



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

Bereaved Sibling Group Meeting

A bereaved sibling facilitates the group. Siblings (14+) meet separately, but at the same location/time as our Chapter meeting.

Monday, May 20

“Mindfulness”

Awareness of our self and our surroundings helps us stay grounded in the present moment. Simple exercises of mindfulness increase awareness, acceptance, and expression of feelings which can help heal your heart and mind.

Monday, June 17

“Bucket of Blooms”

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.

Monday, July 15

“Picnic & 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
Culver's Fundraiser July 11	2
Balloon Release & Picnic	3
Embracing the Invisible Kinship of TCF	4
Remembrance Dates, May-June-July	5-6
Birthday Card	7
Sibling's Grief Fuels Change	7

Resources

Visit our Chapter Website :
tcfmpls.org



Our Local Chapter Is On Facebook.

Join our Minneapolis Chapter's private Facebook community online: [TCF Mpls](https://www.facebook.com/groups/TCFMpls)
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](https://www.facebook.com/TCFUSA)
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**
Lisa Gross Crees**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 12.**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 Seehueter: (612) 991-9954

Email: seehuetercathy@yahoo.comThose who have **SUFFERED**
UNDERSTAND SUFFERING

and therefore

*extend their hand.*The
Compassionate
Friends
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

-Patti Smith

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, (612) 991-9954

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

Culver's
Welcome to delicious.™

Dine to Donate
July 11, 2019 5 pm - 9 pm
Plymouth — 494 / Bass Lake Rd.
6175 Quinwood Lane N. Plymouth, MN
Supporting the Minneapolis Chapter of TCF

We're excited to partner with **Culver's Restaurants** using their "Dine While You Donate" program. 15% of their net sales during our event at their Quinwood Lane, Plymouth location will be donated to our Minneapolis Chapter. This is our first fundraising effort to take place outside our chapter meetings and events.

We encourage you to spread the word and invite friends, family, co-workers, (basically everyone) to join us for dinner and/or a treat on **Thursday, July 11 from 5 pm-9 pm**. The more people who dine, the more our Chapter earns! All customer sales in the dining room as well as the drive-through will count towards our grand total. Who knew donating could be so tasty and satisfying.

Save the date and make plans to join us! We need your help to make our fundraiser a huge success!

HOPE
RINGS IN
PHILADELPHIA
JULY 19-21, 2019

42nd TCF NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Make plans to attend this year's TCF National Conference in Philadelphia at the Philadelphia 201 Hotel. Join bereaved parents, siblings, and grandparents who have found this to be a heart-warming, hopeful experience.

You'll find all the details and link to register for the conference at: www.compassionatefriends.org/event/42nd-tcf-national-conference/

Pre-registration rates end June 15. Call Philadelphia 201 Hotel at **215.448.2963 ext. 6415** to reserve a room and use group code **TH1326**.

Balloon Release & Picnic

Members and extended family are invited to join us **Monday, July 15, 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. Dinner will be first, followed by the Balloon Release. Event will take place rain or shine; we will dine indoors.

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 donation will be appreciated to help with expenses; suggested \$5/per person; 10 & under are Free.

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 to display on the Remembrance Table.

Please RSVP so we can more accurately estimate food and balloons needed. **RSVP by JULY 8, by Email: tcf.mpls@gmail.com or call our Chapter phone number and leave a message, (612) 444-1301.**

Whatever Sparks Joy

We typically think of the winter holidays as being the tough ones, but these next few months have the potential to stir memories, provoke "what could have been" thoughts, and heighten our heartache. Some occasions that immediately come to my mind...Mother's Day, Memorial Day, Last Day of School, Graduation, Father's Day, Weddings, Vacations, 4th of July and...(insert your own significant occasion/event). My husband, John, and I would add May Day, Carson's May 1 birthday, to this long list.

Memories of, or longing for, a carefully crafted Mother's or Father's Day card, Kindergarten graduation, watching your child walk down the aisle or across a stage, postcards from summer camp, sharing stories of the one that got away, cheering from the bleachers, or oohing and ahhhing spectacular fireworks at dusk, can make our loved one's absence more pronounced. Because we greatly love them, we greatly miss them.

Planning ahead and not letting these days abruptly overwhelm us may help us feel more in control of our feelings and how we choose to express them. We can honor our child, grandchild, or sibling by including them in a way we are comfortable. Perhaps we can encourage others to share special memories with us. Memories shared are memories preserved. Doing an activity they enjoyed might bring us a glimmer of joy. Carson loved fireworks, so it seemed fitting his first memorial birthday celebration would include a fountain of fireworks. We weren't quite prepared for how loud and bright fireworks can seem in the quiet of a cemetery, against a starry sky. That "yikes" moment ignited a spark of joy for friends and family gathered and put fireworks on our future "must do" list. There's nothing wrong or disrespectful with sharing a smile, or even a laugh, while celebrating our child's life.

Gloria Jordan, Carson's Mom
TCF Minneapolis, MN



Leader's Corner

I return home from TCF national conferences with books. A recent find is a beautifully illustrated text, [The Gift of a Memory](#) by Minneapolis author Marianne Richmond. The prose is subtle and on point for newly bereft family members. The book reminded me of what we do at TCF meetings. We offer each other the gifts of memories with our loved ones. We recall the sad facts and in time with healing, we begin to share the silly fun that we experienced with that child or sibling. Memories shared become more precious. They are not what's left of someone in our past. They become what we carry forward in our lives.

The TCF national conference is in July in Philadelphia. Those of you who can attend will find it extraordinary. When you return, share your takeaway thoughts from the experience.

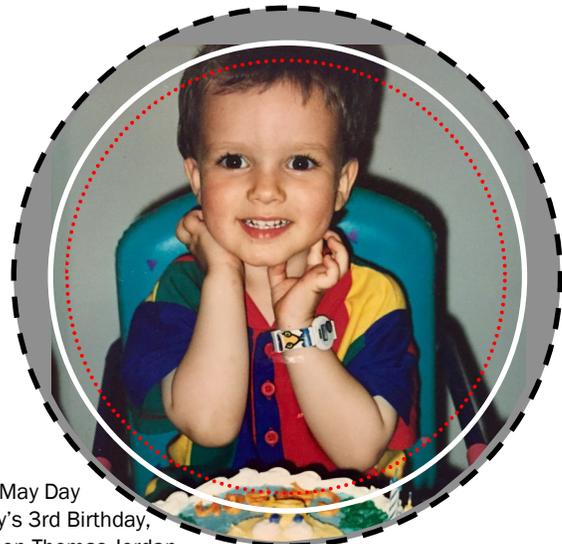
In May our chapter will explore awareness of breathing. In June we celebrate our beloved children/siblings with summer blooms. A perennial picnic and balloon release is planned in July. See you at the meetings.

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

Free Button Pin

We will make each member a free button pin using your child's or sibling's photo. You may provide a photo in person at a meeting, or email it. See important instructions below.

- Email a hi rez.jpg of the photo to tcf.mpls@gmail.com. Please note if there are any special instructions.
- Or, bring a print or photocopy of your child's photo to a meeting. The print or photocopy must be on regular (20 lb.) copy paper. It's important to not use any heavier paper.
- 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 background of 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).
- Button image below is not actual size



Our May Day
Baby's 3rd Birthday,
Carson Thomas Jordan

Embracing the Invisible Kinship of The Compassionate Friends

Every morning following the death of my son I awoke and thought, “my child is dead.” The enormity of that realization each morning was crushing, the momentary shock was like a knife in my heart. I would drag myself out of bed and shed silent tears. My life was forever changed: my only child’s life had ended. The unfairness would rock me into hyper-consciousness as I began my day. Living was a major effort.

Initially I could only cling to my sanity. After the shock passed, the depression and anger had me in a vise grip. My moods would swing every morning, afternoon and night. I would retreat into myself, irrationally lash out at others and then retreat back into myself. My mind would wander, I made silly mistakes in my work, I couldn’t recall names of people who had been in my life for years and my word retrieval was at the bottom.

After two and half months of this grim routine, I attended my first Compassionate Friends meeting. A friend drove me and guided me along into the meeting. I was in a haze. The only contribution I could make was to tearfully say my son’s name. But I continued to attend.

As the newly bereaved, I was given the gift of wisdom from those who had been on this journey much longer than I had been. After several meetings I began contributing little bits. I still wept each time I talked, but I was talking. This was a major breakthrough for me.

Despite the negativity that enveloped me as I let go of my life before the death of my son, I continued to attend The Compassionate Friends meetings. I missed my son’s ability to soften the vitriolic attitude of others who were in his life. Now I was on the firing line. I began sharing my experiences, the horrors of being sued for the wrongful death of my own child and the ache I felt for a once normal relationship with my son’s children. Life was forever altered...for my grandchildren and for me.

The “wise ones” guided me along this path of grief. I learned to live in the moment. I learned to place no expectations on others. I learned that once burned is twice warned in human relationships. I learned that I could survive if I chose to do so. I also learned that to extend my compassion to others was to participate in my healing.

Eventually I wrote an article for our Compassionate Friends newsletter and gave it to the editor. Then I wrote another, and another, and another. Then I began printing the newsletter. Each step, each little contribution brought me closer to sanity. I was participating in the effort to help others in their journey of grief, and in doing this I was helping myself on the journey. I was working with those who had made this journey and survived. Perhaps I, too, would survive. Then I was asked to be the editor of the newsletter. At first I was fearful of this responsibility, but then I realized that I could, in some small way, help others whose children had died. And in offering that help, I could further my personal healing.

It’s been 2 years, 8 months and 10 days since my son, Todd, was killed in a car accident. My husband, who was driving, has worked very hard to retain his sanity. I have learned to help him in that struggle. I have learned to accept that my relationship with my granddaughters was forever relegated to pure insignificance after my son died. I have learned that money is the alpha and the omega for some people and the pain they inflict to get money is justified in their minds. I have learned to accept life as it comes. I am the director of my life and no others.

How am I traversing that road from pure shock to accepting new normalcy? How do I keep my child with me and let go of the horrifying, life altering changes associated with his death? How do I deal with the stupefying actions of others that followed my son’s death? The answer is as simple and as complex as the grief and compassion that lives within each parent whose child has died.

Through the efforts of the “wise ones”, I found comfort and hope. The comfort offered by those who have lost a child is unlike any other we will experience. Their loss is the same as ours: the unspeakable, the worst nightmare, the darkest feature of every parent has now transformed into their reality. Their compassion

is real. Their suggestions are gentle. Their wisdom comes over time and is the culmination of experiences which bring the realization that each of us progresses at a different rate, grieves in a different way, and deals with life from a different perspective.

Those who have been here and choose to return, to relieve the pain of their child’s death in order to help others are the nucleus of our organization. And so, as each day goes by, I learn from others that I must learn for myself. My truth is unique. Each truth is unique. Each parent is unique. Each child is uniquely remembered by bereaved parents and every member of our Compassionate Friends group.

I realized this week that my first thought of the day doesn’t overwhelm me like it once did. My child lives in my heart. I have learned to live that reality. It is my hope to help other parents find this tiny vestige of peace.

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

The Storm of Grief

It comes like a huge thunderbolt—shocking and deafening you to all else around you. Suddenly the world that had been so bright is black and desolate. There seems to be no hope.

The tears come like torrential rains. The winds of reality come and you are torn by the pains and fears caused by the storm. Even when the tears stop for a while, the dark clouds loom over you, threatening you with more tears and more pain.

Most passersby can’t help you through the storm because they have never been caught in one like it- and some don’t seem to care. There are a few who will reach out their hand and try to pull you from the storm, but the storm must be endured. And then there are the special ones—the ones who are willing to walk with you through the storm. Usually these are people who have been there before and know the storm can be survived.

After a time, the torrential rains turn to slow showers, and then the showers come less often. But the clouds don’t go away. The sadness and pain remain, but they become more bearable.

Eventually, as the clouds begin to part, there may even be a rainbow—a sign of hope. And as the sun begins to shine a little more, flowers of memory will be enjoyed. I don’t think the showers will ever end, but I believe, as they get farther apart, the sky will get bluer; we will see more rainbows; and the flowers will bloom more and more.

Perhaps it is even good to have a shower now and then—to cleanse our souls and to revive those special flowers of memory.

Mary Jo Pierce, TCF Tuscaloosa, AL

(continued in 2nd column)

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 & Tom 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
Kaare	Kristi Patterson
Javi	Renee & Ricardo Moron
Alec Smith (sibling)	Alexis, Brittany & 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
Jean Claude Wishard (sibling)	Danielle Wishard-Tudor
Eric Lindquist	Bruce Lindquist
Rob	Mary Quade
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
Allisa Feldman	Harley & Elayne Feldman
Katie	Fern & Dave Sanders
Thor Eide	Susan Nokleby
Zachary	Melanie & Craig Thielke
Derek	Darwyn & Mary Tri
Ben Freidson (sibling)	Debe Fefferman
Drew	Judy Pehrson



July

CHILD	MEMBER
Daniel Hirschberger (sibling)	Anna & Todd Lundblad
Daniel Hirschberger	Linda Schaeffer
Eley Kirabo	Mary Jo & Winston Peterson
Alex	Lisa Welke
Spencer Johnson	Ann Perry
Grant	Greg & Stephanie Dosser
Andrew John terSteege	Leon & Kathryn terSteege
Kendra	Tom & Terri Lindfors
Kendra (sibling)	Cole 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 & Ameer Banks
Dawn Ankney	Sharon & Gregory Maidment
Jonathan Townsend	Kelly Townsend
Danny	Georgie Waulk
Sadie Hanson	Dani Hanson
Shayde Erin Rudenick	Steve Rudenick
Gretchen	Susan and Dave Windschitl
Krista Monyhan	Dave & Tricia Hanson
Krista Monyhan (sibling)	Erin Hanson
Zachary	Connie Theis
Brian	Julia Malmgren
Dylan Colbath	Lisa Colbath
Tony	Tina Mehok
Ryan Trunzo	Scott Wagner & Paula Trunzo

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.

TCF's Vision...

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

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
Robby Andrew Wallenberg Bragg	Linda Wallenberg
David Lindgren	Jeff & Jan Bowers
David Lindgren (sibling)	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 (nephew)	Marcia & Craig Benham
Arthur Colberg	Monica Colberg
Arthur Colberg (sibling)	Jessica & Brandon Schultz

June

CHILD	MEMBER
Alex	Kathy Simanek
Daniel Christian Demsky	Barbara & Robert Demsky
Grant	Greg & Stephanie Dosser
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 & 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
Timothy	Rony & Christine Muzik
Tim	Rozanne & John Puhek
Ashley	Michon Jenkin (Randy Segal)
Leon Harwood	Antonia (Flipper) Filipiak
Corey Fetzer-Londer	Cheryl Fetzer
Alec Smith (sibling)	Alexis, Brittany & 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

July

CHILD	MEMBER
Amia	Adrienne Pelleg
Tucker	Dana & Kevin O'Brien
Krista Monyhan (sibling)	Erin Hanson
Krista Monyhan	Dave & Tricia Hanson
Charlotte	Jon & Angie Downing
Claire Richards	Gail Manning & David Richards
Michael	Jean Shilinski
Peter	Eric Strommen
Allyson	Roger Graphenteen
Adrian	John & Stephanie Merfeld
Archer	Kara Amorosi
Adam	Rhoda Michaelynn
Steve Hokemeir	Gail Hokemeir
Rhiley	Mike Henneman
Kate	Scott & Lisa Fronck
Murdoch	Cory Crust
Murdoch	Nicole Crust
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 Anderson (sibling)	Elizabeth Anderson
Selene	Deborah Anderson
Jason McCarthy (Grandson)	Ken & MaryLou Theisen
Brian	Julia Malmgren
Kaare	Kristi Patterson
Alexander	Susan & Ed Herrmann

He Only Took My Hand

Last night while I was trying to sleep, my son's voice I did hear,
I opened my eyes and looked around but he did not appear.
He said, "Mom you've got to listen, you've got to understand
God didn't take me from you Mom, He only took my hand.

When I called out in pain that morning, the instant that I died,
He reached down and took my hand, and pulled me to his side.
He pulled me up and saved me from the misery and pain
my body was hurt so badly inside, I could never be the same.

My search is really over now, I've found happiness within.
All the answers to my empty dreams and all that might have been.

I Love you so and miss you so, But I'll always be nearby
My body's gone forever, but my spirit will never die
And so you must go on now, live one day at a time
Just understand, God did not take me from you...
He only took my hand."

Submitted by Gail Hokemeir, Steve's Mom
TCF Minneapolis, MN

Birthday Card

Some time ago I wandered into a greeting card store. My son's birthday was next month. I scanned the sections, Mother, Father, Son, Daughter, etc., and found a card. The graphics were sweet...tall kid surrounded by friends and family, everybody smiling.

The card text was missing periods. In his youth my son wrote long sentences with no periods. This card was perfect for him! It read:

"There once was a son who was loved by everyone He was gifted and smart With such a big heart. He's the best son you could find" (open the card) "And I'm so glad he's mine! Happy Birthday."

The card came home with me. I read it again and again.

It was an impulse buy. Was this off balance? Am I OK? It cost \$3.29 plus tax. What do I do with it now?

I pushed that hesitation away, opened the card and wrote "Love you, Art," and signed it "Mom." I added the date and wrote "See you sometime. One day."

I tucked it into a dining room drawer full of family cards given and received over many years.

Three years later I found that card as I was looking for another card. This time I smiled and pinned the card to my desk lamp where I see it every day.

I fully accept purchasing a birthday card for my tall, friendly 20-year old son who died 15 years ago.

Readers not familiar with child loss will find this story "absurd." Webster's Dictionary defines it as extremely poor reasoning, ridiculous, nonsense. Compassionate Friends find nothing wrong with a bereaved mom purchasing a card for a son or daughter who died years ago.

Sometimes Compassionate Friends and everyone else live on opposite planets. I can live with that.

Parents love their children. Siblings love their siblings. We will always remember them and honor them, especially on their birthdays.

Monica Colberg, Art's Mom
TCF Minneapolis, MN

Sibling's Grief Fuels Change

On October 29, 2017, my life changed forever...when two state troopers came to my father's house to notify him his son, at the age of 44, had been killed by a distracted driver. His son who was an avid weight lifter, ate a strict healthy diet and never sped or forgot to put sunscreen on. He should have lived to be 100 due to his dedicated positive lifestyle choices. Jean Claude, my brother, instead died because of someone's else's erroneous choice while driving.

A pain and sorrow like I've never known before enveloped my soul that day, like no other grief I had ever experienced. I have had several devastating deaths in my family—grandparents from cancer, an aunt from cardiac arrest, a friend's child from childhood cancer...and the most painful, my mother due to Ovarian cancer ten years ago. I have experienced this pain of loss and living with grief. My brother's death though; was a loss like I've never felt before. It came blinding and forceful, out of nowhere. Knowing something else, someone else's selfish choice to drive negligently and distracted was the cause of my siblings random and tragic death caused me a slew of emotions I still grapple to deal with today...resentment, anger, survivor's guilt (why him at the wrong place and wrong time), sadness, confusion and deeply embedded sorrow have remained.

One day, four months after my brother's car crash, I read by chance in the newspaper about a group of distracted driving victim's advocates who were utilizing their grief and pain to push for change in our Minnesota laws. Their purpose was to create laws to keep drivers and pedestrians safer on our Minnesota roads. This group has become my life link, the very vital component to how I deal with my deep convoluted grief. One and one-half years after joining this group, one of our goals to make MN a Hands Free cell phone (while driving) state...came miraculously true! (Some members in my group had been fighting for this law for almost ten years since they lost loved ones.) It finally came true on April 12th, 2019. I stood with my other families victims, and we watched Governor Walz sign the MN Hands Free bill. We became the 17th state in the USA to join the crusade all over the world in taking cell phones out of the hands of drivers because they just keep killing people and contribute to distracted driving.

Our group made a difference in our state by fueling our grief into something more impactful that will save future lives. Next year, I will be back to testify again in the MN congress, to make tireless phone calls, and send a litmus of emails and letters to our legislators, all while sharing my brother's tragic death and imploring them to push for stiffer penalties for distracted drivers who cause great bodily harm and fatalities.

I will do it because it feeds my soul and releases my relentless sorrow. This is how I deal with my unsurmountable grief that has stricken me since October 29, 2017. We all deal with grief and loss in different ways...it is a personal journey and this is my journey through my grief for the sudden loss of my brother.

Danielle Wishard-Tudor
TCF Sibling Group, Minneapolis, MN





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 Minneapolis*.

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.*