



# The Compassionate Friends Fayetteville Area Chapter



Volume 25, Issue 3

July 2021

## TCF's 44th National Conference Uniting Grieving Heart's Across Our Communities

### VIRTUAL CONFERENCE 2021

**JULY 16, 2021 THROUGH JULY 18, 2021**

The three-day conference will include:

- Keynote Sessions
- 90 plus workshop choices
- Sibling Sunday
- Candle Lighting Ceremony
- Sharing Circles
- Entertainment
- The conference will take place on a Zoom platform with an online registration system.
- Registration fees for the three-day event will be \$95 per person. To register, go to: <https://www.compassionatefriends.org>

Although we would love to be together in person, we can still connect, support, and gather as a community through our virtual event.

Inside This Issue		A Note From The Editor	
<i>The Compassionate Friends Annual Conference &amp; Editors Note</i>	1	<p><b>NOW IS YOUR CHANCE!</b></p> <p>You have always wanted to attend a national conference, but just couldn't take the time or afford to go. With the virtual conference, now is your chance. From the comfort of your home you can attend as many workshops as you would like, listen to key note speakers, be entertained and light a candle for your child. Go to the national website: <a href="http://www.compassionatefriends.org">www.compassionatefriends.org</a> to register and for up dated information. Maybe this will be one of the good things to come out of this never ending Covid 19 pandemic.</p>	<p><b>WE ARE BACK!!!!</b></p> <p>Yes, we are back. Face to face meetings started in June. We will meet in room 224 through the end of the year. Please enter the building through the doors on the right side and check-in at the security office which will be on the right. Face mask are required. At least Zoom allowed us to keep in touch, but it was so good to see some of you in person last month and get some very needed HUGS!! A hug always makes me feel better.</p> <p>Jennifer German Amy's Mom</p>
<i>Our Credo, Key Note Speakers &amp; Is It Easing?</i>	2		
<i>A Tribute to my Sister, It Can't Be, Quote &amp; Siblings Walking Together</i>	3		
<i>Love Gifts, Regional &amp; National Information</i>	4		
<i>Healing With Humor, Journey of the Survivor, Quote &amp; "Only Us"</i>	5		
<i>You Are My Sunshine</i>	6		
<i>The Bitter Sweetness of Birthdays, Standing, There is a Sacredness in Tears, Quote &amp; Meeting Information.</i>	7		
<i>Birthdays</i>	8		
<i>Angel Dates</i>	9		

## Our Credo

We need not walk alone.  
We are The Compassionate Friends.  
We reach out to each other with love,  
With understanding, and with hope.  
The children we mourn have died at All  
ages and from many different Causes,  
but our love for them unites us.

Your pain becomes my pain  
Just as your hope becomes my hope.  
We come together from all walks of life,  
from many different circumstances.

We are a unique family because  
We represent many races, creeds and  
relationships.

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 helpless and see no hope.  
Some of us have found our faith  
To be a source of strength;  
While some of us are struggling to find  
answers.

Some of us are angry,  
Filled with guilt or in deep depression;  
While others radiate an inner peace.

But whatever pain we bring  
To this gathering of  
The Compassionate Friends,  
It is pain we will share  
Just as we share with each other  
Our love for the children who have died.  
We are all seeking and struggling  
To build a future for ourselves,  
But we are committed to  
Building that future together

We reach out to each other in love  
to share the pain as well as the joy,  
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.

We need not walk alone....

We are The Compassionate Friends.

## Key Note Speakers for the 44th National TCF Conference



**Scarlett Lewis** founded the Jesse Lewis Choose Love Movement, which helps people build a culture of love, resilience, forgiveness, and connection in our communities. Scarlett is the mother of Jesse Lewis, who was killed in his classroom during the Sandy Hook Elementary School tragedy. She has been interviewed by BBC, Fox News, CBS, and the Today Show, and has been featured in Fortune, Strive, and the Huffington Post. Scarlett will share how to thoughtfully respond with love in any situation by using the **Choose Love Formula**.



**Dennis Apple** is a pastor, author, and long-time workshop presenter at TCF national conferences. His 18-year-old son, Denny, died suddenly in his sleep from complications of mononucleosis. The pastor of a mega church, Dennis felt he was exempt from the tragedies that others experienced. Sixteen years later, after a crisis of faith and deep despair, he wrote about his struggle in a book, "Life After the Death of My Son." Dennis co-leads the TCF of Johnson County chapter in Leawood, Kansas.



**Peggi Johnson** is an avid writer and frequent contributor to *We Need Not Walk Alone*, TCF's magazine. Her son, Jordan, died by suicide at the age of 19, in 2009. After Jordan's death, she learned about and received support from TCF. She then served as editor for six chapters in the Washington, DC and Northern Virginia area, as well as a chapter leader in Piedmont, VA. Since 2013, Peggi has presented workshops for TCF national conferences.



**Zander Sprague** is an author, speaker, and licensed counselor. In 1996, his sister was murdered, and, ten years later, his sister-in-law died of a massive cerebral hemorrhage at the age of 35. Zander is the author of "Making Lemonade: Choosing a Positive Pathway After Losing Your Sibling." His latest book, "Why Don't They Cry? Understanding Your Living Child's Grief" is going to press later this year. Zander is a certified From Heartbreak to Happiness® grief coach.

## IS IT EASING?

Phoebe C. Redman, TCF, Bradenton, FL

I heard your name today and my heart did not skip a beat, nor was my mind flooded with the emotion of losing you. I heard your name today and it did not bring back the terrible hurt feelings of when you first left me. I heard your name today with a calmness that surprised me. Many another child carries your name, and it had been torture hearing it and seeing the smiling faces on those little girls. But today I knew—I found out—what others in my footsteps found out and tried to tell me. The hurt will ease; but the memories, the love, the good times will never go away. ♥



A Tribute to my Sister  
Lori Lee Smith

## I Saw You

I saw you today in the morning dew  
As brilliant as a sea of shimmering diamonds  
I shared the most amazing sunrise with you today  
A million shades of red so random in their perfection  
I heard you today in the laugh of my children  
An enchanting melody a thousand angels strong  
I walked with you today and we talked about everything  
... and nothing all at once  
I saw you today in the changing of the leaves  
The colors of your life, the close of one season  
And the ushering in of another  
I sat beside a stream with you today  
The peaceful flow, steady and constant  
I saw you today . . .  
and you were perfect  
And rest assured . . .  
I shall see you again

Avery Smith  
TCF Ada Area Chapter

## This Can't Be

This is still such a shock to me  
This really can't be!

I don't want to believe this is real  
This is not something that I want to feel!  
You just came back, you can't leave for good  
If I could change this all...I would.

You were the one that was always there.  
You were the one to always care.  
Now a picture is the only way to see you.  
I really don't know what to do.

You'll always be my big sister,  
But life's not the same.  
Life without you seems so lame.  
No more car rides, no more late nights.  
No more singing and no more play fights.

Where are you? You should still be here.  
Where are you? I can't find you anywhere.  
I need you still you just can't go away.  
I need you here, please come back and stay!

Useless to pray you'll come back,  
you're gone.  
God took you with Him to call his own.  
But you'll always be present here in our hearts.  
You always have been, right from the start.

This is still such a shock to me,  
This really can't be!

Lilli Pugh  
TCF Houston Northwest, TX  
In Memory of my sister, Mandi

*"When your mind cannot find an answer, open your heart and ask for peace."*

—Sascha

## *Sibling Walking Together*

(Formerly The Sibling Credo)

We are the surviving children of The Compassionate Friends.

We are brought together by the death of our brothers and sisters.

Open your hearts to us. But have patience with us. Sometimes we need the support of our friends.

At other times we need our families to be there.

Sometimes we feel we must walk alone, taking our memories with us, continuing to become the individuals we want to be.

We cannot be our dead brother or sister; however, a special part of them lives on with us.

When our brothers and sisters died, our lives changed.

We are living a life very different from what we envisioned, and we feel the responsibility to be strong even when we feel weak.

Yet, we can go on because we understand better than many others the value of family and the precious gift of life.

Our goal is not to be the forgotten mourners that we sometimes are, but to walk together to face our tomorrows

as surviving children of  
The Compassionate Friends.



## Love Gifts



A Love Gift is a donation to honor a child who has died, or as a memorial for a relative or friend.

The Compassionate Friends depends entirely on voluntary contributions from individuals and organizations to meet chapter expenses. TCF is a 504(c)(3) non-profit organization: all donations are tax deductible. 100% of every dollar donated goes toward chapter expenses.

We thank the following for their kind generosity, love and sharing. There are no dues. We have already paid the ultimate price to be a member.

Bill & Diane Lanier in memory of their son Ralph Lanier

Erica Booher in memory of her son Cameron "Cameo" Booher



### The National Office of The Compassionate Friends

P.O. box 3696  
Oak Brook, IL 60522-3696

Web Site: [www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org) Toll free: 877-969-0010  
[facebook.com/TCFUSA](https://facebook.com/TCFUSA)

### Regional Coordinator for the Fayetteville Area Chapter of TCF

Donna & Ralph Goodrich  
704-822-4503 or [iluvu2lauren@gmail.com](mailto:iluvu2lauren@gmail.com)

TCF 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.

### Healing With Humor

Laughter is not a part of everybody’s life, so it is easy to accidentally offend someone with humor. Bereaved parents, especially the newly bereaved, do not feel like laughing; their joy in life has gone. Laughing seems so trivial to them they can easily be offended. Some bereaved parents feel guilty about humor and laughter. They feel they have no right to joy because their child is dead. Appearing joyous can bring condemnation from society, not to your spouse, for appearing to not care. People may think, surely if you are laughing you did not love your child as much as I love mine. The truth is, joy makes life better. Joyous talk and laughter do not show disrespect, they show that healing is taking place. If you laughed with your child while they lived, it is OK to someday laugh with your child again. Your dear child has never left your heart and their spirit would surely rather fill your heart with joy than sorrow.

~ ~ ~ Chuck Prestwood

### “Only Us”

I have tried many times to explain the pain of losing a child to those that have not lost a child. I’ve come to the conclusion that there are no words to describe it. You have to experience it to fully understand it. It’s more than grief; it changes everything about you in ways that takes years to fully understand.

The pain is all encompassing, and it smothers you with relentless despair. There are times you don’t think you will survive it; I’ve met some that haven’t. It’s a terrible, terrible thing for one to endure.

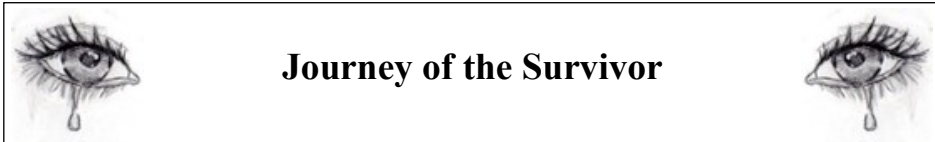
It is survivable, in fact I think one can thrive after the processing and hard work is completed. It takes a major transformation of self to get to this point.

I don’t wish it on anyone, but I will be here to help others through it if I can. It’s the least I can do. I stand at the bright end of that dark, dark tunnel and know the journey is long and dark for those behind me.

Kelly Farley

*“The loss of an only child is neither greater nor less than the loss of one of many children. However, the loss of an only child is experienced differently. It is different because you lose your parenthood, which is such a large part of the life of any parent.”*

—Bill Snapp



### Journey of the Survivor

There will come a day then the tears of sorrow will flow into tears of remembrance and your heart will begin to heal.



The grieving will be interrupted by moments of joy and whispers of hope.



There will come a day when you will welcome the tears of remembrance As a rainbow of the soul, a turning of the tide, a promise of peace.

There will come a day, when you will begin to live forward, Finding your new normal and treasuring each tear.



BP USA Newsletter



## You Are My Sunshine



As a child, I learned to sing on road trips in the family car. We sang "She'll be Coming 'Round the Mountain", "Row, Row, Row Your Boat" and my favorite: You are my sunshine, my only sunshine, You make my happy when skies are gray. You'll never know, dear, how much I love you. Please, don't take my sunshine away. Since my son's death, whenever I hear this song, I mentally change the spelling to 'son-shine.' When he left, skies surely turned gray. Gray skies continue to visit me in random moments of grief to the point that at times, it's impossible to see the sun. And when summer brings sunny days, it breaks my heart that he can't be here with me to light up my life. Grief enhances our senses so that the absence of light allows us to perceive our need for light. A good example came one dark and dismal day as I sat reading, a part of me dwelling on my missing child. Ever so softly, warmth crept across my outstretched leg. I shot a glance in its direction and discovered a stream of golden sunshine. In my preoccupation, I hadn't noticed the parting clouds outside--the transformation from gloom to gleam. If I had not been sitting quietly, thinking of my child, I would have missed the gift--missed an opportunity to find joy in that brief moment when 'son-shine' paid an unexpected visit. What a blessed gift it is to remember my child with joy. There's a scientific reason that a sunny day brings some joy and energy to our lives. Bright light makes a difference to the brain chemistry. Lack of light causes a condition called Seasonal Affective Disorder. SAD doesn't occur only in the dark winter months. If you work the night shift or you spend all day in an office, wear sunglasses outside, spend your days off in a dimly lit home you may not be getting adequate light. All the more reason to grasp at every golden moment that comes our way. The true lifesavers in my grief journey are those small, surprising occurrences that often go unnoticed. When memories arrive on beams of joyous sunlight, I'm learning to take notice, to savor, then stockpile the simple pleasures that somehow appear in spite of heavy days. Sometimes light comes from deep within our hearts. Sometimes friends arrive with small rays of hope, guiding us through the darkest hours. Summer brings moonlit evenings, the flash of lightening across an endless sky, fireflies in a Mason jar, the beam of a flashlight piercing the darkness, yellow butterflies at the break of day; all reminders that our children were bright and full of life. We are on a dark journey. At the same time, we are on a righteous search for light, grasping at hope wherever we find it. When gray days return and winter seems endless, remember--it's not. As grief changes, we learn to survive the darkness, believing that light lies ahead. May sunshine bless you with small, precious moments of hope and joy in the coming summer days.

Carol Clum, TCF Medford, OR



## The Bitter Sweetness of Birthdays

Every day is a hard day without our child, sibling, or grandchild. Some days are extra painful because they mark events or emphasize the passage of time without them. Holidays, the coming of spring, ceremonial days in our family, and the anniversary date of their passing tend to feel heavier and carry extra pain.

The birthday of our brother, sister, child or grandchild is a bitter-sweet day for many of us. I just passed another birthday this week for my son, Connor. He would have turned 23, and this is the 9th time I've marked this day without him physically here. Most of us experience the anniversary date of our loved one's passing as very painful and difficult. Birthdays, however, straddle both pain and joy as we celebrate the precious life we were given, yet one we weren't able to keep.

What are some of the ways to honor their birthdays that increase the beautiful moments we remember and decrease the deprivation we feel? Helping others in a way that reflects your loved one can help shift your focus to gratitude and the good memories. If your child liked to play sports, you can collect donations of athletic equipment for a local school in need. Planting a tree or starting a garden is a representation of new life that can continue your brother or sister's impact and legacy. If music, art, or reading was a passion of your grandchild, you can volunteer to do this type of volunteer service on their birthday in honor of what they loved.

We started a tradition on Connor's birthday of doing random acts of kindness. Whether small or large, many people have continued this tradition over the years in their different communities. These acts of kindness warm our hearts as we pass more years without him physically, yet know kindness is extended in his name in so many places. I try to focus my energies during the day of his birth on celebrating the life I was blessed to receive. Although I never get through the day without the deep longing and sadness that accompany his absence, I'm able to experience more of the good memories and smiles when I do something positive in the world in his honor.

**Shari O'Loughlin**, CEO, The Compassionate Friends, *Connor's Mom and Patti's Sister*

## STANDING

People say  
 "Oh you are doing so well,  
 you are so strong,  
 you are an inspiration!"  
 We do not feel strong.  
 We feel shaken to the core,  
 Saddened beyond belief,  
 Pain beyond comprehension,  
 Forever changed.  
 What do they see that we can not see?  
 "That a horrible storm,  
 unexpectedly ripped through  
 our lives and we are  
 still standing"  
 They are amazed  
 We are paralyzed  
 Still Standing

In Loving Memory of Kyra,  
 Julie Short, TCF SE, IL

## There is a sacredness in tears.

They are not the mark of  
 weakness, but of power.  
 They speak more eloquently  
 than 10,000 tongues.  
 They are the messengers of  
 overwhelming grief,  
 of deep contrition and of  
 unspeakable love.

—Washington Irving

## MEETINGS

First Tuesday of each month

At 7:00pm in Room 224  
 General Classroom Building of FTCC

2817 Ft Bragg Road, Fayetteville

If you have questions contact Jennifer German  
 jojegerman@outlook.com or (910) 245-3177

*Hope isn't a place or a thing. Hope isn't the absence of pain, fear, or sadness. Hope is the possibility of renewed joy. It is the memory of love given and received. Hope is you and me and the person next to you and across the room, down the street and in your dreams."*

—Darcie D. Sims, Ph.D.

## Our Children & Siblings Remembered on Their Birthday's

*Each month some of our members face special but very painful days. We ask that you keep in your thoughts the parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles and siblings of the following children following children's:*

### July

Shaun Boswell July 4

Eli Boswell July 4

Za'nia Hunter July 4

Phillip Berry July 8

"DJ" McKenzie July 11

Joshua Jona July 12

Jeremy Melvin July 12

Carla Parker July 14

Justin Seifert July 17

Glenda Hudson July 18

Alison Thomas July 20

Gregory Trent July 23

Dominic Barnes-Mateo July 26

### August

Randy Lee Dalton August 3

Za'kai Hunter August 4

Nicholas Martinez August 6

Will Rivalland August 7

Archi Kagy August 7

Melba Ross August 19

Valencia Federick August 24



Justin Lopes August 26

Betsy Bloom August 27

Kayla Francis August 28

Grant Miles August 29

Leon Matthews August 31

### September

Emily Haddock September 5

Spencer Walden September 5

Dylan McKelvey September 6

Amelia Moody September 6

Querokee Velez September 8

Cody McLendon September 11

Tony Pantano September 17

Wayne Tyner, Jr. September 21

Stephen Dew September 23

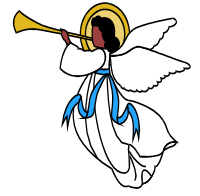
Timothy Bowman September 24

Sean Payne Jr. September 27





## Children & Siblings Remembered On Their Angel Date's



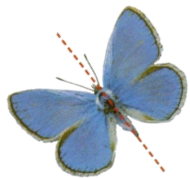
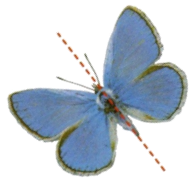
*Each month some of our members face special but very painful days. We ask that you keep in your thoughts the parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles and siblings of the following children.*

### July

Shaun Boswell July 4  
 Eli Boswell July 4  
 Allison Bennett July 7  
 Tony Pantano July 9  
 Benny Michael Traylor July 11  
 Justin Seifert July 11  
 Johnny Cole July 14  
 Justin Lopes July 15  
 Anthony "Brian" Smith July 18  
 Sean Payne, Jr. July 21  
 Nicholas Hayden July 22  
 Elijah Caddick July 26  
 Dominic Barnes-Mateo July 29

### August

Christopher Harris August 3  
 Renee Anderson August 3  
 Ricky Diaz August 3  
 James "Jack" C. J. South August 6  
 Will Rivalland August 7  
 Daniel "Adam" Clark August 8  
 Za'nia & Za'Kai Hunter August 8



Erran Zachary Dawson August 8

Joe Dan Rumley August 8

Gregory Trent August 8

James Campbell August 12

Crystal Dawn Jackson August 14

Ronald Hamilton Jr. August 15

Daniel McDonough August 15

Jimmy Wallace August 22

Betsy Bloom August 27

Jeremy Melvin August 28

Jeffrey George August 29

Pierce Matthews August 30

### September

Akiana Lopez-Sellas September 1

Amelia Moody September 6

Mikayla Watkins September 8

Malachi Matthew September 16

Emily Haddock September 21

Scott Tyree September 27

The Compassionate Friends  
Fayetteville Area Chapter  
703 Rosebud Court,  
Vass NC 28394  
Secretary/Treasurer



**The Compassionate Friends**  
Fayetteville Area Chapter  
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

Chapter Leader  
Cindy Tart .....(910)-391-0779

Newsletter Editor  
Jennifer German.....(910) 245-3177

Printing of the newsletter  
John German.....(910) 245-3177

Webmaster  
John German.....(910) 245-3177

**We're on the Web**  
[www.tcffayetteville.org](http://www.tcffayetteville.org)  
**And Facebook**

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Love Gifts

There is no charge for our newsletter, meetings, or lending library, and we depend solely on your contributions. Love gifts can be made in memory of your child, grandchild, or sibling. Your love gift will insure that all who need our newsletter, will receive it.

I wish to make a donation in memory of \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Death \_\_\_\_\_

Donated by \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

If you would like to make a donation please make checks payable to The Compassionate Friends,  
and mail to TCF Fayetteville Area Chapter, 703 Rosebud Court, Vass, NC 28394  
Please send form with check. **A donation is not required to submit items for the newsletter.**