

### **Our Mission Statement:**

When a child dies, at any age, the family suffers intense pain and may feel hopeless and isolated. The Compassionate Friends provides highly personal comfort, hope, and support to every family experiencing the death of a son or a daughter, a brother or a sister, or a grandchild, and helps others better assist the grieving family.



### **The Grief Olympics**

Perhaps many of you just wrapped up watching the Olympics in Tokyo during the past 2 weeks. I remember watching it growing up as a youngster but this was before Cable TV and only the 3 major networks to choose from as far as television programming. When thinking about a topic for the newsletter, Mickey mentioned the Olympics might somehow tie in to my article. She recounted the many stories of the athletes struggles to get where they are today. The long grueling hours of training and sacrifice by them and their families along with some of their own personal stories. One athlete was adopted by a gay man when just a few years ago, that was unthinkable in our society. Another athlete has a Green Bay connection, her father drives for Schneider National.

We as bereaved parents should all be awarded Gold medals for all the heart break and pain and suffering that we have and will continue to endure for the rest of our lives. Many Olympic events can be tied into our grief journey. One event that comes to mind is the Marathon, a 26.2 mile run. Our grief journey is not a 100 or 200 meter sprint, though we sometimes wish, we could race to the end of our grief. Grief can be a long grueling journey that unfortunately we can not train for, there are twists and curves on our journey and many times we stumble and fall. The high hurdles are another event. Watching the athletes jump the hurdles with timing and precision but sometimes their timing is thrown off and they stumble and fall, similar to what happens to us. But no matter what, they pick themselves up and finish the race, just as we know we must pick ourselves up and continue somehow or someway.

In gymnastics, there is the balance beam, that narrow beam that we walk daily hoping not to slip and fall and have to pick ourselves up and start all over. Many of the sports are individual events and our grief is individual to each one of us. But there are team sports that rely on teammates like volleyball, basketball and the relay races. These teammates are our families and friends that are there to offer comfort and support and to pick us up when we are having a bad day. But in any case, we are all gold medalists as we struggle daily carrying the grief that goes with losing a child, that unfortunately we could not nor were we provided any training for as we continue our grief journey for the rest of our lives.

In Peaceful Sadness, Melissa and Emily's Mom and Dad

Mickey and Steve

### **The Green Bay Chapter of The Compassionate Friends**

meets the third Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m.  
at First United Methodist Church, 501 Howe Street, Green Bay.

*(Enter the parking lot off Monroe at Doty)*

**For further information contact:**

**Main Number: 920-370-3858**

*Sue DeLong, Remembering our Children*

*Mickey Schmeisser, Chapter Leader/Newsletter Editor*

*Steve Schmeisser, Treasurer*

*Sue Van Straten, Remembering our Children*

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Website: [compassionatefriendsgreenbay.org](http://compassionatefriendsgreenbay.org)

### **Monthly Support Group**

Tuesday, October 19, 2021 6 p.m.

What To Do With Your Child's Belongings

Tuesday, November 16, 2021 6 p.m.

DVD – Handling the Holidays

Tuesday, December 21, 2021 6 p.m.

“Holiday Memories to Share” - Can Be A Story Or An Item to Share



## My Witch and My Angel

Mark Clark  
TCF Sugarland, TX  
In Memory of Max



For Zoë Halloween is just about as good as it gets. Not much in my daughter's world beats candy, costumes, friends, make-up, and staying up late even on a school night. Life at age six can be gloriously simple.

But I don't know much of what my son Max thought of Halloween. When he died at age two, he only had one real "trick-or-treat" to his credit. That year—1987—I dressed him in a pumpkin costume and we traipsed to a few neighbors. I took far too many pictures. Max was a fiend for sweets and with the candy ration lifted for the evening, he had to be living well.

I imagine that year would have been his last dressed as a mommy-pleasing pumpkin. At three or four I knew he would demand Ninja or pirate costumes; I would have laughingly bought them and maybe even the plastic sword. I would have let him paint grotesque stitches across his nose and wear fangs that glowed in the dark.

Instead, this is Zoë's year to cast aside the girly version of Max's pumpkin cap. The beloved pink princess frills and red nail polish are being exchanged for a witch hat and black glue-on fingernails sharpened into talons. For the first time, she wants to be Scary and Ugly. With mahogany lipstick and smoky eyes, she will fly out the door in less than a month to cross one more threshold that her brother did not.

I can see the evening now. As I assemble face paints on the counter, I will take a deep breath—the same one I take every year at every holiday and milestone. With my unsteady hand I will design witchy warts and create wrinkles on Zoë's perfect face. I will declare her the Scariest and Ugliest of All.

But as I help my little witch into her costume, I know my eyes will fill with tears. I will think about the years that were

supposed to be: a young boy as Dracula, a 13 year-old teen in baggy clothes escorting his little witch-sister down the block. Who would he be now, the toddler we knew, the boy we lost? What would our life be like if the scary things were still just make-believe?

Zoë will see my tears, but she won't be alarmed: in our family's emotional lexicon, sad and happy often go together and crying is as OK as laughing. She will ask me why I'm sad and I will tell her the truth: I am thinking about Max and wishing he could be here.

And although she is now the mean and fierce Witch Zoë, she will nod her head with understanding. Her plastic nails will lightly graze my arm as she reaches to pat me. Suddenly the frown on her face will disappear and she repeats what has become her annual Halloween revelation: "Mommy, it's OK. Don't forget that Max can go 'trick-or-treat' as an angel." She describes a glittering figure, luminous wings aflutter, giant treat bag at the ready. I smile at the idea and the moment passes.

Later, I light the candle in the pumpkin and watch Zoë skip next door to show off her costume. She heads up the sidewalk, stopping halfway to turn and wave to me. She makes her scariest face and yells, "Mom—take my picture!" I raise my camera and look through the viewfinder. As the flash glows briefly in the dusk, I see a beautiful angel standing in the shadows beside her. But this angel doesn't wear white and his wings have been clipped. I am sure he never had a golden halo. He is a small chubby boy with a jack-o-lantern face on his tummy and chocolate on his fingers. It is 1987 and he is having a really great Halloween.

Just like his sister.

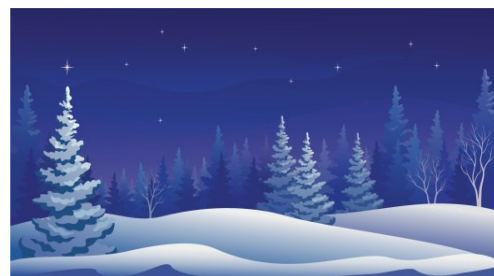


**It is in that moment when we share our thoughts with a fellow griever and they nod, smile and understand that we know that we are not alone.**

**The Grief Tool Box**

# Christmas Without My Child

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



Last night we held our Compassionate Friends chapter meeting for November: the topic was Holidays and Grief. We met in small groups to discuss how we are going to get through this most difficult of times. While we found no single answer, we did make some discoveries about ourselves. We also found some basic ways to take control of our lives.

In our group of eleven were several newly bereaved parents. Deep sorrow and anxiety were apparent in each face as we opened the dialogue—a discussion of the holiday season without their children. This anxiety and deep sorrow immediately became mine; I am that parent, I am still on the first leg of what may be a long journey without my child. Their tears were mine as we talked.

As the discussion progressed, I could see a bit of each parent's tension slowly release. I felt as if I could read their minds: give me some answers, tell me I will survive this, tell me how you did it. The answers were all different; the reassurances of parents who had lost their child and survived that first heartbreaking holiday were there. Some of the answers came from the newly bereaved as they explored their inner feelings.

We found consensus on one important factor: we must give ourselves permission to do what makes us most comfortable. We are not the caretakers to the world right now; we must take care of ourselves. If established traditions bother us, then we must turn to something else. What is the point of pouring salt into this open wound? Perhaps next year or the year after, when the wound is not so fresh, we will want to return to former traditions. Perhaps not.

Through tears and some light laughter, we realized that we are not invincible. We are not responsible for the happiness of friends and extended family. We do not have to meet the expectations of others. We must accept our emotional limitations and the psychological and physical toll that grief takes on us. We must slow down and change our perspective. We must do what is right for us, especially during the holidays.

Most of those who had been through at least one holiday season without their child felt that making changes for the first year or two was a positive step forward. We found that talking honestly with our family about our feel-

ings might make them feel temporarily uncomfortable but it did clear the air about expectations. We agreed that limiting our casual social relationships negated the need to make explanations regarding our lack of interest in holiday celebrations.

By “dropping out” we also eliminated obligations in many areas. This gives us the freedom to choose simplicity over stress, essentials over hassles and flexibility over anxiety. This gives us the opportunity to live in the moment, go where our emotions take us and listen to our hearts.

While we all agreed that the holidays are overwhelming for parents whose children have died, we also agreed that we are each individuals and we each perceive the world differently. Some of us want and need the old traditions during the holiday season. Some of us need to be with people who are not part of our grieving process. Others among us felt that solitude and simplicity were the answer.

The answer to the question of how we get through the holidays is found within each one of us. We each have our own truth. The challenge, we decided, is to honor that truth and hold the line against external pressures. A few of our newly bereaved parents could barely choke out a word or two. Others were more vocal. While grief consumes some of us for many, many years, others appear to “go with the flow” of life very early in their grief. What feels right for one of us may be abhorrent to someone else.

One universal truth did emerge from our conversations: we miss our beautiful children and love them as deeply as when they walked beside us. We live in this purgatory each day of the year, but during the holidays it seems most oppressive. Our children have been torn from our lives forever. Daily life and special traditions will always reflect the deep void that has become our reality. We need our Compassionate Friends at the holiday season. We need to know that others have walked this road, have lived this nightmare and have managed to survive. We each continue to rediscover hope through our Compassionate Friends. And in finding that hope we have given and received the purest gift of the season: the possibility of peace.

## Remembering our Children

During the three months that each newsletter covers, we include your child's birthday and the anniversary of your child's death — if we know those dates. Based upon TCF National policy, we will not print the year of your child's birth or death.

### BIRTHDAYS

<b>Mark Shafer</b> (son of Bruce & Pat Shafer)	10/01	<b>Craig St. John</b> (son of Debra St. John)	11/02
<b>Kara Rojas-Spice</b> (daughter of Jerry & Amy Spice)	10/03	<b>Matthew Skenadore</b> (son of Jude Skenadore)	11/05
<b>Michael Anderson</b> (son of Ron & Lori Anderson)	10/04	<b>Josh Kimes</b> (son of Susan Kimes)	11/06
<b>Josh Gilson</b> (son of Ron & Cindy Gilson)	10/04	<b>Chad Olson</b> (son of Brenda Olson)	11/07
<b>Allen O'Harrow</b> (son of Cal & Lois O'Harrow)	10/04	<b>Nick Baugnet</b> (son of DeeDee & Joe Baugnet)	11/10
<b>Corey Jonet</b> (son of Dan & Lisa Jonet)	10/09	<b>Debi Schultz</b> (daughter of Barbara Fitzpatrick)	11/12
<b>Seth Philhower</b> (son of Shaun & Stacy Philhower)	10/09	<b>Hunter Temme</b> (son of Lisa Temme)	11/13
<b>Colton Steinhorst</b> (son of Tara Steinhorst)	10/09	<b>Ryan Patrick Bergevin</b> (son of Randy Bergevin & Barbara Vandebusch)	11/16
<b>Matthew Arnold</b> (son of Carrie & Bob Arnold)	10/10	<b>Ryan Rockstroh</b> (son of Molly Rockstroh)	11/16
<b>Noah Thomas Campbell</b> (son of Kelli & Craig Campbell)	10/10	<b>Jillian Faymonville</b> (daughter of Louise Faymonville)	11/17
<b>Chad Seitzer</b> (son of Sandi & Fred Seitzer)	10/10	<b>Karson Fenlon</b> (son of Jennifer & Donald Fenlon, grandson of Jan Hendricks)	11/17
<b>Benjamin Edinger</b> (son of Rosanna Scannell)	10/15	<b>Zander Varga Schenzel</b> (grandson of Nancy Varga)	11/17
<b>Jack Natzke</b> (son of Jason and Renee Natzke)	10/16	<b>Dane Cole</b> (son of Don & Karol Cole)	11/18
<b>Taylor Dale Postoak</b> (son of Kathleen Postoak)	10/17	<b>Dillon J. Mueller</b> (son of George and Angel Mueller)	11/18
<b>Lailah Faith Pouwels</b> (daughter of Ed & Carrie Pouwels)	10/20	<b>Amber Mastey</b> (daughter of Brett & Amanda Mastey)	11/25
<b>Tara Beilke</b> (daughter of Chuck & Judy Dams)	10/22	<b>Jimmy Wanner Jr.</b> (son of Pam & Keith Blondeim)	11/25
<b>Evan Van Lanen</b> (son of Dan & Peg Van Lanen)	10/22	<b>Michael Kirst</b> (son of Kris Kirst)	11/27
<b>Van Jarchow</b> (son of Mike & Dixie Jarchow)	10/26	<b>Joe Hinton</b> (son of Tom & Kathy Hinton)	11/28
<b>Shane Hopfensperger</b> (son of Mike & Joann Hopfensperger)	10/28	<b>Federico Abarca</b> (son of Concepcion Melgar)	11/29
<b>Troy Milan</b> (son of Pam Milan)	10/28	<b>Amanda Rose Skar</b> (daughter of Wayne & Kim Skar)	11/29
<b>Richard Allen Zey</b> (son of Tina Zey)	10/28	<b>Shane Lambert</b> (son of Kim Lambert, grandson of Maria Lambert)	11/30
<b>Jaysen Calkins</b> (son of Kate Calkins)	10/30	<b>Chris Krueger</b> (son of Cheryl Krueger)	12/05
<b>Thea L Jacques</b> (daughter of Sally Martin)	11/01	<b>Crystal (Falish) Peterson</b> (daughter of Steve & Darlene Enderby)	12/06
<b>Cassandra LeMere-Zeller</b> (daughter of Donald & Judith LeMere)	11/01	<b>Danielle Deda</b> (daughter of Noel & Sally Deda)	12/07
<b>Jessica Lindberg</b> (daughter of Dana Ewald)	11/02		

<b>Tara Reetz</b> (daughter of Daniel & Jean Reetz)	<b>12/08</b>	<b>Andrea Eve Wirth</b> (daughter of Thomas and Angela Wirth)	<b>12/27</b>
<b>Travis Stelzer</b> (son of Don & Pam Stelzer)	<b>12/13</b>	<b>Nathan Axelrod</b> (son of Johanna Axelrod)	<b>12/28</b>
<b>Jessica Demo</b> (daughter of Sheila & Chuck Henrichs)	<b>12/16</b>	<b>Tom Manning</b> (son of Peggy Manning)	<b>12/29</b>
<b>Joseph Jacques</b> (son-in-law of Pat Wojcik)	<b>12/17</b>	<b>Marjie Duerr</b> (daughter of Linda Duerr)	<b>12/31</b>
<b>Amy Schaut</b> (daughter of Ron & Linda Gerbers)	<b>12/20</b>	<b>Darrian Seppanen</b> (daughter of Janet Deterville)	<b>12/31</b>
<b>Jeremy DeMille</b> (son of Marysue Gerondale)	<b>12/23</b>		

## ANNIVERSARIES

<b>Jacob Engel</b> (son of Billie Jo Engel)	<b>10/2</b>	<b>Ryan Rockstroh</b> (son of Molly Rockstroh)	<b>10/27</b>
<b>Matthew Kiefer</b> (son of Mary Jo Hempel)	<b>10/4</b>	<b>Jeffery Skenadore</b> (son of Jude Skenadore)	<b>10/29</b>
<b>Dillon J. Mueller</b> (son of George and Angel Mueller)	<b>10/4</b>	<b>Aidan Hammer Fry</b> (son of Linda Hammer & Megan Fry)	<b>11/01</b>
<b>Caitlin Van Duyse</b> (daughter of Brenda VanDuyse)	<b>10/4</b>	<b>Steve Knaus</b> (son of Luke & Shirley Knaus)	<b>11/01</b>
<b>Justin Banaszynski</b> (son of Donna Baranczyk)	<b>10/5</b>	<b>Karen Mary Schley</b> (daughter of Jon & Ann Schley)	<b>11/01</b>
<b>Brandon Blue</b> (son of Rondell & Barb Blue)	<b>10/8</b>	<b>Jeffrey Triatik</b> (son of Carol Triatik)	<b>11/01</b>
<b>Danielle Deda</b> (daughter of Noel & Sally Deda)	<b>10/9</b>	<b>Lance Vlies</b> (son of Wendy Vlies)	<b>11/01</b>
<b>Seth Philhower</b> (son of Shaun & Stacy Philhower)	<b>10/9</b>	<b>Joel Bagneski</b> (son of Bill & Kelly Bagneski)	<b>11/02</b>
<b>Jason Ison</b> (son of Rene Ison)	<b>10/10</b>	<b>Jason Banaszynski</b> (son of Donna Baranczyk - Pagel)	<b>11/06</b>
<b>George Stoneburner</b> (son of Chuck & Judy Dams)	<b>10/10</b>	<b>Cody Green</b> (son of Dan and Gwen Green)	<b>11/06</b>
<b>Wendy Jacques</b> (daughter of Sally Martin)	<b>10/12</b>	<b>Andy Haroldson</b> (son of Ralph & Jean Haroldson)	<b>11/06</b>
<b>Jaysen Calkins</b> (son of Kate Calkins)	<b>10/16</b>	<b>Jack Clusman</b> (son of Jessica and Tim Clusman)	<b>11/07</b>
<b>Kelby Bagneski</b> (daughter of Bill & Kelly Bagneski)	<b>10/19</b>	<b>Marjie Duerr</b> (daughter of Linda Duerr)	<b>11/07</b>
<b>Jessica Lindberg</b> (daughter of Dana Ewald)	<b>10/20</b>	<b>Ryan Brunner</b> (son of Bill & Sue Brunner)	<b>11/08</b>
<b>Lailah Faith Pouwels</b> (daughter of Carrie & Ed Pouwels)	<b>10/20</b>	<b>Todd Inman</b> (son of Kathie Inman)	<b>11/10</b>
<b>Jami Daigneault</b> (daughter of Penny & Armand Daigneault)	<b>10/22</b>	<b>Mariah Early</b> (daughter of Melissa Early)	<b>11/17</b>
<b>Ryan Bader</b> (son of Cheryl & Mark Bader)	<b>10/24</b>	<b>Todd Konop</b> (son of Dorothy & Tom Konop)	<b>11/17</b>
<b>Andrew Sorensen</b> (son of Wendy Sorensen)	<b>10/24</b>	<b>Shane Lambert</b> (son of Kim Lambert, grandson of Maria Lambert)	<b>11/17</b>
<b>Jeffrey Van Lieshout</b> (son of Dave & Connie Van Lieshout)	<b>10/24</b>	<b>Joseph Adams</b> (son of Cheryl Skenadore)	<b>11/18</b>
<b>Doug Cole</b> (son of Don & Karol Cole)	<b>10/25</b>	<b>Tami (Sam) Cornelius</b> (daughter of Brenda Cornelius)	<b>11/18</b>
<b>Gary Glebke</b> (son of Joyce Glebke)	<b>10/25</b>	<b>Tara Reetz</b> (daughter of Daniel & Jean Reetz)	<b>11/18</b>
<b>Jacqueline Evers</b> (daughter of Joe and Alice Evers)	<b>10/27</b>	<b>Ella Fickett</b> (daughter of Mindy Meisnest)	<b>11/18</b>

<b>Alex Wolf</b> (son of Keith Wolf)	<b>11/20</b>	<b>Darrian Seppanen</b> (daughter of Janet Deterville)	<b>12/15</b>
<b>George Mostek</b> (son of Jim & Debbie Mostek)	<b>11/21</b>	<b>Aaron Lison</b> (son of Adele Coopmans)	<b>12/18</b>
<b>Jessica Demo</b> (daughter of Sheila & Chuck Henrichs)	<b>11/23</b>	<b>Joe Hinton</b> (son of Tom & Kathy Hinton)	<b>12/20</b>
<b>Benjamin Edinger</b> (son of Rosanna Scannell)	<b>11/23</b>	<b>Stephen DeBroux</b> (son of Matt & Jean DeBroux)	<b>12/21</b>
<b>Kelli King</b> (daughter of Joe King)	<b>11/26</b>	<b>Timmy Parent</b> (son of Steven & Cindy Parent)	<b>12/26</b>
<b>Lance Steffens</b> (son of LouAnn Steffens)	<b>11/29</b>	<b>Matt Pockrandt</b> (son of Margaret LeRoy)	<b>12/26</b>
<b>Nicole Kowalkowski</b> (daughter of Sharon & Roman Kowalkowski)	<b>12/01</b>	<b>Thea L Jacques</b> (daughter of Sally Martin)	<b>12/27</b>
<b>Jacob Peters</b> (son of Jerry & Natalie Peters)	<b>12/01</b>	<b>Richard Allen Zey</b> (son of Tina Zey)	<b>12/28</b>
<b>Paul Stone</b> (son of Joan Stone)	<b>12/01</b>	<b>Dana Kapla</b> (daughter of Bob Kapla)	<b>12/29</b>
<b>Mylisa Klapatch</b> (daughter of Dennis Klapatch & Tamara Walker)	<b>12/02</b>	<b>Cassandra LeMere-Zeller</b> (daughter of Donald & Judith LeMere)	<b>12/29</b>
<b>Ross Ambrosius</b> (son of Melissa & Rob Ambrosius)	<b>12/09</b>	<b>Christopher Voght</b> (son of Tammy Viegut & Timm Gay)	<b>12/29</b>
<b>Brandon Scheider</b> (son of Deb Scheider)	<b>12/10</b>	<b>Ryan Jozwiak</b> (son of Lenee & Eddie Jozwiak)	<b>12/30</b>
<b>Jason Kurey</b> (son of Deb Kurey)	<b>12/11</b>	<b>Joey Wesolowski</b> (son of Jennifer Heller & John Wesolowski)	<b>12/30</b>
<b>Drew Stamsta</b> (son of Lynn Stamsta)	<b>12/13</b>	<b>Kevin Betker</b> (son of Roy "Pete" & Renee Betker)	<b>12/31</b>
<b>Adam Lee Schultz</b> (son of Stan & Deb Schultz)	<b>12/15</b>		

Live through the hurt...so that joy can return to warm your heart!  
This is the season of light, for it is the season  
when we remember that once we loved and were loved.  
And that is the greatest light and memory of all.

Darcie Sims



## ANNOUNCEMENTS, COMMENTS, & MISC.

### Calendar of Events 2021

October 19: What To Do With Your Child's Belongings  
November 16: DVD - Handling The Holidays  
December 12: Candle Lighting at 1 pm  
December 21: Holiday Memories to Share - Can Be A Story Or An Item to Share

### Please Visit Our Site At:

[compassionatefriendsgreenbay.org](http://compassionatefriendsgreenbay.org)

All sorts of goodies are included:

- \*Past Newsletters
- \*Calendar of Events
- \*Articles
- \*Online Donations

### Do you want to Share ??

Do you want to share a picture and/or story of your child? Would you like to write an article about how you're feeling? If you would like to submit a post for our newsletter, we would love to hear from you. We only ask that you remember copyright when submitting.



★ Please note:

If area schools are closed,  
due to inclement weather, we will cancel  
our scheduled meeting

### Candles in the Night

Candles flame in darkness,  
flicker, steadily glow,  
bringing light from shadows  
and help to soothe me so.  
My daughter, like the candles,  
gave my life true light.  
I use the candle's beacon  
to connect us in the night.  
As I light the candles,  
my wish and my request  
is that she'll see my signal  
and know my love's expressed.  
As her light joins my lights,  
our worlds touch and flame.  
As I snuff out the candles,  
I softly say her name.

Genesse Bourdeau Gentry

### Love gifts were recently given by:

Ken and Mary Gehm, in memory of Jared Gehm  
Joyce E. Glebke, in memory of Gary and Roberta Glebke  
Tom and Dorothy Konop, in memory of Todd Konop  
Michael and Dawn Nieft, in memory of Tayler Nieft  
Todd and Sandy Scheffen, in memory of Sam Compton  
Steve and Mickey Schmeisser, in memory of Melissa and Emily Schmeisser  
Pam K. Vogels, in memory of Jason Vogels



**THE  
COMPASSIONATE  
FRIENDS  
of Green Bay**  
Supporting Family After a Child Dies



PO Box 211  
Green Bay, WI 54305

**We need not walk alone!**

Our monthly  
support group  
meets next on:

**Tuesday,**  
**October 19, 2021**  
**at 6:00 p.m.**

at First United  
Methodist Church,  
off Monroe at Doty.  
Call 920-370-3858  
for information.



The Compassionate Friends Worldwide Candle Lighting unites family and friends around the globe in lighting candles for one hour to honor the memories of the sons, daughters, brothers, sisters, and grandchildren who left too soon. As candles are lit at 7:00 p.m. local time, hundreds of thousands of persons commemorate and honor the memory of all children gone too soon.

**NOTE: Our local chapter will be holding our ceremony on Sunday, December 12th at 1:00 pm.**