

# The Primrose



Vol. 43, Issue 2

TCF Broome County Chapter Newsletter

Summer 2023



## Summer of Grief

Summer is here and along with a new season comes a new batch of things we will no longer be able to do with a child who has died. Vacations, picnics, bike riding, even mowing the yard can become filled with painful reminders of what was or should have been. There are no road maps for this journey, no easy steps to follow but here are a few things I've learned to help me cope.

I keep pictures of Missi in my car, wallet, and suitcase - these remind me of the memories I carry in my heart. I retrieve them often.

When I go to a special event, such as a wedding, I visualize Missi in a conspicuous spot like perched on a beam or anyplace a mischievous angel might alight. In my mind, she is always smiling, enjoying the event and adding her own twist of humor to the proceedings.

I always find at least a few minutes to be alone with my sadness and regrets. I shed a tear if I feel the need. I need this time to pull myself together and find enough inner peace to be a part of the living world. I remind myself that many of the people around me grieve for Missi, too. As central as my grief is to my world though, they have a right to enjoy the celebrations of life without my grief at the forefront. My love for them shares their joys, just as their love for me shares my grief.

I will often bring a flower or some little souvenir from an event to her grave. One summer, after a trip, I left a map we had used there, marked with our route. Sometimes I'll just stop and buy a rose on my way home to leave like a "wish you were here" postcard.

I dry and save the petals from roses I bring home or receive as gifts in her memory. In the summer, I sprinkle them on her grave. I hope that these grief strategies of mine might help you this summer. These strategies have developed over a period of nearly 6 years now. It never gets easy, but as time passes, I do get more creative.

Don't pressure yourself to do things or go places you are not ready for. Don't be bullied by the expectations of others. A quiet, "I'm just not ready for that," will usually spark their compassion for your heart's journey.

Joanne Rademacher, TCF Minot, ND

## Things I Learned from You

Things I learned from you: never to be judgmental; to appreciate every sunrise; to marvel at the loveliness of butterfly wings; to see the beauty of every living being; to appreciate my children; the song contained in laughter; to watch the sunset; to see dinosaurs in the clouds; the true meaning of sorrow; to see laughter in the eyes of a child; to care what happens to others; to appreciate art; to love life; to love God; what it means to have a family; to protect the earth; how to accept the life given to me; the importance of education; what it means to be a friend; not to be afraid; to pray; to love more; not to take anything for granted; to see beauty wherever I find it; to be humble; to watch the stars; that there is an eternity. Your life was not wasted, little one, I learned from you.

Maggie Melendez, Racine WI

**The Compassionate Friends, Inc.**  
**National Office Information**

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Regional Coordinator  
Al Visconti (518) 756-9569

**PARENTS RESOURCE CORNER**

Please feel free to call the following people if you wish to speak to someone whose child's death was caused in a manner similar to your child's.

Accidental – Pam Kroft	Ph: 607 427-4043
Illness - Shirley Mehal	607 785-5710
Adult child - Karen Yeager	607 757-1852
Suicide - Sherry Bailey	607 797-8990
Substance - Shelley Levchak	607 759-0852

**The Compassionate Friends of Broome County**

1250 Front Street, # 147 Binghamton, NY 13901  
Web Address:

<https://www.stny.info/tcfbroome/>

For information pertaining to the  
The Compassionate Friends of Broome County,  
call: Donna Cunningham (607) 725-8574

**Monthly Meetings**

First Monday of each month 6:00 - 8:00 PM  
Third or fourth Saturday 10 AM – 12 PM  
Nimmonsburg United Methodist Church  
918 Upper Front Street Binghamton, NY 13901  
(across from BCC)

**Steering Committee**

Chapter Leader & Delegate -  
Donna Cunningham 607 725-8574  
Assistant Chapter Leader - Shelley Levchak  
Outreach - Jody Pangburn  
Library - Liz & Brian Leonard  
Hospitality – Jean Scolaro  
Treasurer – Val Ambrose  
Newsletter Editor – Val Ambrose  
Social Media -  
FB - Pam Kroft, Karen Yeager  
Website—Jim Pratt  
Secretary - OPEN

**Please consider joining our  
Steering Committee Meeting**  
Contact Donna for details

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR**

**Meetings:**

**First Monday 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM**  
**Unless otherwise indicated**  
**Third or fourth Saturday 10:00 A.M.**  
**(Check calendar!)**

**NIMMONSBURG UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

**918 Front Street, Binghamton**  
**(Across from BCC, next to the Credit Union.**  
**Parking in the rear, enter through rear door.)**

**June 5th, 2023 (Monday)**

**6:00 PM “Support our Dads & Grandpas”**

**June 17th, 2023 (Saturday)**

**10:00 AM Open Sharing**

**July 3rd, 2023 (Monday)**

**6:00 PM “Summers Highs and Lows ”**

**July 15th, 2023 (Saturday)**

**10:00 AM Open Sharing**

**July 17th, 2023 (Thursday)**

**6:00 PM “Family Picnic”**

**August 7th, 2023 (Monday)**

**6:00 PM “I have Grief Brain”**

**August 19th, 2023 (Saturday)**

**10:00 AM Open Sharing**

**September 11th, 2023 (Monday)**

**6:00 PM “So Many Emotions”**

The Primrose is published quarterly  
Deadline for newsletter materials:

**February 1st: May 1st: August 1st: November 1st**

Send Information to: Val Ambrose 730 River Rd.  
Binghamton, NY 13901  
Or email [JTL7899@yahoo.com](mailto:JTL7899@yahoo.com)

**NOTICE**

**If you receive this newsletter forwarded through the funeral home, please call Val Ambrose at (607 648-8598) with your correct address so new issues can be mailed directly to you.**

## The Chapter Letter

Hello Everyone,

We have gotten through another season since our last letter, now gearing up for warmer temperatures and summer skies. What a difference in our mood when the sun is shining and the weather is warm. Anything that helps us adjust to our “new normal”. Grief is deep and dark on its own but when our surroundings are bright and sunny, we are given a gift of hope.

Someone asked me recently what it was like to attend a TCF meeting, our group. There can be an uncertainty among parents, grandparents or siblings that are contemplating attending. The best way to explain it is to give my first experience at group. First I was desperate to find some hope for normalcy and answers to Sean’s death. I needed to “get better” and have the question “ why” answered. It took me about twenty minutes to get the courage to get out of my car, walk up the stairs, slow steps on the sidewalk and enter the room where the meeting was held. Walking in for me was almost scary, I looked around and people were chatting and I believe smiling. How could they? I was still in the mindset that I would never, ever smile again. My first reaction was to run but I had come this far so I took a chair and someone introduced herself to me and I felt a sigh of relief. There was a library, a sign in table, chairs placed in a circle, though today we have tables for our stuff and some added semblance of comfort. There was snacks and coffee; grieving craves comfort. As the meeting began we went around the circle and introduced ourselves and talked about our loved ones, still the same today. Speaking is a choice, you don’t have to share, you can just listen. Often our words are buried beneath our tears. For me talking was my therapy, I shared Sean’s entire story and no one stopped me; still true today. I was fortunate to meet someone who was also new that very first night, who promised to meet me there the following month, thank you HJ. Yes we now have 2 meetings a month, adding to our hope. After the meeting I went to my car, drove away and cried all the way home. I got home and put the next meeting on my calendar. I realized I needed to go back and couldn’t wait to have the group help me find my peace and find the answer to my question. Realizing after my second meeting that much wanted answer was to be a question the rest of my life but I did find a glimmer of hope, giving me a smidgen of peace. If you haven’t attended a meeting, take that drive, get out of your car and feel the compassion, friendship, love and hope within the core of our group. No, we can’t take away your sadness and pain but your grief can be softened by the words and actions of others in the room. After all my years at group I would still take home a glimmer of hope to hold me through till our next meeting. No one should have to grieve alone; the likeness of our loss unites us, hence never having to walk alone. We are here to lean on as you try to navigate this thing called, grief.

I have a few announcements this newsletter. The angel of hope had a quick clean up in May, getting her ready for summer visitors. We are doing a big clean up at the angel on Thursday, June 8th at 10ish. Come one, come all. Bring your tools and weed eaters if you can. We will be planting, spreading mulch, sweeping, watering and cleaning the angel along with the benches. But most of all we will be honoring our children, grandchildren and siblings gone too soon. Yes, I know they will be smiling down on us as we toil that day.

Our steering committee has had a few changes of the guard. Elaine Sahre, mother of Kenny, has stepped down as our Outreach liaison. She has held that position for several years, gathering information on the newly bereaved and sending out a packet to them, explaining our mission. Jody Pangburn, mom of Brent, has stepped up to the task to be our new outreach person. Its very difficult in this day and age to reach out to new parents, we often have to forward the packet to the funeral home to pass along. If you know of anyone that would find comfort in our group feel free to reach out to Jodi and she will send them our information. Sherry Bailey, mom of Ryan, has given up her reigns as our librarian to Liz & Brian Leonard, parents of Brian. I hear they are already busy revamping our book cart. A special thank you to Elaine and Sherry and a welcome aboard to Jodi, Liz and Brian.

On Monday July 17th our annual “Bubbles to Heaven” and family picnic will be held at the church. It’s a potluck supper, bring a dish to pass, starting at 6:00 pm. Bring the family for some TCF hospitality and friendship. Sending bubbles to heaven can be challenging, but together they shall rise.

Continued →

On a sadder note I have news to share. Ed Knowles, beloved son of Mary Vaninwegen passed away in early March. We send our condolences to Mary as she now has lost two sons, Ed and his younger brother Justin, known as Bubba in 2004 and also her husband Wayne in 2015, whom was a member of our group. Larry and Toni Sherling have laid to rest their daughter, Jaimie, who left her earthly body in April joining her brother Cory (2012) and nephew Dillon (2020) in heaven. May I say that each one of us sends prayers and thoughts as Mary, Toni and Larry continue on their grief journeys. We love you three.

As the summer passes may you find some moments to embrace something your child, grandchild or sibling enjoyed doing. Go ahead, take this challenge and find those smiles that have been hidden for a while. As the sun shines down so will the smiles from heaven above. Little by little our hearts will mend and our sadness shall fade, leaving us with a sense of hope for a softer future.



Until next time,  
Pam Kroft  
Sean's Mom

Grief is not a disorder, a disease or a sign of weakness. It is an emotional, physical and spiritual necessity, the price you pay for love. The only cure for grief is to grieve. -- Earl Grollman

### **The Crayola Desk**

I did something today. Something I was pretty certain I would not do—did not want to do to be honest. I took my very first step, after almost 13 years, to prepare to part with some of Christopher's things. A light bulb went on over my head suddenly. I realized that most of these "things" I have clung to—almost desperately—would have been gone a long time ago. I understand much like with my son and daughter still here, these things would have been outgrown or simply lost their appeal. He would be a 19-year-old young man—experiencing his college years, working a job or maybe just plain trying to figure out what he wanted to do. He certainly would not be sitting at his Crayola desk drawing or coloring, playing with the power rangers or pokemon—figures he so dearly loved. And that old Gameboy—it would have undoubtedly been traded up for a newer model.

As I cleaned up the desk, I recalled how excited he was the day we gave it to him. How many times he sat in the little blue and red spinning chair making himself dizzy then trying to see if he could draw a straight line. He loved how the drawing area lit from below allowing him to trace his favorite coloring book pages, his tongue hanging out to the side between his teeth in intense concentration.

I took a magic eraser and started to clean that little desk. I never dreamed I would be unable to wipe away the marks and drawings made with his crayons. I kept thinking no one is going to want this if I can't get it looking like new. There is a lazy susan of sorts for the crayons in the lower right corner. Little holes in a plastic turntable, the perfect size for a crayon to stand on end and spin around making them easy to access. Instead of utilizing this item for its intended purpose, Christopher thought it would be more fun to stick marbles in those holes. Here I was standing over my kitchen counter with an array of screw drivers, a pocket knife and butter knife, trying over and over again to pry each of those well lodged marbles out of their holes. I think only for a second that I have a hundred other things to do, that I am spending too much time trying to clean up "this mess."

Immediately I can't help but miss all the other messes I missed out on. I find myself wishing there had been a thousand more. I wonder if I had attempted to do this when he was still here if I might have scolded him. Instead I find myself smiling, with my tongue out to the side between clenched teeth, grateful to get to clean up "his mess."

In memory of Christopher, Tina Loper, TCF, Tyler, TX

## Compassion

I cry when a tear rolls down your cheek  
I agonize when you weep  
I know that you question  
I know that you pray  
That you scream at night in your sleep  
I'm aware of your quavering voice  
when you speak  
Of your lank, straightforward stare  
I know of your pain.  
Your depression, your guilt.  
That you search for 'a face' everywhere.  
I watch as you walk with your head bowed  
low With despair written over your face  
I hear the quick sigh, the internal cry  
I know how you wearily pace  
I see how you search, for a sign, for some  
hope That the light will still shine in your life  
I know how you live,  
I know that you die from the harsh words  
that wound like a knife.  
I empathize most with your loneliness now  
Even though you're not always alone  
I see the rapture as you speak  
your child's name  
For, I've lost a son of my own.

Charmaine H. Stickel E

## When a child dies,

a parent is still tied to that child.  
Souls tied together across universes.  
It doesn't matter the age when they passed.  
It doesn't matter how long ago it happened.  
It doesn't matter - none of it.  
Their souls are forever tied.  
That's the love of a parent.  
That's the love that is more powerful  
than death.  
That's the heart that breaks  
and keeps breaking  
until their arms are filled again.  
It knows no discrimination  
based on age, health, or time;  
it just is, and it always will be.  
Their souls are forever tied,  
and there's nothing that can break them.  
That's the beauty of unconditional love.

## WISH YOU WERE HERE

You'd be nineteen if you were here  
But why you're gone still isn't clear.  
Your things are still all in your room  
As if you'd be returning soon.  
Spongebob waits there by the door.  
Your shoes are still there on the floor.  
Your friends are all young women now.  
They're working jobs or college bound.  
Sometimes we see them and they say  
We miss her so, wish she had stayed.  
Your boyfriend's in the Army too  
And by the way, he still loves you.  
You thought his love was not so true  
And that some other girl he'd choose.  
But near two years have passed on by  
Still to your grave he goes to cry.  
Your niece and nephews miss you too,  
And talk of the things you used to do.  
Your Mother's going to be alright  
And doesn't cry so much at night.  
She puts the flowers on your grave,  
And scrapbook pictures tries to save.  
And me, I'm still the same old Dad,  
The same old routine like I had.  
I work real hard to make a way  
To pay some bills and pass the day.  
I'm not as funny as before  
My world's not happy anymore.  
I don't let on the pain I feel  
But deep inside the hurt is real.  
Time passes by year after year,  
Life goes on with seldom a tear.  
One wish I have, a wish so clear  
My wish most of all, I wish you were here.

-Dad-Steve Tutt TCF Tyler, TX

## NO VACATION

There is no vacation from your absence.  
Every morning I awake I am a bereaved parent.  
Every noon I feel the hole in my heart.  
Every evening my arms are empty.  
My life is busy now, but not quite full.  
My heart is mended, but not quite healed.  
For the rest of my life every moment will be lived  
without you.  
There is no vacation from Your absence.

By Kathy Boyette, TCF, MS Gulf Coast Chapter

## *Our Children Remembered*

*As long as we live, our children too shall live,  
for they are part of us in our memories.  
We lovingly remember the following children on  
Their Anniversary.*



06/02 **Jason** son of **June Moore** Warren Center, PA  
06/02 **Mark** son of **M/M Alan French** Endwell, NY  
06/05 **Ronald** son of **Sylvia Behal** Johnson City, NY  
06/05 **Cory** son of **Toni & Larry Sherling** Endicott, NY  
06/06 **Venus** daughter of **Alyce Katen** Binghamton, NY  
06/11 **James** grandson of **Rita & Michele Kelley** Saratoga Springs, NY  
06/12 **Connor** daughter of **Jen Hall** Binghamton, NY  
06/12 **Daniela** daughter of **Nilsa Mariano** Cicero NY  
06/13 **Jordan** son of **Brad & Laurie Thompson-Fish** Kirkwood, NY  
06/17 **Robert** son of **Frank & Angela Carro** Johnson City, NY  
06/20 **Jeffrey** son of **Marlene Tuttle** Johnson City, NY  
06/21 **John** son of **Joseph & Arlene Bigart** Binghamton, NY  
06/21 **Stacy** daughter of **Ivy Carroll** Atkinson, NC  
06/22 **Tommy** son of **John & Lisa Scannapieco** Chester Springs, PA  
06/23 **Nicole** daughter of **Joanne & Jim Packer** Northumberland, PA  
06/23 **Rodney** son of **Joyce Ritzler** Spencer, NY  
06/25 **Paul** son of **Gloria Carpenter** Binghamton, NY  
06/27 **Richard** son of **Nancy Rinehuls** Binghamton, NY  
07/02 **Marrah** daughter of **Helen Croucher** Endwell, NY  
07/02 **Mark** son of **Carol Botting** Binghamton, NY  
07/04 **Alicia** daughter of **Paul & Kimberly Reger** Lebanon, PA  
07/06 **Thomas** son of **Kathleen Jones** Vestal, NY  
07/07 **Jonathan** son of **Rita Searles** Chenango Forks, NY  
07/08 **Brigette** daughter of **Jackie Ceiri** Johnson City, NY  
07/10 **Scott** son of **Lee Wittling** Windsor, NY

continued ➡

*Our Children Remembered...* continued

- 07/13 **George** son of **Mary Gilg** Harpursville, NY  
07/13 **Jason** son of **Kathy Beers** Endwell, NY  
07/14 **Philip** son of **Cheri Hohn** Binghamton, NY  
07/18 **Alexander** grandson of **Diane Dobish** Binghamton, NY  
07/31 **Joseph** son of **M/M Joel Troutman** Binghamton, NY  
08/01 **Seth** son of **Darwin & Robin McKitrick** Maine, NY  
08/02 **Brian** son of **Brian & Lizabeth Leonard** Vestal, NY  
08/02 **Erin** daughter of **Barbara Paugh** Conklin NY  
08/02 **Rob** son of **Judy Lundvall** Binghamton, NY  
08/03 **Ryan** son of **Tamara Harman** Endicott, NY  
08/04 **Justin** son of **Julie Lee** Binghamton, NY  
08/05 **Amber** daughter of **Joanne Brockway** Watkins Glen, NY  
08/06 **Ryan** brother of **Scott & Elizabeth Taylor** Johnson City, NY  
08/13 **Kyle** son of **Jerry & Sandy Wilcox** Binghamton, NY  
08/17 **Sarah** daughter of **Stephen and Beth McKeown** Endicott, NY  
08/20 **David** son of **David & Colleen Hanzas** Binghamton, NY  
08/22 **Matthew** son of **Thomas & Diane Ellis** Castle Creek, NY  
08/23 **Kelsey** daughter of **Kate Chambers** Nichols, NY  
08/24 **David** son of **Rodney & Janice Black** Binghamton, NY  
08/27 **Robert** son of **Francis Sullivan** Binghamton, NY

### Compassionate Friends

Our stories may be different,  
But inside we're all the same,  
Struggling to find new meaning,  
Trying to erase our pain.

With courage we face tomorrow  
And try to understand.  
Though death has left its sorrow;  
We honor our children's memories  
By learning to live again.

Debbi Dickinson Naperville IL TCF

### Rainy Day

It rained today  
And all of the world  
seemed sad,  
While angels wept  
With tears of empathy,  
And all I thought about  
Was you, my son...

Remembering when  
You ran home  
through the rain  
With dripping hair  
And raindrops on your nose,  
Glistening like my tears  
This rainy day. Lily de Lauder North Hollywood, CA



## Summer Thoughts

Summer is a time when things naturally slow down, a time when many are waiting for the orderly routine of their lives to begin again. For those of us in grief whose lives are already in limbo, it can seem endless if we let it. Seeing children, babies, and teenagers is not easy for us, and we see them everywhere from shopping centers to beaches. Everyone is out living, loving, enjoying carefree activities with their children and we want to scream, "It's not fair!"

I was sitting on my patio one evening at dusk recently, listening to the shouts of children playing and I was crying as I remembered the sounds that my child used to make. I became very depressed as I thought what a long summer this was going to be.

In my reverie, I was reminded of a recent comment that I had heard at a TCF meeting. "My child was such a loving, giving person. He would not want me to waste my life being bitter." I also remembered a good friend telling me to "count my blessings" and naming all the things I had to be grateful for. I was furious at the time. Nothing that I had to be grateful for could compensate for the fact that my child was dead.

Now, sitting in the twilight of this early summer evening, I began to see things differently. I determined that this summer would not be an eternity. I would not let it be. I decided first of all to stay busy. I know I can find plenty to do if I only take the time to look. I am also going to try to enjoy the simple things that used to give me so much pleasure, like working in my garden and flowers. I then decided to try to be truly grateful for the blessings that I have like my husband, my surviving children, my job, friends, etc.

It has been almost five years for me and I know that last year this would not have worked. Of course, I still have times of sadness. I know I always will, but I have decided that in the process of grieving we close so many doors that the only way to recovery, is reopen them gradually at our own pace.

I know I will never be the same person I was before the death of my child, but I hope eventually in some ways I will be a better person because suffering can be beneficial if we learn and grow through it. A year ago I didn't feel this way, and I know I still have a long way to go, but in the meantime, I know the greatest tribute to my child will be to enjoy this summer as he would have done.

Libby Gonzales TCF Huntsville, Alabama



## You Are Braver

You are braver than you will ever know. You may not realize it but you are valiant, magnificent and strong in spirit. You are courageous. You have endured and somehow survived the most horrific injury that anyone in this life can suffer. Your child has died. But somehow you have miraculously found the strength to still breathe in and out. And after a while, you managed to put one foot in front of the other and have tried to the best of your ability to adapt to a strange new world; one that exists without your precious child in it. A world you must step out in to and face every day without any outward signs that you are altered for life. If you were to wear your most grievous wound displayed on the outside of your body like permanent stigmata, would people recoil from the sight or would they perhaps offer compassion and understanding for your piteous condition? That's why you are so brave. Although no one else can see how horribly injured you are, you are still doing your best to function and participate in this life. I want to challenge you to be brave just once more. If you have not been to a Compassionate Friends meeting, please muster all of the strength and courage you have and walk in the door for that first meeting. We'll help you from there. We care. We understand. We too have the same wounds as you. We need not walk alone.

Janet G. Reyes TCF Alamo Area Chapter, TX



## A Gentle Reminder to Go on Living

Finally, I have a platform to complain, vent, accuse, and generally make my thoughts known on how wrong everything is. The only problem with that is that I find myself with little to complain about. I have a wonderful wife and two great kids. I get along with my parents and in-laws. I'm good at my job and like my neighbors....

Don't get me wrong. I could search for things to complain about. My dog won't obey me and has since trained my kids not to obey me. There is a petition circulating my neighborhood requesting that my truck be banned from the streets during daylight hours. Then, of course, there are the real things I could complain about the war with Iraq, drought, forest fires, the economy, the presidential election campaign, and so on. And last, but certainly not least, my infant son dying three months ago.

To be honest, not much else has mattered since my son died. I miss him terribly, but I don't feel right complaining. I've always been told that life wasn't fair. Until my son's death, I hadn't experienced how unfair it could be. I have always been the happy-go-lucky, loud-talking, fun-loving, self-deprecating sharp wit (or is that halfwit?). I'm the jolly fat man who is quick with a joke and quicker with a beer.

The happy Daddy, ready to wrestle, play trucks or Barbie. I'm a lot like Santa—only not as organized or as generous

Or I should say, I was. What surprised me and helped my shattered heart was the generosity and compassion shown by almost everyone I knew. The support my wife and I received enabled us to hold our lives together for each other and for our other children. The kind word or open ear goes a long way when recovering from something like this. It's a long process, recovering from the death of anyone you love, but it is longer when it is a child. It's a journey that we are just beginning, and one that will never end. I know that it will get easier because it can't get any harder.

I often go to my son's grave during my lunch hour from work. I read him the sports page, stressing the current plight of the Avalanche, hoping for some divine intervention. During one of these sessions, I was sitting under the tree that shades his grave, complaining how unfair it was for a father and son to be separated by six feet of earth. I was most of the way through my diatribe when a bird pooped on my shoulder. I didn't look up because I wasn't sure if he was done yet, but I did scramble to my feet, cursing and threatening: As I stood there griping and wiping, I thought to myself that this was a sign. Not immediately, mind you. I mean, lightning bolts and thunderclaps are traditional signs from the afterlife. Bird poop generally doesn't have any existential significance. However, the bird bombing was a message from my son. I can see you, rolling your eyes, but I believe. It was my son's way of telling me to get back to being myself. It's all right to mourn and grieve; in fact, it is a must. There is no timetable for grieving, but I need to wipe it off and get back to work. I'm not so quick to complain about it anymore. Nothing can change the fact that he is gone. If I'm not going to complain about my son dying, I shouldn't be complaining about anything else. Because of my Irish blood and poet's heart, it won't surprise anyone when I raise a glass to toast my angel on occasion. But no longer will I complain about my loss —because I carry him in my heart and in my head. Besides, there are many large geese in the cemetery, and I don't need my son to send me a bigger message.

-By Andrew Padden from "Colorado Voices" in the Denver Post

“Compassion is not a relationship between the healer and the wounded. It's a relationship between equals. Only when we know our own darkness well can we be present with the darkness of others. What gets me up and going each day is knowing that how I live my life and treat others will be the only reflection and definition of my son that people who never met him will ever get to see.” --Tanya Pearce

## Love Gifts

*Our chapter is a self-help group with no required dues. We rely solely on contributions. Your donations help us pay for the cost of this newsletter, the postage, all the books in our library, meeting and event supplies which are a great help to bereaved parents.*

Your contributions are tax deductible and very sincerely appreciated. The following donations were received since the last Primrose deadline:

**Charles & Shelley** in memory of their son **CJ**

**Renee Radicchi Spicer & Steve Spicer** in memory of their son **Joel**

**June Moore** in memory of her son **Jason**

**Nancy Rinehuls** in memory of her son **Richard**

**Samuel & Shelley Allegrino** in memory of their son **Allan**

**Frank & Angela Carro** in memory of their son **Robert**

**Tom & Diane Ellis** in memory of their son **Matthew**

**Jim & Joanne Packer** in memory of their daughter **Nicole**

**Kathy Beers** in memory of her son **Jason**

**Valerie Ambrose** in memory of her son **Joshua**

**Michelle & John O'Neill** in memory of their son **Brian**

**Robin & Joel Vermaat** in memory of their son **Peter**

**Bob & Kim Carroll** in memory of their son **Christopher**

**Toni & Larry Sherling** in memory of their son **Cory**, daughter **Jamie & grandson Colin**

**Joyce Ritzler** in memory of her son **Rodney**

**Ron, Sherry & Brianna Bailey** in memory of their son **Ryan**

**Carlo & Samantha Carlini** in memory of their daughter **Samantha**

**Steve & Beth McKeown** in memory of their daughter **Sarah**

**David & Colleen Hanzes** in memory of their son **David**

**A special thank you to James Tregaskis** for his donation in memory of all our **children.**



## The Awakening

This morning,  
Upon my husband's pillow, a tear.  
Last night I heard no weeping,  
I felt no rhythmic shaking.  
Yet there it is —  
Glistening, silent testimony to pain.

Quickly I reach to blot it,  
As if one swift brush  
Could set the world right again;  
But something stays my hand —  
Stops me to wonder,  
"Am I the cause of weeping?"

In my life is much sorrow,  
Dreadful longing and emptiness  
That even my husband cannot fill.  
Sorrow brings sleepless nights in fear  
Of other phone calls and ambulances,  
More longing and emptiness.

My husband shares this loss,  
But men don't cry.  
They nod gravely and tend to details,  
Make arrangements and give support.  
Yet, there it is upon his pillow —  
A tear.

Have I given way to grief  
And forgotten one who shares?  
Have I made no room for his tears  
In the flood of mine?  
Am I the reason he weeps  
Only in the silence of night?

I close my hand  
To leave the tear drying there.  
No more will I blot out his pain  
To tend to mine,  
For we must share  
In order to live — together.

Marcia F. Alig TCF, Mercer Area, NJ

Normal day, let me be aware of the treasure you are.  
Let me learn from you, love you, savor you, bless you before you depart.  
Let me not pass you by in quest of some rare and perfect tomorrow.  
Let me hold you while I may, for it will not always be so.  
One day I shall dig my nails into the earth, or bury my face in the pillow,  
or stretch myself taut, or raise my hands to the sky,  
and want more than all the world for your return.

Mary Jean Irion

### \*\*\*\* NOTICE \*\*\*\*

There are no dues or fees to belong to The Compassionate Friends. Our largest expense is the printing and mailing of newsletters to our members. Your tax deductible Love Gift donation enables the chapter to continue our mission of reaching out to the newly bereaved and providing ongoing support to all our members.

Send donations to: Valerie Ambrose 730 River Rd. Binghamton, NY 13901

Make checks payable to: *The Compassionate Friends Broome*



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Please specify if there is a specific fund you want the money used for (newsletter, books, supplies, ect...)

**ALL donations are mentioned in the Love gift section of the newsletter.**

### Butterflies

I've always thought the butterfly  
to be so beautiful and free.  
This delicate creation now has a precious,  
new meaning to me.  
The caterpillar signifies our existence  
here on earth,  
The cocoon is our death  
awaiting our rebirth.  
The butterfly in its beauty  
is a symbol of greater freedom.  
A small, but glorious glimpse  
into Heaven's Eternal Kingdom.  
I look upon this living creature  
with renewed faith and hope.  
It gives me strength to face another day,  
and courage to help me cope.



Cherry Austin TCF Newman Coweta Chapter, GA

### Accept me as I am

Grieving, pained, empty, lonely.  
Just love me  
And allow me to feel  
What I must feel.  
One day I will begin to heal  
I know not when,  
Don't be afraid of me  
It is still me  
Struggling to find myself  
Outside of this pain.  
Please just be my friend

Marilyn Henderson  
TCF, Pacific Northwest



### *The Compassionate Friends*

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Supporting Family After a Child Dies

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