is the only
solution to the crisis that
surrounds bereavement in our age.

To share a person's sorrow is to
accept their reality and to
acknowledge the fact that none of
us is immune from death.

*-Rev. Dr. Simon Stephens
Founder of The Compassionate Friends*

MEETING INFORMATION

NEXT MEETING: March 4, 2014

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

DATE: First Tuesday of each month

TOPIC: "What's Bothering Me?"

LOCATION: LCU Campus, Rm 105
Behavioral Sciences Bldg.
2092 Dover Ave., Lubbock, TX



CONTACT INFORMATION:

Isabel Villa, Chapter Leader:

806-218-2397

Deneis Arriaga, Co-Chapter Leader

Sharon Kohout, Newsletter Editor

TCFLubbock@gmail.com

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

Silent Stories

Somehow they press against the windowpane of your mind.

Tales of wanting

Tales of longing

Tales of grief.

A drumbeat,

Heartbeat,

Calling out loss.

But

We remember.

But

We still love.

We will not be silent

We will speak their names,

Always,

We will love them,

Forever.

*~Melissa Anne Schroeter
TCF Rockland County, NY*



Jacqueline, daughter of Laura & Justin Anderson



*There is no
footprint too
small to leave an
imprint on this
world.*

*~Author
Unknown*

COMPASSIONATE LISTENERS

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 Villa	806-218-2397	villagirlso4@yahoo.com
	Deneis Arriaga	806-549-6476	deneis.arriaga@yahoo.com
Suicide	Beverly Colbert	806-773-1375	bevcolbert@aol.com
	Sharon Kohout	806-392-1886	sharon.kohout@gmail.com
Sudden Death	Yolanda Moore	806-535-6551	yomoore@yahoo.com
*Father to Father (support for grieving fathers)	Charles Peek	806-698-1803	JPeek91474@aol.com

A Personal Evolution Through Grief

I have been a bereaved parent now for three and half years. I have learned a few things during that time, and I have much to learn in the future. I am evolving. Evolving from what I once was.....a person who had reasonable expectations of a life that included my son, his children, graduations, holidays, birthdays and special occasions. Now I have become a person who has virtually no expectations that are similar to the ones I had before my son died.

I have evolved into a more sensitive person. I know what some people are thinking before they even say the words. I feel others' joy as if it were my own. I cheer for the success of others. I feel their sorrow, their failures, their missteps. I watch children play and remember my childhood, my son's childhood and I think of the joy that is childhood. I sit for hours watching birds at our feeders, marveling at the beauty of the natural world.

I have slowed down the pace. I no longer feel the pressure to be here or there, to do this or that, to call this one or that one, to wear certain clothes, to "put on the best face" for strangers. I have liberated myself from the mundane and the materialistic. Instead, I simply feel deeply about others. I have become extremely sensitive to all that surrounds me.

I believe the loss of my child has changed me in many different ways. I see this in the attitudes of those who are in the Compassionate Friends as well. While few of us will broach no nonsense in our lives because it is meaningless compared with our experiences, we will listen intently for long periods to the weeping, hysterical cries of a newly bereaved mother. Or we will nod quietly as a parent who is far into grief has a sudden flash of sorrow that is overwhelming. We have a heightened sensitivity to others through no choice of our own. It came with the loss of our beautiful children.

I wonder about what my son would think of events that have unfolded since his death. I have come to conclusions about others that aren't, quite frankly, flattering. Yet, he had come to these conclusions before he died. While I tried to mollify his perception of the dysfunctional people with whom he was burdened, he just said, "that's how it is, mom." And he was right. That's how it is. I have learned to accept people for what they are. If I can help, I will certainly do so. If I can't help, I accept that some things can't be changed, and some people won't change. There is no magic here. It's a simple fact of life. "That's how it is, mom."

I volunteer more these days. I give of myself, my knowledge, any wisdom I may have acquired on life's path to others who are in need. I give of my time, my talents and my labors to those who don't ask as well as those who do. I am comfortable with this.

I have less appreciation for money than I once had. Perhaps that is the best thing to come out of this. What was I chasing? What was my son chasing? What was the point? Bigger, better, faster, farther, more, more, more. It's a shallow existence when one is so focused on the material things that one is defined by materialism. I have learned to let go of preconceptions, and in that letting go, I have been pleasantly surprised by many people.

How did I get to this place? One minute, one hour, one day, one week, one month at a time. It is a slow journey from crawling through the pits of hell in deep grief to coming back to the reality of here and now. It's as close to a near death experience as I can imagine. Instead of great epiphanies, there are moments of clarity. Instead of instant gratification, there is much work to achieve tiny steps forward. But the effort is well worth making. When I came out from the pits of hell, I realized that my reality was changed; I realized that I was a different person. I discovered that the world doesn't run on the dollar. I found that all people have a capacity for goodness, but that many will never use this capacity.

But most importantly, I discovered that after leaving the pits of hell, there is a road toward hope that is traveled by each of us. Some walk more quickly, some more slowly. But we each walk that road to hope. Hope represents a life that is tolerable once again. Hope represents the acceptance of our child's death and the acknowledgement that we will keep our children alive in our hearts for all eternity as we continue into our tomorrows. Hope is reconciling those two elements: yesterday and tomorrow.

I have learned to adjust to change, because change is inevitable. I have learned to stand up for what is right because that is our duty as human beings. I have learned much about the fears of others and even more about my own fears. I have conquered my phobias as a result of my son's death. Nothing my imagination could conjure would equal that gripping pain, the ache that hangs in my heart forever because my child has died.

But most of all, I have learned that my son was right. "That's the way it is, mom." Shortly before he died, he said he wanted to give me a copy of *Who Moved My Cheese?* He never had the opportunity. But I will read it. I have a feeling I know what it will say. Perhaps Todd gave me the plot line when he died. I'd like to think that he was subconsciously preparing me.

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

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention

www.afsp.org

888-333-2377

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

806-765-8393

MISS Foundation (pregnancy/infant loss support)

www.missfoundation.org

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

800-273-8255 (TALK)

Parents of Murdered Children

www.pomc.com

888-818-7662

SHARE (pregnancy & infant loss support)

www.nationalshare.org

800-821-6819

Other helpful websites:

- ❖ www.griefnet.org
- ❖ www.thebereavementjourney.com
- ❖ www.griefwatch.com
- ❖ www.journeyofhearts.org
- ❖ www.bereavedparentsusa.org
- ❖ www.healingheart.net
- ❖ www.childrenofdome.com
- ❖ www.spacebetweenbreaths.com
- ❖ www.holdingontolove.com
- ❖ www.griefhaven.com
- ❖ www.centerforloss.com
- ❖ www.survivorsofsuicide.com

Open Up

Each of us
Is on our own journey,
Starting out with a sharp shock of pain,
Descend into a dark cave of grief;
Swallowed up in sorrow..

Open up
The possibilities are endless,
In sorrow and in pain.
I know that now,
And I know
That while the worst can happen
Somehow we go on.

Open up
To the limits of blue sky.
Starting in the dark cave of grief,
The beast uncoils.
Let it roar,
Let it whimper,
Let it go.

Open up
To the acknowledgment of pain.
To the knowing that
We are not in control.
We move in and out from darkness
To possibilities.

Open up
Like spring flowers pushing
Up through the snow.
Knowledge that while sorrow remains,
And the beast of grief lives on,
So too does memory.

*-Melissa Anne Schroeter
TCF Rockland County, NY*

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The Compassionate Friends National Office

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877-969-0010

www.compassionatefriends.org

Regional Coordinator:

Bill Campbell

972-935-0673

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

March 4, 2014

7:00 p.m. TCF Lubbock Chapter Meeting

March 8, 2014, 10 am - 3 pm

Planning meeting for 2015 National Conference, Duncanville, TX

April 1, 2014

7:00 p.m. TCF Lubbock Chapter Meeting

May 6, 2014

7:00 p.m. TCF Lubbock Chapter Meeting

From the Editor:

How is it that some days I think "I can do this!" and other days I have dissolved into a puddle of tears?! There are times when I feel like I should be further along on this journey, but then I realize that grief has no timeline.

What helps more than anything is to come together monthly with others in our Compassionate Friends group. Our group is growing as newly bereaved parents, grandparents, and siblings learn about our monthly support group meetings. There is sadness and tears as we talk about our losses, but joy and laughter as well as we share stories about our children.

Please help us spread the word that there is indeed hope after the death of a child. If you have any questions about the TCF Lubbock Chapter, please contact our chapter leader Isabel Villa at 806-218-2397 or myself at TCFLubbock@gmail.com. We are working on creating a web site and hope to have more information for you soon.

Sending peace and hope,

*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