



The Compassionate Friends

Minneapolis Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

8701 36th Ave N

New Hope, MN 55427

Meeting Schedule

We meet 7:00–8:30 pm on the third Monday of each month.

St. Joseph Parish Community

8701 36th Ave N

New Hope, MN 55427

Corner of 36th Ave N & Boone Ave N

Bereaved Sibling Group Meeting

A bereaved sibling facilitates the group. Siblings meet separately, but at the same location and time as our Chapter meeting.

Monday, May 21

"Tear Soup"

A recipe for healing after loss. A blend of different ingredients creates a unique, soothing recipe for comfort and help in our own grief process.

Monday, June 18

"Blooms and Buttons"

We'll pick a fresh flower from a bucket of blooms and share why that flower reminds us of our child. A favorite activity and an opportunity to share our child's name. Photo Buttons will be created at the meeting. See page 3 for details.

Monday, July 16

"Picnic and Balloon Release"

Members and family are invited to our uplifting, annual event. See Page 3 for details. Note earlier start time: Picnic begins 6:00 pm, Balloon Release follows. Held at our regular meeting place.

We Need Not Walk Alone

The Compassionate Friends is a self-help organization offering friendship, understanding, and hope to bereaved families. Anyone who has experienced the death of a child at any age, from any cause, is welcome. Our meetings give parents the opportunity to talk about their child and feelings as they go through the grieving process. Our meetings are also open to grandparents, older siblings, and extended family. There are no membership dues. There is no religious affiliation.

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

The Secret of TCF's Success is Simple: As seasoned grievers reach out to the newly bereaved, energy that has been directed inward begins to flow outward, and both are helped to heal.

To Our New Members: Coming to your first meeting is the hardest thing to do. But, you have nothing to lose, and much to gain. Try not to judge your first meeting as to whether or not TCF will work for you. The second, third, or fourth meeting might be the time you find the right person...or just the right words spoken that will help you in your grief work.

To Our Members Further Down the 'Grief Road': We need your encouragement and your support. Each meeting, we have new parents. Think back, what would it have been like for you at your first meeting if there had not been any TCF "veterans" to welcome you and share your grief?



About Our Meetings:

Please don't stay away from a meeting because the scheduled topic does not interest you. At each meeting there will be time to discuss and share whatever is on your mind. We welcome your participation, but it is not required.

Inside This Issue:

Chapter and National Contact Info	2
National Conference Scholarship	2
Picnic and Balloon Release	3
A Mother's Hope	4
What People Give You	4
Birthdays and Angel Dates	5-6
Dad's Dog House	7

Resources

HELP! Our Chapter Website is Temporarily Unavailable

Are you, or someone you know, willing to help design a new website for our Chapter?

Our Local Chapter Is On Facebook.



Join our Minneapolis Chapter's private Facebook community online: [TCF Mpls](#)
Or log onto Facebook and search: TCF Mpls

www.facebook.com/groups/TCFMpls

National Organization Resources may be found by visiting:

www.compassionatefriends.org

Click "Find Support" tab.

• **National Magazine, We Need Not Walk Alone®**

• **Monthly E-Newsletter**

• **Online Grief-Related Webinar Series**

• **Online Support Community**

• **Facebook Closed (Private) Groups**

[TCF/USA National Facebook Page](#)

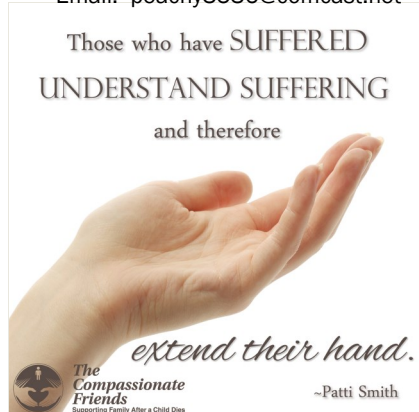
www.facebook.com/TCFUSA

MINNEAPOLIS CHAPTER INFO**TELEPHONE:** (612) 444-1301**EMAIL:** tcf.mpls@gmail.com**Minneapolis Chapter Leader**
Monica Colberg**Treasurer**
John Jordan**Newsletter Editor & Co-Leader**
Gloria Jordan
tcf.mpls.editor@gmail.com**Database Coordinator**
Mary Jo Peterson**Webmaster**
*Position Open***Facebook Page Administrator**
Lisa Gross Crees**Hospitality Coordinator**
Gail Hokemeir**Donor Appreciation**
Pat Reller**Co-Librarians**
Tasha Feigh & Mary Feigh**Special Events Coordinator**
Carol Hawk**Sibling Facilitator**
Maggie Bauer**Steering Committee Meetings**
Held quarterly to plan events and Chapter direction. Next meeting: Friday, July 13.**TCF NATIONAL OFFICE**

Toll Free: 1-877-969-0010

E-mail:
nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.orgwww.compassionatefriends.org**Facebook:** www.facebook.com/TCFUSA**Twitter:** <https://twitter.com/TCFofUSA>**REGIONAL COORDINATOR**

Cathy Seehuetter: 651-459-9341

Email: peachy3536@comcast.net

Articles printed in this newsletter reflect the author's personal views, and not necessarily the opinion of the newsletter editor or The Compassionate Friends.

SURROUNDING AREA ADDITIONAL CHAPTERS**The St. Paul Chapter**

Meets at Beaver Lake Lutheran Church at 2280 Stillwater Ave. in Maplewood.
Second Thursday each month, 7 pm.
Sandy, (651) 528-6073
Cathy, (651) 459-9341

The Rockford Chapter

Meets at Our Father's Lutheran Church at 3900 Gilbert Ave SE.
Fourth Tuesday of each month, 7 pm.
Sandy, (763) 843-8685

The Monticello Chapter

Meets at St. Henry's Catholic Church at 1001 7th St. E in Monticello.
Second Monday of the month, 7 pm.
Beth Hill, (763) 295-3610.

The South of the River Chapter

Meets at Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church at 12650 Johnny Cake Ridge Rd., Apple Valley.
Third Tuesday each month, 7 pm.
Sue, (952) 797-6346


41st TCF National Conference
July 27-29, 2018 St. Louis, MO

The Compassionate Friends National Conference is an event to remember. The conference includes keynote speakers, Candle Lighting, and the Walk to Remember. It is a place where "friendship, understanding, and hope" are more than just words. Every person comes for the same reason: a child, grandchild, or sibling has died. It is a time filled with love where you will truly learn, "I need not walk alone." It's a weekend of hopeful and healing activities for bereaved parents, grandparents, and siblings. In this warm, safe atmosphere surrounded by compassionate people, it won't be out of place to sometimes have deep feelings of sorrow, then only a few minutes later to have laughter erupt.

There are almost 100 Workshop Sessions and Sharing Sessions offered—a time for learning and sharing. Many aspects of grief are covered: for men only, just for women, young or adult siblings, or grandparents. Others relate specifically to the circumstance surrounding the loss—sudden death, addiction, illness, age of the child, family dynamics, etc. Workshops using creativity, physical activity, and writing/journaling promote health and healing.

Don't miss the opportunity to participate in a great conference with lots of activities and workshops for bereaved parents, siblings, and grandparents, just like you.

See the article below for a scholarship opportunity. Visit the following websites and download a Registration Booklet for details. Contact our chapter with questions.

Conference Event Page: [Conference registration and Hotel reservations:](#)

Ordering a Conference memento: [Conference Memento - Compassionate Friends](#)

Registering for the Walk to Remember: [Walk to Remember Registration](#)

Submit your Child/Sibling/Grandchild's name to be carried in the Walk to Remember: [Walk to Remember Name Submission - Compassionate Friends](#)

Order a Walk to Remember Tribute sign to be on the Walk to Remember Route: [Order a Walk Sign](#)

NEW! TCF National Conference Scholarship

New this year, our Minneapolis chapter is offering scholarships to help our chapter members attend the 2018 National Conference in St. Louis. We will reimburse the registration fee of \$115 (adult) for a limited number of applicants, one scholarship per family. If you are interested in applying for a scholarship, submit a copy of your receipt for the conference registration. Please submit your request via email to: tcf.mpls@gmail.com or to a Chapter Leader at a monthly meeting.

Balloon Release & Picnic

Members and extended family are invited to join us **Monday, July 16, at 6:00 pm** for our annual Picnic and Balloon Release ceremony. This event will take the place of our regular July meeting, but has an earlier start time of 6:00 pm. Rain or shine, we will dine indoors. Dinner will be first, followed by the Balloon Release.

Experience a release of grief as we send our balloons into the sky. It's a powerful symbolic image, lifting our pain as we watch the balloons dance out of sight.

Please note the earlier start time of 6:00 pm. The location for the Picnic and Balloon Release is the same as our regular meeting place:

St. Joseph Parish Community, 8701 36th Ave N, New Hope, MN

Once again, the Chapter will prepare all the food for the picnic. All you need to bring is your beverage. The Chapter will provide the main course, side dishes, dessert, and dinnerware, and Balloons. A suggested \$5 donation/per person will be appreciated to help with expenses.

We would appreciate a few volunteers to arrive early to help set up the serving line, and/or stay after to help clean up. When you RSVP, let us know if you are able to help.

If July is a Remembrance month for you, please bring a memento or photo for display on the Remembrance Table.

Please RSVP so we can more accurately estimate food and balloons needed. **RSVP by Email:** tcf.mpls@gmail.com **or call our Chapter phone number and leave a message, (612) 444-1301.**



Leader's Corner

A candle flicker is energy in the wind. Candles of grief flicker with memory.

Let the energy of grief mingle with your talents and memories, and then write it, sing it, say it, dance it, play it, cook it, build it and grow it.

Share it.

Grief journeys take you to new paths when you say Yes. You will be amazed at what you accomplish.

Try it.

Monica Colberg, Art's Mom
TCF Minneapolis, MN, Chapter Leader

Free Button Pin

At the June 18th meeting, we will be making each member a free button pin using their child's or sibling's photo. Our chapter received a donation of a new photo button machine capable of making a larger 3" button.

- For each 3" button pin, you need to provide a print or photocopy of your child's photo. The print or photocopy must be on regular (20 lb.) copy paper. It is important to use this type of paper and not anything heavier.
- For best results, your photo image should be 3½" in diameter (black dashed line as shown in layout below).
- It will be placed on a 3-inch button (white solid line). The additional edge surrounding the photo is folded to the backside under the plastic cover.
- Because slight shifting may occur, the desired image area should be within a 2⅞" diameter (red dotted line).



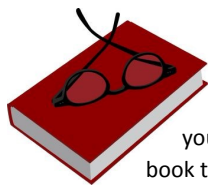
*My child died. I don't need advice.
All I need is for you to gently close your mouth,
open your heart and walk with me
until I can see in color again.*

~ Angela Miller

Save the Date: Sunday, September 23, 2018 Minneapolis Chapter Walk to Remember

Walk begins 12:30 pm, Bassett Creek Park, Crystal, MN

This is our Chapter's annual fundraiser. Invite friends and family to join us! Details to follow in our August newsletter.



Lending Library

Our chapter offers a lending library with a variety of books on grief and bereavement. We encourage you to browse our library and feel free to check out a book to take home with you.

We only ask that you sign out the books and return them in a timely manner so others can have the benefit of the information as well. If you have borrowed a book from our library, please remember to return it.

If you have read a book that was helpful to you and would like to share it with others, donating that book in your child's name is a wonderful way to honor them. We welcome member's reviews of any book that you have found interesting, helpful, or inspiring. Submit reviews to tcf.mpls.editor@gmail.com

TCF's Vision...

*That everyone who needs us will find us and
everyone who finds us will be helped.*

A Mother's Hope

When my son died, I hoped it was a mistake...it was not. I hoped it was a dream...it was not.

Before my son died, I hoped for enough time in the day to clean my home, provide my family with clean laundry, taxi service and healthy meals. I loved dinnertime with my family. After my son died, I didn't know what day it was. Cleaning our home or doing laundry were things I no longer thought of. I did not cook; I did not shop for food; I did not eat.

I hoped he would come back...he did not. I hoped I would gain understanding...I did not.

I couldn't understand how I could wake up on a perfectly normal morning, and my son was gone from his room, gone from our home and gone from our lives.

I hoped for acceptance...I found none. I hoped those around me would understand me...they did not.

How could they understand me? My son was dead. They could not have any way to understand unless they had also lost a child. How could my beautiful, vibrant, healthy son be gone?

I hoped for peace...I had none. I hoped for sleep...I had none.

I hoped for courage to resume my daily life...my life was out of control. The only thing I was sure of in the early days of my grief was that our lives would never be the same again.

I hoped this empty feeling would go away...it did not. I hoped that some day my family would be normal again...we were not.

I hoped I could stop looking for our son in every young man I saw that was tall, slim and had sandy-coloured, curly hair...I could not.

I hoped I could become the parent to my surviving children that I knew they deserved...I could not.

I knew how much they were hurting, but I could not help myself and I could not help my children. My younger son needed my comfort. My daughter, expecting her own child, needed my comfort. I was their mother but there was no comfort in me to give.

I hoped I could be a wife to my husband...I could not.

I never hoped for laughter. How could I laugh when my son was dead? I hoped the feelings that consumed my every waking moment would somehow change so I would not feel as though I could never again be in a public place without crying. Six months after my son died, I hoped for a reprieve. I no longer could stand the pain and I saw my doctor. I knew he must have an answer to my question. How long will I feel like this? He did not.

I had begun attending Bereaved Parents of the USA meetings, but I hardly spoke a word at the first meeting. At my second meeting, I could not stop talking. I had found the glimmer of hope that I had been searching for. Now, I have the understanding I hoped for. I have peace; I finally sleep; I find joy every time I see a tall, slim, young man with sandy-colored, curly hair; I do not cry as often; so there is hope. We all have a future; we have memories. No matter how long our children were part of our lives, we have memories.

I hoped this all-consuming grief would never again happen to my family...but it did.

When my daughter-in-law was six months pregnant, my son told me their baby had died. How I grieved for my son. I knew what he was feeling. I hoped to be able to help him and his wife...I could not.

Then I realized that all of the things I had hoped for had begun to come about, but they had taken a lot of time and support from others. I hoped my son and his wife could hold on long enough for time to help and to heal. They have.

When my son died, I never hoped for joy. I could not imagine joy as part of our lives ever again...but there is joy. When my son was a baby, a toddler, a young child, a teenager and young man, I watched over him. I thought I could watch over him for my entire

life. But I was wrong. I hope with all my heart that now he is watching over me. The first time I realized that joy would one day be part of my life was the day I remembered a trick my son played on his little brother. He gave him a glass of buttermilk instead of regular milk and pretended it was a mistake. We have laughed so many times about this little story. I can still see the twinkle in his eye. I can hear my son and daughter as he made up names for her to tease her. Oh, how he loved to laugh. I remember the look on his face when I discovered the snake he put in my garden terrarium. I know my joy will never change every time I think of my son, share a memory with someone or look at pictures of him.

My hope as a mother is that we all will find peace and cherish the joy our children have brought to our lives.

Betty Lineberger, BP/USA, Ocala, FL

www.bereavedparentsusa.org.



What People Give You

Long-faced irises. Mums. Pink roses and white roses and giant sunflowers, and hundreds of daisies. Fruit baskets with muscular pears, and water crackers and tiny jams and the steady march of casseroles. And money, people give money these days. Cards, of course: the Madonna, wise and sad just for you, Chinese cherry blossoms, sunsets and moonscapes, and dragonflies for transcendence. People stand by your sink and offer up their pain: Did you know I lost a baby once, or my eldest son was killed, or my mother died two months ago. People are good. They file into your cartoon house until it bows at the seams; they give you every blessed thing, everything, except your daughter back.

~ Kathleen Sheeder Bonanno, from *Slamming Open the Door*.

© Alice James Books, 2009. Reprinted with permission

Standing By

Our son Art died unexpectedly at the age of 20. The funeral in Minneapolis came and went within the week. Hundreds of friends and family attended. Marcia, my identical twin sister, flew in early from California to help. After the funeral she stayed longer than she had intended before returning home.



I had to talk about Art. It was vital to say his name over and over through grieving. It helps in healing. I wore out friends who were afraid of or had grown weary of the story of his death repeated once again.

My sister Marcia called me on the weekend. I wailed through my grief on the phone with her. Every weekend I answered the phone and there she was. Eventually I anticipated the weekend call. A long time after that I recognized that she had called me every week for three years. I love her for standing by me. She never turned away from my tears.

In a perfect world grief would never be a constant companion for a parent or sibling. In this imperfect world, I wish grieving parents and siblings have an identical twin. Sans that, Compassionate Friends is a bona fide alternative.

Monica Colberg, Art's Mom
TCF Minneapolis, MN

Our Children Remembered...on Their Birthdays

Loved...Missed...Forever in Our Hearts



May

CHILD	MEMBER
Carson Thomas Jordan	Gloria & John Jordan
Logan Bruns	Julie & Paul Kingsbury
Justin Thillman	Sarah Tieszen
Mitch (sibling)	Rachel Shapiro
Ross Alvin Joseph Stenerson	Barbara Stenerson
Julie Marie Olson Topp	Barbara Olson
Noah David Muonio	Michael & Anita Muonio
Gregory	Mary Sincheff
Eric Brodin	Judy & Buck Brodin
Adam	Rhoda Michaelynn
Sawyer James Tate	Robert & Joy Tate
Mandy	Don & Connie Lundholm
Steve Hokemeir	Gail Hokemeir
Jenna Rietmulder	Jay & Holli Rietmulder
Javi	Renee & Ricardo Moron
Alec Smith (siblings)	Brittany, Alexis, & Jamisen Holt
Alec Smith	Nicole Smith-Holt & James Holt Jr.
Scott Tuma	Shirley Tuma
Kameron	Dawn Gurule
Michael Habte	Debra Hudson
Nick (sibling)	Alyssa Kroll
Eric Lindquist	Bruce Lindquist
Payton Tripp (Granddaughter)	Janet & Richard Tripp
Lisa	Carol Sorensen
Natalie	Vickie Hackel
John Pecnik (sibling)	Jeanne Klein

June

CHILD	MEMBER
Carolyn Ann Bedford	Barbara & Robert Demsky
Ben Alden	Mary & John Alden
Tyler Russell Hill	Sheryl & Allen Hill
Abigail	Eric & Sam Zander
Alex	Chuck & Trudi Campbell
Mark	Bev London
Tina	Cynthia Wong
Vincent	Jeff Lewis
Katie	Fern & Dave Sanders
Thor Eide	Susan Nokleby
Zachary	Melanie & Craig Thielke
Derek	Darwyn & Mary Tri
Ben Freidson (sibling)	Debe Fefferman
Benjamin Freidson	Judy Freidson
Drew	Judy Pehrson

Birthday Table

Birthdays are given special recognition at our monthly meetings. During your child's birthday month, you are invited to bring photos and memorabilia to share and display on our Birthday Table. Some like to sign up to bring a favorite snack or treat (even birthday cake) to celebrate the birthday of their child.

July

CHILD	MEMBER
Daniel Hinschberger (sibling)	Anna & Todd Lundblad
Daniel Hinschberger	Linda Schaeffer
Else	Mary Jo & Winston Peterson
Michael	Jessica & John Kunza
Spencer Johnson	Ann Perry
Andrew John terSteege	Leon & Kathryn terSteege
Kendra (sibling)	Cole
Kendra	Tom & Terri Lindfors
Bruce	Judith Richart
Paul	Char & Rich Myklebust
Jory Day-Monroe (sibling)	Seaira Garcia
Jory Day-Monroe (grandson)	Mary Klingelhoets
Andrea	Joan & Martin Leeper
Cynthia	Liz Keller
Arthur Colberg (Nephew)	Marcia & Craig Benham
Arthur Colberg	Monica Colberg
Arthur Colberg (sibling)	Jessica & Brandon Schultz
Persephonee	Chris & Amee Banks
Dawn Ankney	Sharon & Gregory Maidment
Jonathan Townsend	Kelly Townsend
Danny	Georgie Waulk
Sadie Hanson	Dani Hanson
Emily Pham	David Pham
Shayde Erin Rudenick	Steve Rudenick
Krista Monyhan (sibling)	Erin Hanson
Krista Monyhan	Dave & Tricia Hanson
Zachary	Connie Theis
Brian	Julie Malmgren
Dylan Colbath	Lisa Colbath
Jamie Lents	Leslie Elsenpeter
Ryan Trunzo	Scott Wagner & Paula Trunzo

Another Birthday

Here it is another birthday
Another to bare without you
I don't know how old you'd be
This is a tremendous rue.

In our minds, you never change a bit,
From the last time we saw you.
You'll forever be no different
Such a sweet child we all knew.

Even though the years go by
I still hear your voice
Mama, mama, mama
These words make me rejoice.

Today it is your birthday
I'll celebrate for you
You made us very happy
A tremendous life you knew.

Our Beloved Children...in Our Hearts Always

especially during the Remembrance Month of their death.



May

CHILD	MEMBER
Logan Bruns	Julie & Paul Kingsbury
Samantha	Julie & John Bangsund
Natalie	Vickie Hackel
Vanessa Marie	Maureen Voltin
Joseph Engles	Deb & Paul Barland
David Lindgren	Jeff & Jan Bowers
David Lindgren (siblings)	Adam and Tony Lindgren
Ashley Cochran	Lisa Cochran
Ella	Heather Ward
Carissa Hayen	Linda Hayen
Scott Tuma	Shirley Tuma
Lori Jensen	Christine Jensen
Mark Richard Peterson	Todd & Helen Peterson
Melissa Marie Vomhof	John & Ruth Vomhof
Julie Marie Olson Topp	Barbara Olson
Arthur Colberg	Monica Colberg
Arthur Colberg (sibling)	Jessica & Brandon Schultz
Arthur Colberg (Nephew)	Marcia & Craig Benham

June

CHILD	MEMBER
Alex	Kathy Simanek
Daniel Christian Demsky	Barbara & Robert Demsky
Ron Reinert	Sharon Reinert
David	Derwood Twigg
David Andrew Twigg	Selma Twigg
Andrea	Joan & Martin Leeper
JoAnna	Aron & Ruth Wilterding
Krystie Anna (care giver)	Patty Beaudry
Krystie Anna	Rick Karl and Bruce Steiger
Tyler (sibling)	Lindsay Kloetzke
Ty	Steve & Pam Kloetzke
Ryan Trunzo	Scott Wagner & Paula Trunzo
Zachary	Melanie & Craig Thielke
Dan Lewis	Chris & Bob Lewis
Tim	Rozanne & John Puhek
Ashley	Michon Jenkin & Randy Segal
Leon Harwood	Antonia (Flipper) Filipiak
Corey Fetzter-Londer	Cheryl Fetzter
Alec Smith (siblings)	Brittany, Alexis, and Jamisen Holt
Alec Smith	Nicole Smith-Holt & James Holt Jr.
Daniel	Dan & Chevis Peso
Justin Thillman	Sarah Tieszen
Tyler Russell Hill	Sheryl & Allen Hill
Kelsey Eberle (Granddaughter)	Mary Alice Carlson
Kelsey Eberle	Roxanne & Terry Eberle



*In the space of a smile,
the meteor is gone.*

In memory of
Carson Thomas Jordan

July

CHILD	MEMBER
Tucker	Dana & Kevin O'Brien
Michael	Jessica & John Kunza
Krista Monyhan (sibling)	Erin Hanson
Charlotte	Jon & Angie Downing
Claire Richards	Gail Manning & David Richards
Krista Monyhan	Dave & Tricia Hanson
Michael	Jean Shilinski
Allyson	Roger Graphenteen
Adrian	John & Stephanie Merfeld
Adam	Rhoda Michaelynn
Steve Hokemeir	Gail Hokemeir
Rhiley	Mike Henneman
Kate	Scott & Lisa Fronek
Andrew John terSteege	Leon & Kathryn terSteege
Barry Allan Beal	Carol Beal
David	Joan Robson
Ashton Faye Anderson	Scott & Sharon Anderson
Chad Goodspeed (sibling)	Brenna Goodspeed
Chad Goodspeed	Betty Udseth
Luke	Amy & Jason Crotteau
Harriet	Stephen & Fiona Burgdorf
Lana Celinda Johnson	Eldon & Penny Johnson
Michael DeBruin	Mary & Bob DeBruin
Selene	Deborah Anderson
Selene Anderson (sibling)	Elizabeth Anderson
Jason McCarthy (Grandson)	Ken & MaryLou Theisen
Brian	Julia Malmgren
Alexander	Susan & Ed Herrmann

Memories

*The certain special memories
That follow me each day,
Cast your shadow in my life
In a certain way.*

*Sometimes the blowing wind
Or the lyrics of a song
Make me stop and think of you
Sometimes all day long.*

*Memories are good to have
To share and keep in my heart,
Just knowing that you're still inside
Makes sure we'll never part.*

Collette Covington
TCF Lake Charles, LA

Dad's Dog House

A dog house is a place where a dog will usually feel safe, and at times it is where he serves out a punishment. I have been known to get myself into the latter proverbial "Dog House." I expect it started way back before I ever got married to my wonderful wife, Gloria. Usually, I was aware of my predicament and at other times not so much. When our son Carson was about 9 years old he received a puppy. Rusty was a German Shorthair Pointer who stole our hearts but at times found himself in the proverbial "Dog House."



When Carson died, our world shattered like a glass Christmas ornament being smashed with a sledge hammer. Rusty wasn't immune to Carson's death. When Carson finally lost his battle to depression, he shut Rusty in a bedroom before he took his own life. It was, in a sense, a safe dog house for Rusty. He undoubtedly knew something was wrong when he heard the gun shot, smelled death filter through the house, and heard the horrific screams and yells when Gloria and I would later come home to find our son. I believe Rusty felt his own grief; not long after Carson died, he was diagnosed with cancer. He was only given 4 – 6 months to live.



All of us grieved the best we could. While my heart ached, I would find myself giving Rusty a long hug, missing my son and loving his dog at the same time. I was consciously aware that Rusty was a living connection to our son and that he wouldn't be with us for very long. These hugs were usually when we

were alone because Rusty wouldn't tell anyone about the depths of my pain. Perhaps it was the Grace of God, or the love Rusty received, or his awareness of how much we needed him after Carson's death, but he stayed with us for over two and a half more years.

Gloria and I will always grieve our earthly loss of Carson and will support each other the best we can. There are times when I want to grieve by myself. I am more willing to fully let go, to yell, to cry, when I'm not worrying about what others might think or having to appear strong for my wife or anyone else. It is much like being in my own proverbial "Dog House," but this dog house isn't because I've done or said anything wrong, it is because I want a safe place to grieve and heal.

I think everyone needs their own proverbial "Dog House," a place where we feel safe to grieve. I feel this is especially important for men as we are, more often than not, unwilling to fully allow ourselves to grieve around others. Hopefully we can find that place, a bathroom, garage, man cave, or our dog's dog house, where we can fully grieve, because grieving is necessary to heal. I still seek my dog house, but not as much as I used to — a sure sign of healing and growth. Now if I could only stay out of that other dog house.

John Jordan
TCF Minneapolis, MN

Survivor

She walked into the room, her memory seared into my mind. I will never forget her face — the pain was excruciating, raw, all surrounding and all encompassing. She held her down parka around her like a blanket that could keep out the mind-numbing cold, unimaginable pain, emptiness and sadness that went to the core of your heart and soul.

Three years later I saw her at The Compassionate Friends — she had survived! Her hair and nails were done, the blanket of protection was not on the surface, though always will be a part of her, but more hidden. Loss of a beloved child is a scar that time can cover but never erase.

There was a smile and conversation. Slowly the layers of indescribable pain are peeled away, one moment, one hour, one day, one week, one month, one year at a time. She survived, and life somehow goes on with our memories, stories, tears and deepest love that death can not take away.

TCF Minneapolis, MN member

Random Acts of Kindness

My brother, Ryan Allen Hartranft, passed away from a heroin overdose on January 12th, three days before his 22nd birthday. My family and I decided to do something different this year to celebrate Ryan's life on his 4-year "Angiversary."

We began doing Random Acts of Kindness in his memory and asked those we know to participate with us if they would like to. It could be something as simple as holding the door for someone, buying the next person in line a coffee, giving to charities, or whatever your heart desires!

This year we completed 26 Random Acts Of Kindness between January 12th and 15th to celebrate his life and his 26th birthday that would have been the 15th!

Some Random Acts of Kindness we completed were:

- Buying donuts for the staff at Railside Auto Inc. where Ryan had worked.
- Donating 2 envelopes with \$26 each to Railside for them to choose the recipients.
- A birthday cake for a couple's grandson who was turning 7 that my mom met at Wal-Mart.
- Movie tickets for a dad and his 2 children.
- Lunch for a father and son sharing a milkshake (Ryan LOVED milkshakes).
- Donated Ryan's recovery books from rehab to Daymark Crisis Recovery Center.
- Donated 6 bags of clothing (some of Ryan's and some we purchased) to the Union County Community Shelter.
- Left money at a car wash in an envelope for someone to pay for their wash.
- Found a mom shopping with her 3 kids and gave her money to put towards her order.

Completing these 26 Random Acts of Kindness truly helped us all to know that even though it is always a tough time for us, we were so happy to be able to help others and to do so in memory of Ryan.

Each Random Act we did came with a card explaining what we were doing, and we encouraged people to share the moments with us by using #RAOKforRAH

You can visit our Facebook page: Random Acts of Kindness In Loving Memory of Ryan to see all the Acts we completed.

Sarah Hartranft, TCF PA





**The
Compassionate
Friends**
Minneapolis Chapter
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

c/o St. Joseph Parish Community
8701 36th Ave N
New Hope MN 55427

The Minneapolis Chapter of The Compassionate Friends operates solely with voluntary donations. The printing and mailing of this newsletter is the largest item in our chapter's budget. While there are no dues or subscription fees, donations to help offset this expense are much appreciated. A \$10 annual donation covers the expense of providing the newsletter to you for a year. Gifts in any amount are appreciated.

Thank you for your consideration!

Complete and return this form along with your donation to a chapter monthly meeting or mail to our treasurer:

John Jordan, 11905 53rd Ave N, Plymouth, MN 55442

Please make check payable to The Compassionate Friends.

Please Print

Name _____
Address _____
City, State, Zip _____
Phone _____
Email _____
Child's Name _____
Birth Date _____
Death Date _____

NO LONGER INTERESTED?

We want to make sure everyone who is receiving our newsletter is interested in staying on our mailing list.

Perhaps you aren't able to attend monthly meetings, but wish to continue to be informed of our chapter news and events.

Perhaps you find comfort in reading the articles and stories included in the newsletter.

To remain on our mailing list, all you need to do is one of the following*:

Attend an occasional meeting or event, (be sure to sign in)

OR

Email our Database Manager at tcf.mpls@gmail.com

OR

Complete and return the coupon found to the left.

***This action is necessary only if your renewal date on your mailing label is highlighted.**

©2018 The Compassionate Friends