



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

A Quarterly Newsletter
 by and for Bereaved Parents
 April/May/June 2024

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.



19 Years and Counting

While reflecting on several things the other day, including writing this article for the newsletter, I wondered what I could write about. With the end of tax season coming soon, I recalled that Mickey's father passed away on April 14th. This April it will be 30 years since his passing. Approximately 1 month later, it will be 19 years for the passing of Melissa and Emily. 19 years, I thought almost 2 decades. Here her father has been gone 3 decades, how can that be. Where has all this time gone? It is hard to believe that I was only 50 years old when Melissa and Emily passed away. Now, I am 9 months from being 70 years old. I wonder how I or the both of us have survived all these years but we have done it so far. Has our lives been a struggle at times? Of course it has. We have experienced other passings in our families since then, my father, my sister's husband, Mickey's brother and nephew within the span of several months.

I then thought to myself, it is hard to believe with all of these deaths, that I still have 2 aunts on my mother's side of the family along with an uncle, who was married to my mom's youngest sister. Last year, the last surviving sibling of my dad's family died at 104. My mom's 2 surviving sister's are both in their 90s. I am thinking that I could possibly have another 20 plus years here before being reunited with our daughters. That will make it close to 40 years since their passing. Where will I be then? Will I be in a nursing home? Will I still be in my own home with Mickey and myself carrying on as best we can? With no children, who will look after us? My younger sister, who is only 4 years younger than myself? Or Mickey's siblings who are close to her age? Nieces and nephews?

But then I think what is there to worry about and why worry about it, right? Life is for today, worrying about the future is not going to help, in my opinion. I know that Melissa and Emily are and will be watching over us and guiding us in our twilight years!

I guess Mickey and I will just keep moving forward and hope for the best and that our golden years are filled with peace and happiness. I will always have my memories of Melissa and Emily. I know these memories will make me laugh and smile and reflect how fortunate I was to be their father, even if it was just for a short period of time.

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

Mike Nieft, Steering Committee

Mickey Schmeisser, Chapter Leader/Newsletter Editor

Steve Schmeisser, Treasurer

Sue Van Straten, Remembering our Children

E-mail: compassionatefriendsgb@gmail.com

Website: compassionatefriendsgreenbay.org

Monthly Support Group

Tuesday, April 16, 2024 6 p.m.

Seasonal Grief in Spring

Tuesday, May 21, 2024 6 p.m.

Emoji Me - Pick One

Tuesday, June 18, 2024 6 p.m.

Feelings

Memories...A Time for Smiles A Time for Tears

Jean Van Ruth
In memory of my son, Greg
TCF of Madison WI



As I wondered in my mind why the ache in my heart was worse than it had been for a while, I suddenly remembered. In my memory I went back to September 20, 1991. It was the last time Greg would be in the hospital. He was five months into his illness.

When Greg's doctor examined him at the clinic, he told Greg that he would have to go into the hospital again. We had long ago lost count of the times he had been in the hospital. When his doctor left the examining room, Greg looked at me with tears in his eyes and said, "When is this going to end?" As I put my arms out to him, with tears in my eyes and my heart breaking, I said "I don't know, Greg." He hugged me so tight.

While at work on September 24th, I got a call from Greg's doctor. He said Greg was ready to come home from the hospital. He told me in these exact words, "Greg's heart is failing fast, he is going to die." I will never forget those words for as long as I live. I felt like a knife had been put in my heart.

When I went to the hospital to get Greg, he was sitting in a chair in his room. We looked at each other and I said, "I need a hug!" As my son was hugging me, he said that he didn't want anyone feeling sorry for him. And he wanted to live as normal a life as possible in the time he had left.

Greg chose to die at home. It was his last wish. He was afraid to die alone, but he was never afraid to die. There were many times over the next few months that he said he was ready to die. I promised him that he would not die alone. We were with him day and night.

When I spoke with Greg's doctor a few days later, he told me that when he told Greg he was dying, the most peaceful look came over Greg's face. Greg knew it wouldn't be long and he would be free. He would be at peace and he would no longer be ill.

Three and a half months later, on January 4, 1992, Greg was at last set free. He died peacefully and we had kept our promise. He did not die alone. Our lives changed forever. As I held our son, who was now in God's hands, I didn't think our lives would ever be normal again. Our hearts were broken and part of our future was gone. Though our hearts may never be mended, we have picked up the pieces of our shattered lives and we struggle on. Our life is as normal as it will ever be.

Then there are times like these. A memory bringing me to the brink of tears. Then I wonder if I will ever get through the memories of Greg's illness without tears. There are so many memories of those 8 ½ months. Some memories make me smile, but most make me cry.

This grief business is a strange thing. It can creep up on me and bring tears, sometimes before I realize why those tears are there. But then I remember, and once again I work my way through it. The ache in my heart isn't as sharp as it used to be, but it isn't gone. It probably never will be.

But our child is gone. How thankful we are to have been Greg's parents. How thankful we are that Greg gave us 20 years of memories. Twenty years of love.

*Grief never ends...but it changes. It's a passage, not a place to stay.
Grief is not a sign of weakness, nor a lack of faith...It is the price of Love.*



TCF...Unconditional Caring

Kitty Reeve
In Memory of my son, Philip
TCF Marin and San Francisco Chapters, CA



My Son Philip died in August 1994, when he was 26 years-old. He died by suicide, influenced by a genetic illness, bipolar mood disorder (manic depression). I well remember how I flinched inwardly when people began referring to Philip's having "committed suicide." It seemed to diminish my wonderful son, to make him into what he never was: a kind of criminal. I wanted people to remember the beauty of his soul, yet what they focused on was the shocking way in which he died.

So it has been personally important to me to learn that TCF has made a change in the language it uses related to suicide. TCF now uses the terms "died of suicide" or "died by suicide" in all publications and presentations. The new, emotionally neutral language helps to lift the burden of stigma from all of us whose children or siblings died by suicide. It gives us strength and helps us heal.

If your child or sibling has died in one of society's less "acceptable" ways—by suicide, murder, alcoholism, from a drug overdose, AIDS or sexually transmitted diseases or in prison—do know that TCF does not accept society's stigmas. There is no room for blame or condemnation when all our hearts are aching for the children we no longer have. We honor your child and your grief, no matter the cause of death.

Similarly, if you are a parent or sibling who may feel "other" in our oft-judgmental society, please know that you will not be "other" in TCF. We welcome you with understanding and compassion, whatever your age, your race, your ethnicity, whether you are rich or poor, married or single, gay or straight, whatever your religion or lack of religion. We welcome you.

And if you have endured the most terrible tragedy, if you have had more than one child or sibling die or have lost all your children or siblings, you are welcome. Many people are terrified that we are "contagious" because the worst nightmare has become a reality in our lives. They don't want to believe what we know: that neither we, nor they, can keep our children safe and alive. So they avoid us. And they especially may avoid you who have had more than one child or sibling or all your children die, because the horror of what has happened in your lives terrifies them. We welcome you, and we honor your courage and want to be helpful to you in your healing. We offer our compassion and understanding to all parents and siblings and other family members who are on this very difficult journey into healing. May the unconditional acceptance one finds in TCF someday be mirrored in a wiser and more tolerant society.



Holding Onto Love

Chuck Collins
TCF Burke/Springfield/Fairfax Chapter



*Trees and flowers seem suddenly reborn,
As another spring arrives fresh and new,
Surrounded by such beauty,
My thoughts turn to you.
As another college graduation looms,
Great excitement fills the air,
Glancing at the smiling students,
I still search for strawberry blonde hair,
No matter what I do in life*

*You are always there,
I feel your presence constantly,
As each new experience we share.
Though physically, you have left us,
Your love remains here to stay,
A bond so strong and nourishing,
It gets us through another day.*

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

Matthew Daley (son of Mary Daley)	4/01	Nicole Kowalkowski (daughter of Roman & Sharon Kowalkowski)	5/09
Hannah Lynn Flauger (daughter of Daniel Flauger)	4/02	Carson Murfield (son of Matthew & Christy Murfield)	5/10
Dana Kapla (daughter of Bob Kapla)	4/02	Chayse Michael Wilcox (grandson of Todd & Melanie Wilcox)	5/10
Rick Strombach (son of Donna Strombach)	4/02	Jacqueline Evers (daughter of Joe & Alice Evers)	5/12
Jason Ison (son of Rene Ison)	4/04	Lance Vlies (son of Wendy Vlies)	5/12
Brittani Walker (daughter of Mary Walker)	4/04	Leo Fulmer (son of Evonna Krause)	5/13
Elizabeth Turek Bigley (daughter of Albert & Mary Turek)	4/06	Timmy Parent (son of Steve & Cindy Parent)	5/13
Mylisa Klapatch (daughter of Dennis Klapatch & Tamara Walker)	4/06	Luke Stempa (son of Gerri & Steve Stempa)	5/13
Dean Collard (son of Debbie Collard)	4/08	Greg Lindbloom (son of Ginger Lindbloom)	5/17
Jason Vogels (son of Pam Vogels)	4/08	Kevin Betker (son of Roy "Pete" & Renee Betker)	5/24
Christopher Voght (son of Tammy Viegut & Timm Gay)	4/08	John Charniak (son of Maynard & Jeanette Charniak)	5/25
Craig Kozloski (son of Bobbie & David Kozloski)	4/09	Stephanie Corbeill (daughter of Sylvia & Richard Corbeill)	5/27
Jason Kurey (son of Deb Kurey)	4/09	Patrick Meyer (son of Dan & Anne Meyer)	5/27
Cody Green (son of Dan & Gwen Green)	4/10	Nathan Crowe (son of Tom Crowe & Lisa Hanneman)	5/28
Brandon Scheider (son of Deb Scheider)	4/10	Tyffany Stevens (daughter of Lynn Pigeon)	5/28
Brandon Groh (son of Cathy Groh)	4/11	Bailee Ann Bullock (daughter of Faith Bullock)	6/02
Kevin Kazik (son of Sally Kazik & Charlie Kazik)	4/11	Shannon Saldana (daughter of JoAnn Koss)	6/02
Tammie Gustman (daughter of Victoria Fifield & Marvin Gustman)	4/12	Amanda Dulak (daughter of Frank & Maddy)	6/04
Brent Rosner (son of Tina Rosner)	4/12	Noah Froemming (son of Butch & Sara Froemming)	6/07
Rebekah Puzen (daughter of Larry Puzen & Carol Schroeder-Puzen)	4/14	Aidan Hammer Fry (son of Linda Hammer & Megan Fry)	6/08
Jacob Peters (son of Jerry & Natalie Peters)	4/15	Hunter Vincent (son of Bonnie & Steve Vincent)	6/08
Joel Bagneski (son of Bill & Kelly Bagneski)	4/19	Sharon Ellner (daughter of Laverne Heezen)	6/09
Nathan Jarosinski (son of Mark & Jean Jarosinski)	4/21	Evan Meder (son of Randy & Margaret Meder)	6/13
Joshua Calaway (son of Bonnie Calaway)	4/24	Jared Gehm (son of Ken & Mary Gehm)	6/16
Kaitlyn Marie Schley (daughter of Jon & Ann Schley)	4/24	Taylor Poole (son of Kelly Poole)	6/16
Justin Plate (son of Mark & Grace Plate)	4/25	Derek Waterman (son of Patricia Waterman)	6/16
Ryan Bader (son of Mark & Cheryl Bader)	4/26	Stephen Charneski (son of James & Roberta Charneski)	6/17
Roberto Velez (step-son of Faith Bullock)	5/04	Ashley MacDonald (daughter of Yvonne Cerkas)	6/18
Matthew Baudhuin (son of Jason Baudhuin & Dawn Baudhuin)	5/06	Emily Schmeisser (daughter of Steve & Mickey Schmeisser)	6/19

Shawnie Silas-Grode (daughter of Pauline Silas)	6/19	James Capelle (son of Tammy Capelle)	6/26
Nicole Ekberg (daughter of Debbie Ekberg)	6/20	Chase Lasecki (son of Steven & Linda Lasecki)	6/26
Andrew Sorensen (son of Wendy Sorensen)	6/23	Matthew Murphy (son of Kathleen Murphy)	6/26
Alyssa Steward (daughter of Wendy Steward)	6/23	Joshua Webster (son of Julie Denny)	6/26
Maria Cambray (daughter of Jack & Gerry Cambray)	6/24	John Aulik (son of Germaine Aulik)	6/27
Matt Hanson (son of Dean & Mary Hanson)	6/24	Ben Delain (son of Peter & Becky Delain)	6/29
Ian Seymour (son of Diane & Paul Seymour)	6/24	Steve Price (son of Jennifer & Steve Price)	6/30
Skylar Beattie (daughter of Krystle Cooley)	6/26		

ANNIVERSARIES

Andy Bell (son of Patrick & Debbie Bell)	4/02	Roberto Velez (step-son of Faith Bullock)	4/21
Bailee Ann Bullock (daughter of Faith Bullock)	4/02	Mark Malueg (son of Sue Malueg)	4/22
Joshua Calaway (son of Bonnie Calaway)	4/02	Marisa Nelson (daughter of Amy Nelson)	4/22
Makayla Lego (niece of Tim & Christine Newtols)	4/02	Andrew (Andy) Short (son of Barbara Short)	4/22
Mike Quinnette (son of Jim & Carol Quinnette)	4/02	Paige Franklin (granddaughter of Judy & Chuck Dams)	4/23
Hannah Lynn Flauger (daughter of Daniel Flauger)	4/03	Doug Kwiatkowski (son of Dave & Theresa Kwiatkowski)	4/23
Raina Manders (daughter of Spring Manders)	4/04	Mike Smith (son of Dave Smith)	4/23
Nicolas Resch (son of Lynn & Steve Marcks)	4/04	Dalon Calkins (son of Kate Calkins)	4/26
Rick Strombach (son of Donna Strombach)	4/06	Winnifred (Freddie) McClory (daughter of Bob McClory & Carrie Brooks)	4/26
Eric Barlamant (son of Jim Barlament & Penny Maraccini)	4/07	Evan Van Lanen (son of Dan & Peg Van Lanen)	4/26
Wendy Johnson (daughter of Tom & Debbie Johnson)	4/08	Crystal (Falish) Peterson (daughter of Steve & Darlene Enderby)	4/30
April Erickson (daughter of Darla Nooyen)	4/09	Jon Boettcher (son of Roger & Pat Boettcher)	5/05
Amy Laedke (daughter of Debra & Fred Laedke)	4/11	Nicole Ekberg (daughter of Debbie Ekberg)	5/09
Shannon Saldana (daughter of JoAnn Koss)	4/12	Amanda Rose Skar (daughter of Wayne and Kim Skar)	5/09
Joseph Derge (son of Randy & Ann Derge)	4/14	Noah W. Froemming (son of Sara & Butch Froemming)	5/11
Megan Kelley (daughter of Bev Kelley-Miller)	4/14	Adam Federwitz (son of Mary & Gary Federwitz)	5/12
Jared Gehn (son of Ken & Mary Gehm)	4/15	Joseph Jacques (son-in-law of Pat Wojcik)	5/12
Patton Prunty (son of Ed & Pat Prunty)	4/15	Austin Reeck (son of Ann Rieckmann)	5/12
Olivia DeMeuse (daughter of Cheryl DeMeuse)	4/16	Gabriela Jacques (granddaughter of Pat Wojcik)	5/13
Travis Christenson (son of Cherie Oettinger)	4/18	Michael Anderson (son of Ron & Lori Anderson)	5/14
Kaitlyn Marie Schley (daughter of Jon & Ann Schley)	4/19	Noah Thomas Campbell (son of Kelli & Craig Campbell)	5/14

Austin Jay Bullock (son of Faith Bullock)	5/15	Brent Rosner (son of Tina Rosner)	6/06
Craig Jacobs (son of John & Cathy Jacobs)	5/15	Troy Tousey (son of Vicki & Tim Tousey)	6/06
Michael Schermerhorn (son of Jayne Schermerhorn)	5/15	Taylor Poole (son of Kelly Poole)	6/08
Emily Schmeisser (daughter of Steve & Mickey Schmeisser)	5/15	Kara Rojas-Spice (daughter of Jerry & Amy Spice)	6/08
Melissa Schmeisser (daughter of Steve & Mickey Schmeisser)	5/15	E.J. Veard (daughter of Paula Veard)	6/11
David Staude (son of Irv & Bev Michaud)	5/15	Ben Wilfer (son of Paul Wilfer)	6/11
Kory Kuran (son of Carol Pomrenke)	5/17	Bruce T. Blaser Jr. (son of Bruce & Paige Blaser)	6/12
Kevin Keane (son of Mike Keane)	5/18	Allison Hunt Bush (daughter of Nan & Terry Bush)	6/16
Hunter Temme (son of Lisa Temme)	5/19	Riviera Konen (daughter of Jennifer & Todd Konen)	6/17
Taylor Budysz (daughter of Krysta Budysz)	5/20	Alyssa Steward (daughter of Wendy Steward)	6/18
Matthew Baudhuin (son of Jason Baudhuin)	5/21	Leon Schroeder (grandson of Marci Beck)	6/19
Evan Meder (son of Randy & Margaret Meder)	5/22	Ella Smetana (daughter of Frank Smetana)	6/20
Ryan Patrick Bergevin (son of Randy Bergevin & Barbara Vandenbusch)	5/25	Samantha DeLong (daughter of Joe & Sue DeLong)	6/22
Dean Collard (son of Debbie Collard)	5/29	Tara Beilke (daughter of Chuck & Judy Dams)	6/23
Nathan Jarosinski (son of Jean & Mark Jarosinski)	6/02	Katie Culhane (daughter of Muffy & Kevin Culhane)	6/23
Sharon Ellner (daughter of Laverne Heezen)	6/04	Allison Fields (daughter of Leanne Fields)	6/23
Ken Johnson (son of Kathy Johnson)	6/05	Heather Fuller (daughter of Leslie Tagge)	6/24
Ashley MacDonald (daughter of Yvonne Cerkas)	6/05	Timothy Metoxen (son of Florence Petri)	6/28
Jenah VanGroll (daughter of James & JoAnn VanGroll)	6/05	Michael Kirst (son of Kris Kirst)	6/30
Shane Bowhousen (son of Doug & Renie Bowhousen)	6/06		

Love gifts were recently given by:

Mark and Cheryl Bader, in memory of Ryan Bader
 Gary and Mary Federwitz, in memory of Adam Federwitz
 Ken and Mary Gehm, in memory of Jared Gehm
 Doug and Renee LaViolette, in memory of Brian LaViolette
 Todd and Sandy Scheffen, in memory of Sam Compton

ANNOUNCEMENTS, COMMENTS, & MISC.

Calendar of Events 2024:

April 16: Seasonal Grief in Spring

May 21: Emoji Me - Pick one

June 18: Feelings

Do you want to Share??

Do you want to share a picture and/or a 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.

A Promise

Faye Harden
TCF, Tuscaloosa, AL

The colors of life change as we go through grief.
We begin black and white;

Then gray settles over us, seeping into our pores,
surrounding us,

Smothering us for a long period of time; then slowly
the colors change.

We may not even be aware of their changing 'til one
day we see a rainbow,

And know it was meant for us.

Please Visit Our Website:

www.compassionatefriendsgreenbay.org

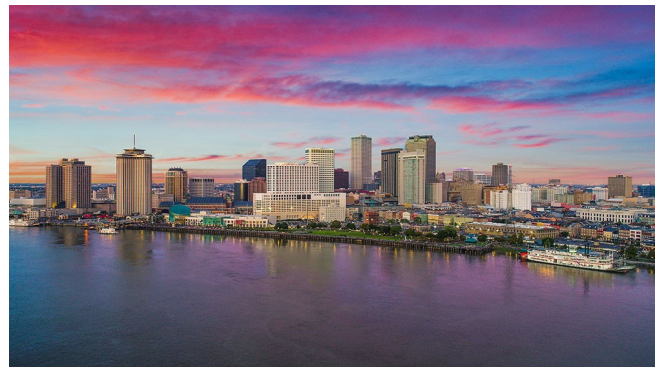
All sorts of goodies are included:

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

July 12, 2024 @ 8:00 am – July 14, 2024 @ 1:00 pm

47TH TCF NATIONAL CONFERENCE

New Orleans, LA





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FRIENDS
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PO Box 211
Green Bay, WI 54305

We need not walk alone!

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meets next on:

Tuesday,
April 16, 2024
at 6:00 p.m.

at First United
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Call 920-370-3858
for information.



When
you Believe,
Signs turn up
Everywhere