



# The Compassionate Friends

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

Lubbock, Texas Chapter

JUNE/JULY 2015

VOL. 2, NO. 6

## A Tribute to Fathers

**“To love and be loved is to feel the sun from both sides.”**

YOU ARE NEAR,  
EVEN IF I DON'T SEE YOU.  
YOU ARE WITH ME,  
EVEN IF YOU ARE FAR AWAY.  
YOU ARE IN MY HEART,  
IN MY THOUGHTS,  
IN MY LIFE,

*Always.*



## Where Are You Now?

where are you now  
but in my heart  
your voice clear in my mind  
I know we're never far apart  
mind to mind  
heart to heart  
and, maybe, if I'm fortunate,  
soul to soul  
we connect  
you, watching over me  
me, so unaware  
but, oh, to actually see you  
how you've grown and changed  
still, oh, to embrace you  
feeling your strength and youth  
breathing in your life  
now held only within  
mind's eye  
heart of hearts  
and lonely soul



*-Victor Montemurro  
TCF Brookhaven in Medford, NY*

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## TCF LUBBOCK CHAPTER MEETING INFORMATION

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**NEXT MEETINGS:** **July 7, 2015**  
**August 4, 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 Cam



**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:** **July 15, 2015**  
**August 19, 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)



### THE REASON FOR TCF MEETINGS

One could ask, "Why go and listen to the woes of other people when it is easier to get wrapped up in our own?" It is not to compare tragedies, nor assess the right or wrong means of grieving, nor to pressure or complicate or confuse a bereaved parent with timetables of grief. This is not the reasoning behind TCF meetings.

When a child of a family dies, the emotional pain can be intense. It is tempting at times to try to run either into solitude or avoidance. A balance is needed to survive and live more than a resigned existence. Finding a way isn't easy when the "rest of the world" rushes by, taking little notice that our life has changed.

The monthly meetings of The Compassionate Friends is a special time we can set aside to gain and maintain our balance. We need a lot of encouragement to endure and experience our emotions and to express ourselves while grieving. Coming to a meeting can help alleviate the feeling of being alone in sorrow. The environment of other bereaved parents offers a means of keeping in touch with reality, in which there can be a sharing and mutual understanding. There is sustained support knowing that others are willing to acknowledge that though a child's song might be over, the melody of memories will remain woven throughout the remainder of our lives.

*-N. Hunt  
TCF Sioux Falls, SD*



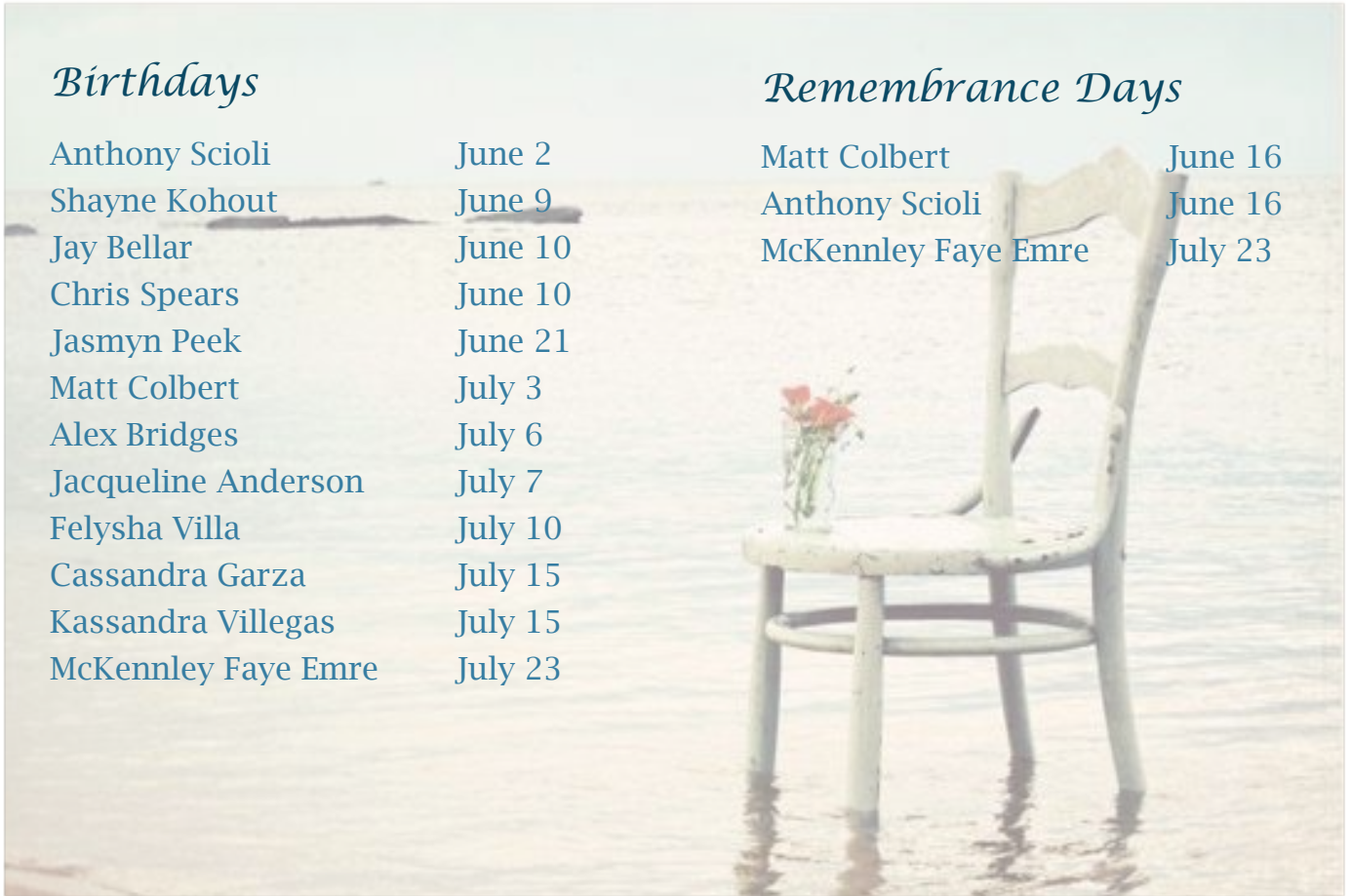
# Remembering Our Children...Always

## *Birthdays*

Anthony Scioli	June 2
Shayne Kohout	June 9
Jay Bellar	June 10
Chris Spears	June 10
Jasmyn Peek	June 21
Matt Colbert	July 3
Alex Bridges	July 6
Jacqueline Anderson	July 7
Felysha Villa	July 10
Cassandra Garza	July 15
Kassandra Villegas	July 15
McKennley Faye Emre	July 23

## *Remembrance Days*

Matt Colbert	June 16
Anthony Scioli	June 16
McKennley Faye Emre	July 23



## **This House and I**

I think this house and I shall grow old  
together and fall down around one  
another.

How can I paint the walls when his  
breath has coated them?

How can I wash the door frames when  
the smudges of his fingerprints surely  
are still there?

How can I patch the hole I kicked in the  
wall in the weeks after he died?

How can I clean the carpets that still  
hold  
billions of his skin cells, his DNA?

How can I throw out the old, broken  
chair  
that he sat and slept in?

How can I clear the air that sometimes  
still carries his scent?

How can I ever fix the broken hearts of  
his mother, his sisters and I?

How long must I wait?

*~Jack McPeck  
TCF of Spokane, WA  
In Memory of my son Zachary Ian  
McPeck*

## The Second Time Around

As bereaved parents, our lives are marked by events that are characterized as “before” and “after.” In the past decade there have been three events that have changed my life forever. The first occurred on May 4, 1997, when my son Richard Jr. died suddenly by suicide at the age of 24. He was about to enter basic training in the US Navy the next day. Life as we knew it came to an end. After the initial shock and denial began to subside, we begin our very long and lonely grief journey.

My wife needed to find answers, was filled with guilt and anger, and needed to explore the whys and what-ifs. I began to read everything I could find that dealt with death of a child, suicide, and grief. I tried to move quickly through the steps so that I could “get on with my life.” We all grieve very differently, but at the time I had no idea that this is normal. I tried to get my wife to move along with me, but it didn't work. We eventually settled back into our jobs, and the subject of our son's death often ended in conflict. As time marched on, my grief was neatly buried in a package that sat in a place nobody could find. My son was certainly not discussed at work, but I was functioning and felt I was doing okay.



The second event occurred about two years later. I was on a bus touring the West when I met a couple named Ceil and John. We were placed together for dinner and as pleasantries were being exchanged, the dreaded question surfaced: "How many children do you have?" Ceil later told me that the minute I hesitated, she knew I was a bereaved parent. The rest of the week was spent talking of my son's life, his death, and my journey for the last two years. I had found people who really were interested in what I had to say. They didn't change the subject and they didn't run away. For the first time since my son died, I could talk freely outside of my home. Ceil told me about TCF, and with my promise to find a local chapter when I returned to Boston, we said our goodbyes. She also told me of a TCF National Conference being held in Virginia the following year.

Ceil is a persistent person, and when I returned home I found the local chapter. To my surprise, I found that the meetings were held in the same parish where my son was buried. I attended the first meeting and felt I had found a new home that was safe and loving. I could now tell my story to people who would listen and not judge.

The next year I attended my first TCF National Conference. One of the first people I met was a woman whose four children had died. I was overwhelmed by the numbers, the love, and the sharing that took place during those three days. I attended a workshop given by Rich Edler on “Finding Joy Again.” He spoke of gifts that we received from our children who died and about a new life with new meaning. He even suggested that we might become better persons because of what we had been through. I hadn't experienced any of these gifts, but I was uplifted and hopeful. When it was time to leave, I was frightened to reenter the real world. It is painful to take off the badge I had worn the previous three days.

It didn't take long for me to find one of those gifts. Shortly after returning home, I learned that the brother of a colleague had died. I knew that I must go and talk to her mother because I had been there and I could. I was frightened, but somehow the words just came to me. We talked of her pain and about TCF, and she soon became a regular at our meetings. For the first time, I saw something positive that resulted from my son's death. My life once again had new meaning. I became more committed to and involved in TCF. I was learning that “helping is healing,” and the more I gave, the more I seemed to get back. More gifts arrived as I became able to speak and write about my journey.

November 21, 2004, brought the third event that further defined my life. We were sitting with four other members of TCF from different parts of the country at lunch discussing the upcoming 2005 National Conference at the Copley Marriott. My wife was with me and one other member of our chapter and, of course, my friend Ceil. Of the six of us, two had suffered multiple losses. On the way home we discussed how remarkable it is that people can go on and do remarkable things with their lives after suffering such loss. At that moment we did not realize we were also already members of that group of those who have suffered multiple losses. We drove by the mortuary in Boston, and I mentioned how horrible the journey to identify my son had been almost eight years earlier. At that time I did not realize that my daughter Lynn's body had already been taken there. We arrived home to the news that our daughter Lynn had died earlier that day. The journey had begun once again. Our TCF friends arrived, and my friend Ceil stayed with us until after the funeral, giving up Thanksgiving with her family. We were surrounded by love and support, and I again realized what it means to be “A Compassionate Friend.”

Little has been written about those who have suffered multiple losses. The impact has been devastating. Our family has shrunk by 40 percent. My surviving child, Libby is 24 years-old and has gone from the youngest to the only surviving child. There are now two empty rooms in our home. But some things are different from the first time we experienced loss. From the moment I heard of Lynn's death, I knew that being newly bereaved the second time was the last place I ever thought I would be. I also knew that, as bad as I felt, it would not be like that forever. I had traveled this road before. I knew that I was not alone, had acquired new tools, and had a very large family of TCF-ers I could lean on. I knew that my wife and I would grieve very differently, as we had before, but that was okay, and we would respect each other's way of dealing with grief. And I also knew I must carry on my involvement with TCF in order to survive. I now had two children whose memories must be kept alive. Rich Edler had taught me that I could help because I had been there.

Because my family was that much smaller, we each had to do more to make Richard and Lynn proud of us. For the next six months I was kept busy with plans for the 2005 National Conference. It was a labor of love done in memory of my children. My wife and daughter also helped, and we all learned that "helping is healing." I also realized that becoming involved with the conference was a way to postpone some of the pain and emptiness that I knew would resurface.

It was 12:30 p.m. on Sunday, July 3. The 28th National Conference has ended, and most of those who had attended had left the hotel. I looked around to see if there were any more good-byes to say, anymore of those TCF hugs to receive before I left the world of understanding, comfort, and love. I had inhabited this place for the past three days and was reluctant to reenter that "other world" where we are invisible in our grief to most whom we meet. How difficult it is to take off the badges that we all wear so proudly, giving our children faces, as well as names. They are the tools we use to tell others our stories. I'd had the chance to visit and share with many friends. I had been educated, entertained, and wrapped in support. I had also had the privilege to serve on the conference committee and share my experience in a workshop. This work has helped to give purpose to my life and the lives of my children. Many members of our chapter experienced a TCF conference for the first time and we have shared our experiences. We have been brought closer by working together and walking in memory of our children. As I think of the last six months, I realize that this conference will stand as a very important part of my grief journey.

I had left that cocoon and once again was brought back to the realization that my grief is still very raw and I have far to go. But I also see that I walk with so many ready to help. I know that we may distract ourselves with work or other activities, take our grief in measured doses, and postpone our journey to regain some strength, but it is a journey that will still lie ahead. Darcy Sims talked about grief that after over twenty five years is still just "under the surface," ready to make its appearance at any time. As time goes on we become better able to manage the grief and place it in that spot when we need to.

November will be a difficult month for my family as we remember my son Richard's 33rd birthday on November 16 and the one-year anniversary of my daughter Lynn's death on November 21. Some years it is harder to give thanks than others. I have received many gifts this year. The best ones came with a badge, a child's picture, and a TCF hug.

Rick Mirabile  
TCF South Shore Chapter, MA  
In Memory of my son, Richard and my daughter, Lynn

Reprinted from *We Need Not Walk Alone*, the national magazine of The Compassionate Friends.

On April 28, 2014 TCF lost a dedicated and faithful friend when Rick Mirabile died after a long and courageous battle with melanoma. Rick was a physician, as well as the Massachusetts Regional Coordinator for TCF. He resided with his wife, Ellen, in Hingham, Massachusetts. In spite of his illness, Rick took on the challenging responsibility of Conference chair for the National Conference when it returned to Boston in 2013. At that conference, he was the well-deserved recipient of the TCF Recognition Award for outstanding service to TCF at a national level over a period of years. Rick, thank you for making a difference in the lives of so many.



## You Were On My Mind . . .

When I woke up this morning...  
You were on my mind. You were on my mind.

You with that genuine enthusiasm,  
like a kid with his first bicycle.

You with the curiosity and excitement  
that dads love to be there for.

There's so much of you still with me.  
Still with us!

It's not fair that we feel cheated or  
that we won't share your ways anymore.

But in reality, after all the tears and  
inner feelings of pain and sadness pass

We will have joy and great happiness  
because we shared your days.  
Your laughter. You.

And when I wake up each morning  
It will be OK that you were on my mind...  
You are on my mind.

That's a special place for you to be,  
because it will be forever.

*-Michael Tyler  
TCF Lighthouse Chapter, Lewes, DE*



## TCF NATIONAL CONFERENCE UPDATE

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

Registration is still being accepted for the  
National Conference. This is such a  
wonderful opportunity to connect with  
other parents, siblings, and grandparents  
who have experienced loss. For additional  
information, go to

<http://>

[www.compassionatefriends.org/  
News\\_Events/Conferences/  
National\\_Conferences.aspx](http://www.compassionatefriends.org/News_Events/Conferences/National_Conferences.aspx)





# 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.thebereavementjourney.com](http://www.thebereavementjourney.com)
- ❖ [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.griefhaven.com](http://www.griefhaven.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

**July 7, 2015 7:00 p.m.**

TCF Lubbock Chapter Support Group

**July 15, 2015 7:00 p.m.**

Pregnancy and Infant Loss Support Group

**August 4, 2015 7:00 p.m.**

TCF Lubbock Chapter Support Group

**August 19, 2015 7:00 p.m.**

Pregnancy and Infant Loss Support Group

**TCF National Conference,  
Dallas, TX**

July 10-12, 2015

*From the Editor:*

Here is a note from Alan Pederson, Executive Director of The Compassionate Friends :

“You absolutely do not want to miss The Compassionate Friends National Conference in Dallas, Texas on July 10th-12th. Give yourself the gift of a healing weekend filled with love and compassion for those whose children, grandchildren and siblings have died. From our opening Friday morning speaker Kay Warren (Matthew's mom and the wife of Purpose Driven Life author Rick Warren) until the closing on Sunday you will find hope and healing. We offer over 100 workshops, a beautiful candle lighting ceremony, a Walk to Remember in an atmosphere filled with healing music, art and tranquility. Register today, it will be the best gift you could ever give yourself ... You have my word on it!”

As the veteran of four conferences, I can heartily support Alan's statement. At my first conference in 2010, seven weeks after Shayne's death, I was gathered in and comforted by 1000 strangers. I didn't think I would survive. But as I approach my fifth conference, I look forward to sharing hope. Yes, we can do this....together.

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



## *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.

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

Paul and Sharon Scioli - in memory of their son Anthony