



The Compassionate Friends Fayetteville Area Chapter



Volume 23, Issue 4

October 2019

COPING WITH OCTOBER

The coming of autumn with the beautiful colors of the leaves and their falling will bring different emotions to different families. Maybe your family had a tradition of driving through particularly scenic areas. Maybe the child you lost was the one who raked the leaves. Perhaps all of this will simply be a reminder that winter and a barren landscape are coming. Halloween is a favorite holiday for most children, but it can be hard for bereaved parents. This formerly innocent holiday, the yards decorated as graveyards with markers and ghosts and skeletons, the stores of unhappy spirits that must walk the earth, all have a completely different impact on us now. Many of us have opened the door to give out treats and been

faced with a costume so similar to one our child wore for a Halloween past that either we really want to pull aside the mask to see the face behind or we want to dream that this was one last visit from our precious child. Some parents have surviving children who still want to join in the fun – and, oh, how hard it is to “trick or treat” when you feel the victim of the ultimate “trick”. Stop and think – What can you do differently? For autumn and its beauties and chores, what routines can you change? Hire someone or ask a friend who has been offering to help and asking for specific tasks. Maybe you could do it together. For Halloween, take surviving children to a carnival (many schools and churches sponsor these). Or, if a carnival was an every year event, go to the zoo or go door-to-door this year. If you don’t have surviving children wanting to celebrate, maybe you can leave your house dark and go to a movie and skip the holiday. In

any event, planning ahead will help you get through a difficult time.

Tracy Stackhouse, BP/USA, Central Arkansas

We Made It Through the Summer

Pam Duke, TCF, Dallas, TX

We made it through the summer;
Another season has passed.
When I look back now,
I did not think I had the courage
to reach this point in time.

The worst may not yet be over,
but things seem better than yesterday.
I’ve realized it’s all right to wish for
you

Daily... and nightly...
It’s my prerogative as your parent

I do not have to look forward to the
seasons coming soon, but I will...
because I know it’s what
you would want me to do.

Just please know, I still love you
as though you were in our home.
That love will never die.

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A Note From The Editor

Our thanks to the two nursing students from FTCC last month for their presentation of the Comfort Bear Project at Cape Fear Valley Medical Center. A program directed at helping mothers and families who have experienced stillbirth. Our next few meetings will be dealing with how to survive the holidays. Read the information about the Candle Lighting Service on the next page and plan to come, bring family and friends. Do this for your child and do it for yourself. If you would like to help with the service by doing a reading or lighting a candle, please talk with Cindy Tart or myself.

Peace & Love, Jennifer German “Amy's mom”

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The Fayetteville Chapter of The Compassionate Friends

Memorial Candle Lighting Service

December 8, 2019 at 2 PM

**Fayetteville Community Church
2010 Middle River Loop
Fayetteville, NC 28312**

The service is open to bereaved families and friends who have experienced the death of a child at any age and from any cause. You are encouraged to bring picture or an item of remembrance for the memory table.

We will have refreshments after the service. Please bring your favorite refreshment (finger foods, deserts, etc.) to share.

To get to the church take I-95 N Bus/ US-301 N / N Eastern Blvd.

Take the first exit/ Middle Road

Turn right onto Middle Road

Turn right onto Middle Loop Road

Fayetteville Community Church is on the left

Please arrive early, the service will start at 2pm

For more information or questions or

To **volunteer** for a part in the program call

Cindy Tart at (910) 391-0779 or

Jennifer German at (910) 245-3177

Also

Be a part of The Compassionate Friends 21st annual Worldwide Candle Lighting

By lighting a candle where ever you are from 7 – 8 pm on December 9 and

help create a wave of light around the world

*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.

The Measure of a Mann

By Meredith Mann

Have you ever seen a movie where one of the main characters dies in the middle? Right as you are getting into the best part, after the introductions, when you feel like you know the characters and you've started, often subconsciously, to develop possible endings in your head for how things will go? It isn't common. If my life were a movie, it is just reaching its climax. The majority of main characters are already in the picture, and there is some idea of what path I am headed on and where life will take me. There are things to look forward to in my predicted ending, grad school, a wedding, a career and a family. All things I would do with my brother as he enjoyed the same successes. Well, that was the plan. My brother, Michael Waite Mann, was 25 when he passed away unexpectedly at the end of last February. Who wouldn't turn off that movie, who wants to watch something with such an abrupt transition from a comedic drama to a tragedy? This isn't a film I can turn off. It is my life and I have no choice other than to continue, so I will do the best I can and take comfort in knowing that he is always watching.

Michael was my co-star. Him being my big brother was a given, but him being my best friend and my confidant, that was an added bonus. I know that all of you know the feeling of trying with all of your being to describe your lost loved child, sibling or grandchild, and you will understand what I mean when I say that words simply fail. I cannot fit Michael onto this page. I cannot tell you what he means to me, or share all of the stories that I think can shine a bit of light onto how wonderful he was. But, maybe that's not such a bad thing. Maybe the fact that I can't describe him, that I can't put it into words, is a testament to how truly amazing he was and how special our relationship was. So as for Michael, I will leave it at that. He was an amazing individual, someone I looked up to so greatly, someone who's every word and opinion I cherished, someone with whom I shared an indescribable bond, and someone who I am incredibly blessed to call my big brother.

Since Michael passed, so many people have told me that they've never known siblings as close as Michael and I, and some have asked me how we got so close. I've spent some time thinking about that question. It wasn't because we were so similar, because we have always been very different. It wasn't because we always got along, and it didn't mean we didn't fight growing up. It is a direct reflection of what phenomenal parents we have.

As different as Michael and I were, one common thread is that we have always known how fortunate we are to have the parents that we do. Michael and I wouldn't have known the value of such support and consideration if they had not led by example – at every meet, every game, calling just to say hi and see how things were going. My parents continue to lead by example. They are steadfast in their ways of honoring Michael, pushing through, carrying each other and me.

To my parents: when you look at me and wish I didn't hurt like I do – don't. That would mean that Michael and I wouldn't have had the relationship that we did. That relationship was the most amazing gift in the world. The depth of my grief is one measure of the man Michael was. The strength that I have comes from you. Thank you for all that you do and for keeping me going in the worst days of my life. I am so grateful to have the two of you and know that Michael would be proud of us for sticking together, though he would expect nothing less.

People say I am early in my grief to be taking on the task of newsletter editor, and I am, but Michael encouraged me in all that I did, and I know that his heart would break at the thought of me not challenging myself to accomplish more. So on the hardest days I keep pushing, for him. Knowing I'm living with two hearts means I will live this life with twice the passion, twice the courage and twice the love. Twice the drive, twice the motivation and twice the compassion will allow me to accomplish twice the dreams, his and mine, and I will do it all in his honor. I hope he enjoys the show.

I hope that he felt it when I looked at him like he was my

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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.

Effie McPhail in memory of her daughter Erica Graham

Vickie Bowles in memory of her son Bryan Bowles

Ben and Christina Traylor in memory of their son Benny Michael Traylor

Shelly Sweat in memory of her son Darrel Sweat

Marti Hooks in memory of her son Brandon Huston

John and Jennifer German in memory of their daughter Amy Elizabeth German

If you wish to make a donation or a love gift, please make checks payable to The Compassionate Friends, and mail to TCF Fayetteville Area Chapter, 703 Rosebud Court, Vass, NC 28394. Please include the name of the child, love one, or friend that you wish the donation to be made in memory or honor of.



The Compassionate Friends
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

The National Office of The Compassionate Friends

2301 NE Savannah Rd. #700
Jensen Beach, FL 34957

Web Site: www.compassionatefriends.org Toll free: 877-969-0010

Regional Coordinator for the Fayetteville Area Chapter of TCF

Donna & Ralph Goodrich
704-822-4503 or iluvu2lauren@gmail.com

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Because

Beth Oldani, TCF, Arlington Heights, IL

Because you can't feel me,
 doesn't mean I'm not there.
 Because you can't see me,
 doesn't mean I'm not near.
 Because you can't hear me,
 doesn't mean I don't speak.
 Because you can't touch me,
 doesn't mean I'm out of reach.
 Because I am dead,
 doesn't mean I am gone.

**Autumn**

Lily de Lauder, TCF Van Nuys, CA

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.

**HOPE**

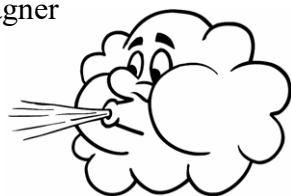
It is the gift of hope which reigns supreme in the attributes of The Compassionate Friends. Hope that all is not lost. Hope that life can still be worth living and meaningful. Hope that the pain of loss will become less acute And, above all else, the hope that we do not walk alone, that we are understood. The gift of hope is the greatest gift that we can give to those who mourn.

- Rev. Simon Stephens, TCF Founder

**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

**MEETINGS**

First Tuesday of each month at 7:00 pm
 meetings will be held in room 210 of the General
 Class Building at Fayetteville Technical Community
 College. 2817 Ft. Bragg Road, Fayetteville, NC
 28303 (across the street from the Barbeque Hut)
 Unless otherwise posted on our website.

If there are changes for any reason, meeting
 information will be posted on our website
www.tcffayetteville.org

Questions
 Contact: Cindy Tart at (910) 391-0779 or
flossiemay4771@gmail.com

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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.

THANKSGIVING OF LIFE

Only a month after Daniel's death, Thanksgiving arrived full of symbols of plentiful harvest and thankfulness while we felt bereft of everything. We fled to Maryland. There, among the many around my sister's table, Daniel's empty place stood out less starkly than at home. Love and family pressed around to hold back the despair and the loneliness. Though we could not feel the spirit of Thanksgiving, we did appreciate the support and caring of our family. We marveled that any positive feelings were able to emerge.

Upon our return to New Jersey, we were greeted by a neighbor flushed with surprise and excitement. During our absence Daniel's dog, Puffy, had given birth to three puppies, in her powder room! Our caring neighbor served as mid-wife throughout the night of their birth, alternately crying for the loss of Daniel and laughing with the joy of new life.

That Thanksgiving, eleven years ago, held many special messages for us. Messages of love, family, neighbors, and giving. Greatest of all was the message of life. Though we went away, we could not flee the holiday nor the pain of separation; we could not run from life. It was waiting for us at my sister's. It was waiting for us upon our return.

Yet, a long time passed before we could accept living again. Puffy's puppies, however, were the beginning. As they nibbled our fingers or wet the carpet, they caused us to care about their antics. Their damp noses and velvet ears helped us to interact with the community through searching for their adoptive families. We also practiced letting go as each puppy left.

For us, holidays are again happy occasions for the same reason they were originally difficult. Holidays are days set aside for love, togetherness, sharing, and families. The death of a child turns those wonderful aspects of holidays into pain. What we discovered that Thanksgiving long ago is that even with the pain comes the beginning of healing from the love, togetherness, sharing, and families that holidays include. So, change your routine or surroundings this Thanksgiving, but do not try to flee from life. Life is the pathway to recovery. Allow yourself the reassurance of feeling life's healing power this holiday.

Happy Thanksgiving!

Marcia F. Alig



*“We remember our children
 with love and gratitude.
 We feel sadness because
 we miss their faces,
 their voices and their smiles.
 But we do not forget.”*

OCTOBER 2019

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, and siblings of the following children's:

October

Bryan Bowles October 1

Jimmy Wallace October 2

James Page October 4

Nicholas Simmons October 8

Sharnale DeMar Thompson October 8

Mark Draughon October 15

Kevin Harlan October 15

Carissa Gillis October 18

Ryan Malcom October 20

November

Preston Riley November 1

Ryan Stevens November 5

Carolyn Kapperman November 7

Elijah Caddick November 8

Baby Davis November 9

Renee Anderson November 11

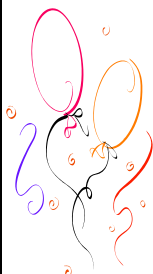
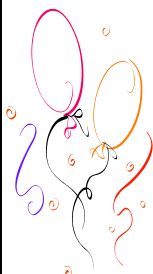
Omar Sharaf November 11

Cameron "Cameo" Booher November 12

Keith Parker November 12

Jeffrey George November 13

Charles Cook November 14



Zackery Hollister November 14

Johnny Cole November 15

Brianne Stewary-Goodrich November 18

Lamont Saffore November 21

Lawrence Boivin November 24

Brittney Stokes November 24

Kristen Wactor November 30

Matthew Guin November 30

December

Joe Konen December 1

Pam Tatum December 5

Crystal Dawn Jackson December 5

Zach Grullon December 6

Tammy Owens December 7

Kendra "Candy" Seay December 8

Christine Geier December 9

Shawn Leigh Watkins December 15

Ricky Diaz December 15

Derrell Lee Dean December 16

Hope Parker December 19

Nickolas Ross Hayden December 25

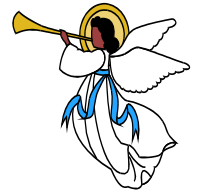
RaMael McArthur December 28

Lexi Minyon December 31

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Our 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, and siblings of the following children's:

October

Melba Ross October 1

James Page October 5

Nicholas Martinez October 8

Carla Parker October 9

Valencia Fredrick October 10

Kirsten Wactor October 10

Pam Tatum October 11

Brittney Stokes October 19

Ralph Lanier October 20

Archie Kagy October 21

Johnathan "JD" McKenzie October 21

Christopher Ortega October 26

November

Kyle Harris November 6

Christopher Hrvoj November 7

Talisha Morris November 8

Kendra "Candy" Seay November 8

Baby Davis November 9

Joe Konen November 9

Patrick "Pat" Shea November 14



Joshua Gurierrez November 12

Zackery Hollister November 14

Lawrence Boivin November 15

Amy Elizabeth German November 16

Joshua Jona November 16

Brandon Huston November 17

Christine Geier November 20

Brianne Stewart-Goodrich November 22

Kylon "Kyle" Smith November 30

December

Joseph Barnes December 1

Andrew Beutelspacher December 2

Kayla Francis December 10

Stephen Dew December 12

Cameron Booher December 16

Ryan Malcom December 19

Grant Miles December 22

Preston Riley December 23

Ryan Stevens December 30

What the caterpillar thinks is the end of the world, the butterfly knows is only the beginning.

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HANDLING THE HOLIDAYS

The following guidelines are shared in the hope that they will be helpful to you in thinking about and planning for the holidays ahead and other special family times throughout the year. They were prepared by Shirley Melin of The Compassionate Friends, Fox Valley Chapter, Aurora, IL with some additions from the Montgomery AL Chapter and from the booklet "Handling the Holidays," edited by Bruce Conley, a funeral director in Elburn, IL and a member of the Advisory Board of the Fox Valley Chapter. We are most grateful to all of these people for sharing with us.

Holidays, birthdays, and other special days are usually times for family gatherings and celebrations. When we come together for the first time after the death of our child, it can be really difficult. Our families try to protect us in the best way they can, but it can still hurt. How can we cope? How can we as grieving parents handle these times in a realistic and effective way? First, acknowledge and accept your feelings. Tears, depression, and loneliness are all natural reactions to a loss, months, even a year or more after the loss. At the same time, do not feel as though you are betraying your child if you are able to enjoy some of the festivities. If the thought of preparing for these special days seems overwhelming, one helpful first step may be to make a list of things to be done in planning for the holiday. Have a family conference and together decide what is really important: What traditions do you want to carry on? What would some members find meaningful, or what things might be too painful? What changes, if any, would you want to make? Consider whether a task can be shared, whether someone else can take it on, or whether it should be eliminated. Whatever decisions are reached, this sharing can demonstrate recognition and respect for each person's values. In setting priorities, good guidelines to use are: Would the holiday or special day be the same without it? What gave meaning to our holidays in the past? If you have family traditions, decide together whether you want to carry them on this year or if this is a good time to begin new ones. Consider and discuss ways of keeping traditions while trying to lessen the pain of loss, perhaps by making some changes in the usual way of doing things. Remember that although we may decide to do some things differently this year, we can decide to return to earlier customs another year if we wish. It is important to realize that while holidays and special days are traditionally a time of festivity, they can also be a time of frantic busyness and resultant fatigue. Don't set unrealistic expectations for yourself to be joyful. As grieving persons we must recognize that we may simply be unable to function at our usual pace. We may need to break things down into smaller, more manageable chunks, goals we can achieve. Fatigue can be deadly and lead to feelings of depression under the best of circumstances. Don't overextend, don't overcommit. Eliminate the unnecessary and reduce the pressure on yourself and others. By talking over what is really important with family members, priorities can be set, tasks shared, and plans made to accomplish those things considered essential. Decide what you can handle comfortably and let your needs be known to friends and relatives. If your faith has been an important part of your life, allow time for its expression during these holidays and special days. If it has not, this may be a fitting time to approach the clergy person or church of your choice. In either case, you may find that by enriching and deepening your religious experience, you have added a new dimension to your life. Our lives have changed. Our holidays will be different. It's not a choice of pain or no pain, but how we manage the pain we feel. The important thing to remember is to do what is comfortable for you and your family. It may help to know that those of us who have been through these holidays and special days before have found that anticipation is frequently worse than the day itself



The Compassionate Friends
Fayetteville Area Chapter
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Vass NC 28394



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

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We're on the Web
www.tcffayetteville.org

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Love Gifts

Love gifts are tax-deductible donations made to the Fayetteville Area Chapter of TCF in memory of your beloved child, sibling, grandchild or loved one. There is no charge for our newsletter, meetings, or lending library, and we depend solely on your contributions. We sincerely appreciate your support. 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 _____

Phone Number _____

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.**