



# THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS INC.

International Organization Offering Friendship and Understanding to Bereaved Parents

## MIAMI COUNTY CHAPTER NO.1870

October 2022 NEWSLETTER Vol. 31 No. 9

Facebook page "The Compassionate Friends of Miami County Ohio Chapter 1870".  
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### *Autumn Tears*

*We look back on September and we realize that somehow we made it through those dreaded first days of school. Whether it was the anticipation or the actual days that were the worst, we survived. We used our faith, our support systems or just plain hard work and made it over yet another hurdle. We watched small children heading for their first day of kindergarten, listened to excited teenagers talk of high school and heard stories of children leaving home to attend post-secondary school. Somehow we rode the waves of grief and found ourselves ashore again.*

*As these waves subside new ones will build as we head into the holidays that speak of, and to, children. Halloween will soon approach and for some, painful memories. Thanksgiving arrives to exemplify family and togetherness and Christmas looms ahead. These special days are forever reminders of our loss—the costumes we'll never sew, the empty chair at turkey dinner, the fun and magic we'll never share with someone we love. Forever reminders that our child has died.*

*To survive when these events and anniversary days come around let's find time to think of the good memories we have—the announcement of our long awaited pregnancy at Thanksgiving dinner, the look of excitement on our son's first Halloween night, the vision of our daughter helping prepare the turkey dinner. These holidays will always be reminders that our child died.*

*Let us also make them reminders that our child lived! They left us memories more precious than any others to hold and celebrate!*

*~Penny Young, TCF Powell River, British Columbia*

Meetings are now being held at:  
Zion Lutheran Church  
14 W Walnut St  
Tipp City, OH 45371

(located on the corner of Main and Third  
handicapped accessible, entrance by  
parking lot on W. Walnut St.)

Next Meeting: Oct 27, 2022

7:00 pm

Topic: *Surviving the Holidays*

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*In the fall  
When amber leaves are shed,  
Softly—silently  
Like tears that wait to flow,  
I watch and grieve.  
My heart beats sadly in the fall;  
'Tis then I miss you most of all.*

*-Lily de Lauder  
TCF, Van Nuys, CA*

## MUSINGS ON HALLOWEEN, PAST AND PRESENT

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As I type this, the nip in the October air is a reminder that the major holidays are just around the corner. Halloween paraphernalia has been in the stores since July with Christmas decorations right behind them. For those of us who are bereaved parents, this means the sooner the décor is on the store shelves, the longer we have the constant reminders that we will be facing the holidays without our child present. Whether this is your first Halloween following their death or years down the road, such as in my situation, the holiday season stirs the emotions. For example, with Halloween, there could be the sorrow of no longer having to find that perfect costume or witnessing the delight in your child's eyes as they head out the door to trick-or-treat. If your child was an adult when they died, perhaps it is your old memories of Halloweens when they were youngsters. And there are those whose children died before they ever had the opportunity to create memories, the sadness that they were never able to experience even one holiday with that child.

Halloween can be particularly hard to get through. In the past, I always thought of it as innocuous enough; costume parties, children excitedly dashing door-to-door looking for treats, pumpkin carving, and the occasional harmless prank. However, after my daughter Nina died, I became acutely aware of things that I had never given a second thought. For instance, my neighbor made their whole front yard into a graveyard scene of fake headstones with scary or silly epitaphs on them, and terrifying creatures coming out of the earth. Before Nina died, I also found cemeteries “creepy”, but now look at them differently, even with a sort of reverence. I no longer have a problem going out to my daughter's grave-site, even in the middle of the night. I find the solitude of the historic countryside cemetery dignified and worthy of respect. I was hurt by what I felt was ridicule and disdain for the final resting place of our loved ones' physical bodies. In addition, some of the masks portrayed faces of death in a way that I found highly offensive, especially since I knew many who lost their children to some of the means depicted. I perceived it as a mockery of the tragedies that these families suffered.

Though I still don't pretend to understand the allure of the above-mentioned Halloween depictions, they aren't as painful to me as they were the first few years after Nina died. Especially in the early grief years, we become hypersensitive to our surroundings and more keenly aware of anything related to death. It is pretty hard to look past the non-bereaved populations seeming nonchalance about something we take so personally. Though we wish there was more understanding, we also know all too well that they cannot truly empathize unless they have walked in our shoes. It is easy to forget that, before our children's deaths, we too may have shown the same indifference. We'd like to think that we would not have been so callous because we now know firsthand how much this hurts those affected. However, before we lost our “innocence”, truth be told, we probably didn't give any of it much thought.

On this 22nd Halloween without Nina, I do my best to ignore all the ghoulishness surrounding this time of year. If I do find I am having difficulty, I try very hard to focus on positive memories of Halloween's past, such as her grade-school costume party where our basement became a makeshift haunted house where blindfolded “witches” and “fairy princesses” shrieked and giggled as they plunged their hands into bowls full of peeled grape “eyeballs” and wet macaroni “brains”, or the photos I have of her in different costumes over the years, from Care Bear to Punk Rocker. Then there is the photo taken of Nina on her last Halloween. No longer of trick-or-treat age, she stayed home to pass out the candy and carved her own Jack-O-Lantern that she is pictured proudly along side, with her ever-present smile and that wonderful twinkle in her brown eyes; such precious memories...

For those with a missing trick-or-treater this Halloween, the first holidays are the most difficult. Though I find they are easier to bear as time marches on, there will always be the awareness that someone so loved is absent from the family gatherings. Remember that this roller-coaster grief-ride brings different feelings with each passing year. It is important to allow those feelings—whatever they may be—and let them happen, Try not to be waylaid by other's expectations of you. Trust your instincts. Truly, only you know what is best for you.

~Cathy Seehuetter, posted Oct 2021 TCF website. Cathy's 15-year-old daughter, Nina Westmoreland, was killed by an alcohol-impaired driver on Cathy's birthday while her family was vacationing in FL in May of 1995. In 2012, her police officer stepson Chris took his own life.

NEED TO TALK TO SOMEONE?

A listening ear is sometimes the best medicine.

- Kim Bundy (suicide) 573-9877
- Pam Fortener (cancer) 238-4075
- Donnie Fortener (cancer) 760-2238
- Pam Fortener (siblings) 238-4075
- Cathy Duff (auto accident) 473-5533
- Jackie Glawe (auto accident) 478-3318

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CHAPTER NEWS

Upcoming meetings:

- Oct - *Getting ready for the Holidays*
- Nov - *Topic cards*
- DEC - *Children's Candlelight Memorial*

After October

and if there be a perfect month,  
 for me, it is October...  
 with days and nights like laughing fauns,  
 with mornings bright and sober.  
 when wind will dance in sudden glee  
 to do the autumn-sweeping  
 or cloud and fog and wistful rain  
 can move a heart to weeping.  
 and in October You were born,  
 four days before November...  
 and four years later you were gone,  
 my little son, my only son,  
 I love you.  
 and remember. . .

~Sascha Wagner  
 © The Compassionate Friends

*Thank You  
 for your love gifts!*

★ Love Gifts should be made out to: *The Compassionate Friends* and mailed to **Cindy Glaser, 5255 Rudy Road Tipp City, Ohio 45371**. Please send your donation by the 15th of the month prior to the month you want your child remembered in the newsletter.

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## Our Children Lovingly Remembered

### October Birthdays

Child—Parent, Grandparent, Sibling

Allison Rudy - Lora Rudy  
 Brad M. Massie - Barbara Massie  
 Jayme "Buggs" Laurent - Ray & Debbie Cox  
 Jessica Back - John & Roberta Back  
 Joshua Matthew Lightle - Matt & Kristi Lightle  
 Maci Eickman - Josh & Elizabeth Eickman  
 Montgomery Alan "Monte" Mott - DeDe Mott  
 Zachary O. Patrick - Mike & Tina Patrick



### October Angel-versaries

Child—Parent, Grandparent, Sibling

Aaron T. Duvall - Kim Duvall  
 Benjamin Paul Gudorf - Wilda Stanley  
 Brent A. Snyder - Claude & Mary Snyder  
 David J. Elam - Danny & Tammy Elam  
 Douglas Ray Lavy - Robert E. & Sharon Lavy  
 John Patrick McLaughlin - Don & Pam Fortener  
 Joshua Matthew Lightle - Matt & Kristi Lightle  
 Justice Meade - Sue Brown  
 Justice Meade - Jenni Warner  
 Liam Seamus Gillespie - David & Julie Gillespie  
 Linda Kimerling - George & Harriet Holbert  
 Samuel Pearson - Randi & Carolyn Pearson



### REMEMBERING

*Friends may think we have forgotten*

*When at times they see us smile.*

*Little do they know the heartache*

*That our smile hides all the while.*

*Beautiful memories are wonderful*

*They last till the longest day.*

*They never wear out, they never get  
 lost and can never be given away.*

*To some you may be forgotten,*

*To others a part of the past.*

*But to those who loved and lost you,*

*Your memory will always last.*

*~Author Unknown*

*Every effort is made to publish accurate information regarding the birth and remembrance dates. Please let me know if there is an error in the listing, in order to correct our records. If you receive this newsletter and you have not given us the name and dates for your child, but want them listed here, please contact me. - Jackie Glawe/Editor*

***"Love knows not its own depth until  
 the hour of separation." ~Kahlil  
 Gibran***

## IT'S A FAMILY AFFAIR

When a child dies, grief is a family affair. It hits Mom and Dad and siblings with equal despair. Mom cries and cannot get out of bed. Dad holds in emotions and leaves much unsaid. Sisters and brothers simply cannot understand why death came and dealt this kind of hand. No one acts as they should and nothing is the same. The family wants to draw together but seems to share only pain.

Someone must be responsible when a child dies. Each family member thinks in some way it's them, and cries. But no one is responsible for things we cannot control. So reach out to each other and keep the family whole. Don't let the difference in how you each grieve change the love in your family or its belief. Be strong when you can and weak when you must. Love each other with kindness and trust to keep the family love and you will all survive. We who have been there and made it through together can say that holding on to each other will make love last forever.

~Written by Keith Russell in memory of his brother, Steven Russell, who was murdered April 9, 1984

## YOU DID NOT DIE

You live in the beautiful wind that blows.  
 You live in the sound of birds that crow.  
 You live in the sun that shines so bright.  
 You live in the peaceful dark at night.  
 You live in a star I see in the sky.  
 You live in ocean waves that come in with the tide.  
 You live in the smell of flowers and grass.  
 You live in the summer that goes so fast.  
 You live in my heart that hurts so much.  
 You did not die, we only lost touch.

~Shari Swirsky, TCF Toronto, Ontario, Canada

***“When you close your eyes and remember, don’t forget that your sibling rests yet in you, in your heart and in your thoughts, in everything you do. They will never leave you alone. You have a listener at your beck and call. What a gift!”***

***– from a Sibling***



**The  
Compassionate  
Friends**

*Miami County Chapter*

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

2445 N Montgomery County Line Rd  
Tipp City OH 45371

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

*The Compassionate Friends is a self-help organization which offers support to families who have experienced the death of a child. Only a person who has experienced the trauma of losing a child can fully understand the pain and suffering involved.*

*We gather to listen) to share) and to support each other in the resolution of our grief. We need not walk alone, we are The Compassionate Friends.*

**MISSION STATEMENT** ... The mission of The Compassionate Friends is to assist families toward the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child of any age and to provide information to help others be supportive.

***If you are receiving our newsletter for the 1st time,*** it is because someone told us that you might find it helpful. To find out more about The Compassionate Friends, please call our Chapter Leader, Kim Bundy (937) 573-9877. We cordially invite you to our monthly meetings held on the fourth Thursday of each month. Nothing is ever expected of you. You don't have to speak a single word. Parents who do attend, find comfort, support, friendship and understanding from others who have also lost a child. You do not have to come alone - bring a family member or friend with you.

**You need not walk alone!**



IF YOU ARE RECEIVING THIS NEWSLETTER, AND WISH TO HAVE YOUR NAME REMOVED FROM OUR MAILING LIST, PLEASE CALL OR TEXT (937) 478-3318 AND LEAVE A MESSAGE. Thank you.