

The Compassionate Friends



Boca Raton Chapter, October 2008 561-368-0324

The Compassionate Friends, Inc., is a self-help organization offering friendship and understanding to all bereaved parents. TCF is non-denominational and all bereaved parents are welcome. TCF National headquarters is P.O. Box 3686, Oak Brook, Illinois 60522. Telephone 630-990-0010, toll free 877-969-0010, Fax 877-969-0010. Regional Coordinator, Sally Migliaccio 561-747-2691.

Schedule of Meetings: Held at St. Paul's Church 701 W. Palmetto Park Rd., Boca Raton All meetings begin at 7:30 p.m.	<i>Chapter Leader</i>	<i>Gail Schroeder (Engel's Mom)</i>
	<i>Newsletter Editor</i>	<i>Gail Schroeder (Engel's Mom)</i>
October 6 October 20 November 3 November 17 December 1 December 17	<i>Refreshments</i>	<i>Ina & Cary Winters (Randi's Mom & Dad)</i>
	<i>Librarians</i>	<i>Jerry Flax (Brett's Dad) Walter Hochhauser (Brett's Dad)</i>
	<i>New Members</i>	<i>Nate Kimbleton (Robin & Melinda's Dad)</i>

The October newsletter is dedicated in loving memory of Ivan Herlihy by Mom, Monica, Sister, Nina, and Dad, Ron. Always remembered

The October newsletter is dedicated for the anniversaries of the tragic losses of Nancy, Larry, Robin and Baby Nate by Civia Yellin

Special Days

We call them "Special Days" and there is really nothing special at all about a child dying. The important thing is that we never forget them and by listing their birthday and the anniversary of their death, we always acknowledge their existence...that they were HERE, that their lives had MEANING, and they were LOVED, and that they are MISSED.

Sherie, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Donald Bass, date of passing 10-1-07
Sean, son of Denise and Joel Sperber, date of passing 10-2-06
Bret, son of Barbara & Charlie Britton, birthday 10-03-79
Robin, daughter of Nate Kimbleton, date of passing 10-04-04
Steven, son of Burma Marengo, birthday 10-11-64
Jules, daughter of Garry & Shellie Bergman, birthday 10-13-63
Jason, son of Bobby Markowitz, birthday 10-13-69
Todd, son of Susan Cohen, birthday 10-13-78
Carol, daughter of Thelma & Joe Wasley, date of passing 10-13-06
Charles, son of Alison Mitchell, birthday 10-14-84
Kathy, daughter of Harriet & Bernie Molinski, date of passing 10-15-95
Ally, granddaughter of Harriet & Bernie Molinski, date of passing 10-15-06
Ben, son of Shirley & Bob Schwartzman, date of passing 10-15-07
Lynne, daughter of Bebe Hyman, birthday 10-15-46
John, son of Connie & Jack Aiello, date of passing 10-16-02
Alan, son of Jean & Harry Harris, date of passing 10-16-05
Jennifer, daughter of Mary Groebeck, date of passing 10-16-05
Jake, grandson of Fay Cheskin, birthday 10-17-97
Jonathan, brother of Jennifer Levin, birthday 10-18-61
Jonathan, son of Helene Samuels, birthday 10-18-61
Brandon, son of Bob & Ronda Fryburg, birthday 10-19-86
Anthony, son of Rick Mattice, birthday 10-20-89
David, son of David & Raiza Iverson, date of passing 10-20-90
David, son of Lois Radding, date of passing 10-20-06
Zachary, son of Daniel & Dianne Solomon 10-21-88
Stephanie, daughter of Tom Kuleba, date of passing 10-22-08
Roger, son of Caroline Asen, date of passing 10-22-05
Kayla, daughter of Tracey & Jody Joiner, date of passing 10-22-07
Jonathan, son of Lorraine & Herb Michaelis, birthday 10-24-61
Scott, son of Joan & Hank Schiff, date of passing 10-24-94
Stephanie, daughter of Tom Kuleba, birthday 10-25-89
Jennifer, daughter of Roni DeBenedetto, birthday 10-25-75
Amy, daughter of Rich & Lynn Harris, date of passing 10-25-83
Larry, son, Nancy, daughter, Robin, daughter-in-law, Nate, grandson, date of passings 10-25-97
Ben, grandson of Alice Kroulas, date of passing 10-25-04
Billy, son of Ruby Troy, date of passing 10-25-06
Lauren, daughter of Peter Herzog, birthday 10-27-85
Fran, daughter of Bea Smiley Rubin, date of passing 10-27-99
Parker, son of Cynthia Meyer, date of passing 10-28-04
Jules, daughter of Garry & Shellie Bergman, date of passing 10-30-06
Vanessa, daughter of Rosalie & Tom Bianco, date of passing 10-31-05

New Members:

Stephanie, daughter of Tom Kuleba, 10-25-89 10-22-08

Mark, son of Albert & Miriam Movitz, 11-5-53 8-7-08

Priscilla, daughter of Elita Freitas 1-15-80 6-15-08

TJ, grandson of Catherine Ciaccia, and brother of Lucille Ciaccia 7-8-86 3-16-08

To Our New Members

Coming to your first meeting is the hardest thing to do. But you have nothing to lose and everything 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 will find the right person – or just the right words said that will help you in your grief work.

To Our Old Members

We need your encouragement and support. You are the string that ties our group together and the glue that makes it stick. Each meeting, we have new parents. THINK BACK...what would it have been like for you if there had not been any “oldie” to welcome you, share your grief, and encourage you? It was from them you heard, “your pain will not always be this bad; it does get softer.”

Telephone Friends...if you need to talk

Gail Schroeder 561-368-6916

Jerry Flax 954-341-8657

Ronda Fryburg 954-753-0493

Nate Kimbleton 561-414-0811

The newsletter printing and postage amounts to approximately \$160.00 currently per month and donations of \$100.00 or more will be designated for this purpose and receive a special acknowledgement on the front page. Please send checks directly to:

The Compassionate Friends
350 Paulus Court
Boca Raton, FL 33486

with a note as to how this special acknowledgement should be worded.



A love gift is in honor of a child who has died. All gifts are of no charge to our members and you may either submit one by calling the chapter phone number or by leaving one at any meeting. Remember you may use this tool in our newsletter for your child or in memory of other's children. This is a wonderful way for others to say, "I am remembering your child."

Dearest Engel:

This is Mommy's birthday month and of course, I will miss you very much during this time. You always liked all the parties and celebrations as much as Mommy did. Thank you again for all the signs you send and I love you very, very much.

Love Mommy

Hi Samantha:

You've been watching so we know you know about all the obstacles and challenges we have been facing in this material world. Please don't worry about us. Your love gives us more strength than we could have imagined and the privilege of being your parents makes anything we have to face worth it. We wouldn't trade the too few years we had with you for anything. So many smiles, so much laughter and learning and love. Our happy family will always be the very best thing that ever happened to us. We miss you all the days and all the nights.

Marissa and Scott love Sammy forever!

A Message From The Chapter

So often I am asked about the makeup of our TCF chapter of bereaved parents who are seeking a place of refuge from a world that just doesn't comprehend the depth of the pain that the loss of a child has brought into their home and lives.

Many who call are concerned that they may not fit into a TCF group because the child who died was too young or too old. Some wonder if their child died too long ago, while some think it is too soon because their child died only a few weeks ago. Perhaps the child died suddenly or there was a long illness. Maybe the baby died before birth; maybe shortly after. The death may have been from suicide or AIDS or any of a number of causes that society in general has a hard time accepting. Emotions can often run high when you are talking about the death of a child who has meant more to you than life itself.

I only have to go back to TCF's mission statement to assure those who ask that "yes" you will truly fit in and you will need the on-going support of a group that truly understands.

If you are trying to gather up the courage to attend a TCF meeting or struggling with the strength to attend twice a month, I want to assure you personally that our chapter and the leadership does everything possible to make certain that your experience is one of friendship, understanding and hope. I know that some of you will walk away from that first meeting with the feeling that you have taken home everyone else's pain. But give it some time and give TCF a chance. For those of you who have attended and feel it makes you worse than you were before you arrived, why is that? Are you so deep in your grief that you can't hear the other stories that are so similar and you can learn "survival skills" from? Or, have you forgotten that maybe sharing your pain will not only help yourself but help another member relate? How many times I hear the same "I think I am worse...I think I am going crazy....There is no one that seems to care any longer."

I care. The members who attend regularly care.

Come again to a meeting and express your feelings openly – it helps. TCF is there for you so.....***You Need Not Walk Alone!***

Wishing you gentle peace and strong courage.

Gail Schroeder
Chapter Leader

**In Memory of our Children
Thanksgiving Dinner**

A time to laugh...a time to cry.

Join Gail and Walt as they host dinner in their home for all parents and family members who need a place to remember their child and be supported on this difficult holiday.

Date: Thursday, November 27, 2008

Time: 4:00 pm

Place: Schroeder's

350 Paulus Court

Boca Raton

RSVP: No later than November 13, 2008

561-368-0324

A small candle ceremony will be performed at the conclusion of dinner.

TCF Worldwide Candle Lighting

Sunday, December 14, 2008

The soft glow of a candle. Gentle music plays in the background. Tears fall silently to the floor, a tribute to a child who has died. This scene is repeated perhaps thousands of time around the world during The Compassionate Friends Worldwide Candle Lighting, which has captured the eye of the world like no other event of its type. To be held on the second Sunday in December, as always, this year's Worldwide Candle Lighting is scheduled for December 14th 2008.

The Worldwide Candle Lighting shows that people from around the world can gather in peace and unity to remember all of the precious children who have died. This has been TCF's gift to the bereavement world.

Please plan now to participate in the 12th Worldwide Candle Lighting on December 14. Those who are unable or do not wish to attend a formal service are asked simply to light a candle in their home with friends and family. Last year one person made a special request of his neighbors. Anyone driving down the street of his home saw candles lit in the windows of every home.

In addition, heartfelt messages are submitted by the thousands to TCF's online Remembrance Book which is open only on the day of the Worldwide Candle Lighting. You may do so at

<http://www.compassionatefriends.org>

Candle Light Remembrance Service

Sunday, December 14, 2008

Sponsor a Centerpiece – In memory of your child/sibling/grandchild

Please consider sponsoring a candle table centerpiece for our December candle light service. We will display a sign "In Memory of" on each sponsored centerpiece. We also will include a photo of your child, if a photo is provided. After the ceremony, you can take the centerpiece home with you as a special remembrance. If you can not attend the candlelight services, your centerpiece will be donated to a newly bereaved family to take home after the ceremony.

The cost of a centerpiece is \$100.00

The net proceeds from the centerpiece will help support our annual candlelight remembrance service.

This will be a first come first serve availability. There will be 14 tables inside the banquet hall to be used for these centerpieces. After the first 14 are secured and paid, smaller floral arrangements will be displayed throughout the ceremony but without personalization. A mention of your donation in memory of will be included in the program for the smaller arrangement.

Costs for smaller arrangements will be \$50.00

The deadline for ordering centerpieces is November 1st 2008. Again, the first 14 larger table centerpieces will be closed out as soon as the first 14 orders are received. You may still continue to order the smaller ones up until November 1st.

Please call Gail at the chapter line of 561-368-0324 to inquire and secure your order.

12th Annual Worldwide Candle Lighting
Sunday December 14, 2008

The Compassionate Friends Worldwide Candle Lighting is believed to be the largest mass candle lighting on the globe which gives all bereaved families a special day each year to remember a beloved child who lives on in their heart.

Program begins at 6:15 p.m. Please arrive by 6:00p.m.

Poetry Readings: Ina Winers, Walt Schroeder
Parent Speakers: Scott Wynkoop, Eileen Kesnig
Special Speaker: Darcie Sims

A slide show will be shown during the candle lighting. A 4x6 photo needs to be submitted with a \$7.00 cover charge to 350 Paulus Court, Boca Raton 33486 no later than November 15. Pictures will be returned the night of the ceremony. Please use a post-it note on the back of the photo to indicate name. Pictures that were submitted last year will be used again.

We will have a special table set up for our children's and sibling's pictures. Bring a stand up picture no larger than 5 x 7 of your child to share.

Any individual remembrances can be shared after the lighting of the unity candles and individual candles.

**** Dinner will be served after the ceremony****

Ceremony will be held at the Holiday Inn Hotel. Address is 1950 Glades Road, Boca Raton. From I-95, exit Glades Road. Go west to the first traffic light and make a U-turn. The hotel is directly on the right. Event will be in the ballroom, located at the back of the hotel, near Mario's Restaurant.

A Bereaved Parents Wish List

I wish my child hadn't died. I wish I had my child back. I wish you wouldn't be afraid to speak my child's name. My child lived and was very important to me. I need to hear that my child was important to you also. If I cry and get emotional when you talk about my child, I wish you knew that it isn't because you have hurt me. My child's death is the cause of my tears. You have talked about my child, and you have allowed me to share my grief. I thank you for both. Being a bereaved parent is not contagious, so I wish you wouldn't shy away from me.

I need you now more than ever. I need diversions, so I do want to hear about you; but I also want you to hear about me. I might be sad and I might cry, but I wish you would let me talk about my child, my favorite topic of the day. I know that you think of and pray for me often. I also know that my child's death pains you, too. I wish you would let me know those things through a phone call, a card or note, or a real big hug. I wish you wouldn't expect my grief to be over.

These first years are traumatic for me, but I wish you could understand that my grief will never be over. I will suffer the death of my child until the day I die. I am working very hard in my recovery, but I wish you could understand that I will never fully recover, I will always miss my child, and I will always grieve that my child is dead. I wish you wouldn't expect me "not to think about it" or to "be happy". Neither will happen for a very long time, so don't frustrate yourself. I don't want to have a "pity party", but I do wish you would let me grieve. I must hurt before I can heal.

I wish you understood how my life has shattered. I know it is miserable for you to be around me when I'm feeling miserable. Please be as patient with me as I am with you. When I say, "I'm doing okay", I wish you could understand that I don't "feel" okay and that I struggle daily. I wish you knew that all of the grief reactions I'm having are very normal. Depression, anger, hopelessness and overwhelming sadness are all to be expected. So please excuse me when I'm quiet and withdrawn or irritable and cranky. Your advice to "take one day at a time" is excellent advice. However, a day is too much and too fast for me right now.

I wish you could understand that I'm doing good to handle an hour at a time. Please excuse me if I seem rude, certainly not my intent. Sometimes the world around me goes too fast and I need to get off. When I walk away, I wish you would let me find a quiet place to spend time alone. I wish you understood that grief changes people. When my child died, a big part of me died with my child. I am not the same person I was before my child died, and I will never be that person again. I wish very much that you could understand ~ understand my loss and my grief, my silence and my tears, my void and my pain. BUT. . . I pray daily that you will never understand.

The Compassionate Friends Credo

We need not walk alone. We are The Compassionate Friends. We reach out to each other with understanding and with hope. Our children have died at all ages and from many different causes but our love for our children unites us. Your pain becomes my pain, just as your hope becomes my hope. We come together from all walks of life and many different circumstances. We are a unique family because we represent many races and creeds. We are young and we are old. Some of us are far along in our grief but others still feel a grief so fresh and so intensely painful, that we feel hopeless and see no hope. Some of us have found our faith to be a source of strength; some of us are struggling to find answers. Some of us are angry, filled with guilt, or in deep depression; others radiate an inner peace. But whatever the pain we bring to this gathering of The Compassionate Friends, it is a pain we will share just as we share with each other our love for our children. We are all seeking and struggling to build a future for ourselves, but we are committed to building that future together as we reach out to each other in love and share the anger as well as the peace; share the faith as well as the doubts and help each other to grieve as well as to grow.