



**THE
COMPASSIONATE
FRIENDS
of Northeastern WI**
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

A Quarterly Newsletter

by and for Bereaved Parents

October/November/December 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



On the Horizon— New Beginnings

Beginning with our September meeting, we have a brand new meeting venue. Due to changes at our former location, we were no longer able to have our monthly meetings at First United Methodist Church. Thanks to our new meeting facilitator and steering committee member Mike Nieft, we are now holding our monthly meetings and Candle Lighting Ceremony in December at OneWay Christian Church on 9th Street. Mike contacted Pastor David Roth and he graciously offered his facility to host our monthly meetings. There will be easy access to the church off of Hwy 41 and Taylor Street. We did not have to change our meeting night and time. Our Candle Lighting Ceremony will be held as usual on the Second Sunday in December but at 3:00 pm instead of 1:00 pm.

But this is not the only change to affect the Chapter. The steering committee felt our name did not match with the area our participants come from to our meetings. Since the closing of the Door County and Kewaunee County chapters along with the Neenah chapter, we felt that we are actually serving Northeastern WI. Hence, our new name is TCF of Northeastern WI.

As mentioned in the last newsletter, Mike Nieft will be facilitating the meetings. Mike will conduct the meetings on an open forum/discussion versus a specific topic. Joleen Krings will be greeting new members and current members at our meetings. Kim Skar has offered to undertake the task of continuing our quarterly newsletters.

As we know change is inevitable in life just as the passing of our children has changed our lives and thrust us into a new normal, these changes will be beneficial to the long-term survival of our chapter. We hope everyone will embrace these changes and help the chapter to move forward in the years ahead.

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

The Northeastern WI Chapter of TCF

meets the third Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m.
at OneWay Christian Church, 2071 9th Street, Green Bay.

For further information contact:

Main Number: 920-370-3858

Sue DeLong, Remembering our Children

Joleen Krings, Steering Committee

Mike Nieft, Steering Committee

Mickey Schmeisser, Chapter Leader/Newsletter Editor

Steve Schmeisser, Treasurer

Sue VanStraten, Remembering our Children

E-mail: compassionatefriendsgb@gmail.com

Website: compassionatefriendsgreenbay.org

Monthly Support Group

Tuesday, October 15, 2024 6 p.m.

What Keeps you going on Difficult Days

Tuesday, November 19, 2024 6 p.m.

Signs from our Loved One

Tuesday, December 17, 2024 6 p.m.

Guest Speaker: Margaret Meder
Certified Grief Educator



And For This I Give Thanks

Cathy Seehuetter
TCF St. Paul, MN
In Memory of my daughter, Nina



"I am acutely aware that autumn is here. As I write this, the air coming through my window is crisper and the leaves are taking on the golden and scarlet hues of the season. The shorts and tee shirts, which were the summer mainstay of the neighborhood children, are being replaced by sweats and flannels. Pumpkins are replacing pink flamingos as lawn ornaments. The beauty of nature is at its most spectacular. It is unmistakably here, welcome or not...

This will be my fifth autumn, to be followed by my fifth holiday season without my daughter Nina. I find that I am far enough along in my grief to find memories to smile about now, but still close enough to remember those first few years and the piercing stab of pain in my heart that went along with them. Halloween, with memories of the costume party she threw when she was 10 years old, the major production she made out of what she would wear as a trick-or-treater, and as she got older, her enjoyment in passing out candy to neighborhood goblins. Then came Thanksgiving, one of my favorites. I liked the idea of family and friends gathering together with no other purposes other than eating until you nearly exploded and being thankful for each other and the blessings of the past year. No presents required, just the joy of family togetherness - and the knowledge that my children were here, all of them. On that first Thanksgiving the empty chair and place at the table seemed to scream out at me that someone precious was missing. And the message of this particular holiday was thankfulness? What on earth could I ever find to be thankful for?

Some TCF parents have memories of being unable to choke down any morsel of food because they were continually trying to choke back tears that first Thanksgiving. Just wanting to curl up in a ball, pull the covers over their heads, and wake up some time in January after the last remnants of the holidays were cleared away. In all honesty, I cannot tell you even one detail of that first one: where I spent it, who was present, where I was, if I cried all day. I remember nothing.

I do remember three months after Nina had died, though. On a visit to my neurologist I tearfully told him of my depression over her death. His response to me was "Why don't you count your blessings rather than your sorrows? Think happy thoughts and maybe you won't feel so sad." I, of course, asked him if he had ever lost a child. He had not obviously. Only someone uneducated in the school of grief would say something like that.

Almost five Thanksgiving's later, have I found reasons to be thankful? I asked myself this question and decided to put pen to paper. I was surprised to say the list was quite lengthy, so I will only share a few of them. I am thankful for:

- My loving family, and the welcomed joyful additions in the last few years.
- My memory, because now the painful memories are, more often than not, replaced with the beautiful memories of the past, and they were such beautiful memories.
- My life, for whom else will keep Nina's memory alive? Of course, my family, but they have lives, as they should. I am the self-appointed keeper of my daughter's memory.
- Nina. The joy of loving her, the privilege of being her mother. Though I wish it had been much longer, I wouldn't trade those 15 ½ years for anything.
- Smiling a genuine smile, laughing a hardy laugh, and finding my sense of humor again. I sincerely believe that Nina likes to hear me laugh and that she would want me to find humor in life again.
- My sight, because I commented (for the first time in five autumns) on the magnificent colors of the autumn foliage and the grandness of Minnesota's most sumptuous season. I didn't think I'd ever notice again. But I did.
- The Compassionate Friends, who showed me there is life after the death of a child; who allowed me to express my emotions, listened patiently, understood my pain, and welcomed me into their hearts. They helped salvage what remained of my sanity and I will be eternally grateful.
- The opportunity to give back, through TCF meetings and this newsletter. To bring hope to the newly bereaved in the knowledge that it won't always hurt this bad, and that you will make it with the love and support of family and your Compassionate Friends. And, that there will come a time that you too will find things to be thankful for again.

I am told, by those who know, that peace and acceptance are that light we are searching for at the end of the tunnel. Though I find myself still looking for it at times, those further down the grief road have reassured me it will come. Maybe not this Thanksgiving or next, but that it will. And I believe them.

The Holidays Are Coming

Marge Frankenberg
TCF Arlington Heights, IL
In loving memory of my son, Blake



"The Holidays are coming! The Holidays are coming!" Most bereaved parents make that observation with the same sense of fear and dread that Chicken Little had when he announced, "The sky is falling! The sky is falling!" We view Christmas or Hanukkah differently than the rest of the world. In our minds they become great trials to be endured. In my opinion, this trial is tougher than birthdays or death anniversaries. This is the time when love abounds. The family (and extended family) all gather together, coming from near and far, to share in this love. The only trouble with this happy scene is that our child is missing. He or she has traveled too far from us to come for the holidays! We can't buy gifts for a photograph or hug and kiss a memory. The emptiness that this creates in us cannot be filled, no matter how many relatives gather by our hearth. To add to the pain, most well-meaning friends and relatives feel that the best way to handle the problem is to pretend that it doesn't exist. They never mention the one person that is on the minds and in the hearts of everyone. We found out early on that it is not possible to keep the "presence" of our child out of a family gathering. Trying to do so makes everyone uncomfortable and causes us as parents to feel disloyal.

The first Christmas after our son died, we did it "their" way. Never again! Now we make sure that he is very much a part of our holiday. For starters, we decided once again to hang all three stockings. We don't fill them, but just seeing them all hanging together is right for us. The tree was very important to Blake. Every year he took the responsibility of stringing the lights for us. Now it is important to us to see that Blake has a tree. We have a very special one, about 3 feet tall, that we weight heavily at the bottom. We decorate it with weather-proof ornaments and place it at his grave.

We leave the tree there until spring so it can make the gravesite when the snows are deep. We also have a lovely candle that we burn on special days. This is our way of including our missing son in the family circle. But most important, we talk about him. We don't do it obsessively, but we don't hesitate to recall memories of him as often as we recall those of other children in the family. Because we talk of him in an easy and natural manner, the rest of the family has taken our cue. They now bring up his name naturally. It is all so much more comfortable than the way we tried to handle it that first year.

Another couple in our chapter had a wonderful idea for the first holiday after their daughter died. Their greatest fear was that no one would mention her, so they compiled an album of her pictures and casually left it out on the coffee table. It wasn't long before people were looking through it, recalling favorite memories of her, and the ice was broken.

There must be so many other ways that you can make your child a part of your holiday—ways that seem right and comfortable for you. You may choose to keep your thoughts private rather than share them with others. But the most important thing to remember is that the choice is yours. Do what makes you comfortable, not what others think should make you comfortable. If you follow the dictates of your heart and that gives you comfort, those around you will see that it is so and follow your lead.



On behalf of our Chapter, I would like to extend a special **THANK YOU** to Jessica's mom Sue VanStraten. For almost two decades, Sue has shared her time, talent and treasure, by mailing out the Angelversary cards to all our bereaved parents, grandparents and siblings, whose children have left us to soon and will never be forgotten.



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

Mark Shafer (son of Bruce & Pat Shafer)	10/01	Cassandra LeMere-Zeller (daughter of Donald & Judith LeMere)	11/01
Kara Rojas-Spice (daughter of Jerry & Amy Spice)	10/03	Jessica Lindberg (daughter of Dana Ewald)	11/02
Michael Anderson (son of Ron & Lori Anderson)	10/04	Craig St. John (son of Debra St. John)	11/02
Josh Gilson (son of Ron & Cindy Gilson)	10/04	Matthew Skenadore (son of Jude Skenadore)	11/05
Allen O'Harrow (son of Cal & Lois O'Harrow)	10/04	Josh Kimes (son of Susan Kimes)	11/06
Peyton Haller (son of Paul & Angela Haller)	10/05	Chad Olson (son of Brenda Olson)	11/07
Corey Jonet (son of Dan & Lisa Jonet)	10/09	Nick Baugnet (son of DeeDee & Joe Baugnet)	11/10
Seth Philhower (son of Shaun & Stacy Philhower)	10/09	Jacob Kowalski (grandson of Jessica Fehlberg)	11/10
Leon Schroeder (son of Sawyer Schroeder, grandson of Marci Beck)	10/09	Debi Schultz (daughter of Barbara Fitzpatrick)	11/12
Colton Steinhorst (son of Tara Steinhorst)	10/09	Hunter Temme (son of Lisa Temme)	11/13
Matthew Arnold (son of Carrie & Bob Arnold)	10/10	Ryan Patrick Bergevin (son of Randy Bergevin & Barbara Vandebusch)	11/16
Noah Thomas Campbell (son of Kelli & Craig Campbell)	10/10	Ryan Rockstroh (son of Molly Rockstroh)	11/16
Chad Seitzer (son of Sandi & Fred Seitzer)	10/10	Jillian Faymonville (daughter of Louise Faymonville)	11/17
Benjamin Edinger (son of Rosanna Scannell)	10/15	Karson Fenlon (son of Donald & Jennifer Fenlon, grandson of Jan Hendricks)	11/17
Jack Natzke (son of Jason and Renee Natzke)	10/16	Zander Varga Schenzel (grandson of Nancy Varga)	11/17
Austin Jay Bullock (son of Faith Bullock)	10/20	Dane Cole (son of Don & Karol Cole)	11/18
Lailah Faith Pouwels (daughter of Ed & Carrie Pouwels)	10/20	Dillon J. Mueller (son of George and Angel Mueller)	11/18
Tara Beilke (daughter of Chuck & Judy Dams)	10/22	Elias Gonzales (son of Maria Gonzales)	11/21
Todd Reigner (son of Arthur & Barbara Reigner)	10/23	Andy Haroldson (son of Ralph & Jean Haroldson)	11/24
Winnifred "Freddie" McClory (daughter of Bob McClory & Carrie Brooks)	10/25	E.J. Veard (daughter of Paula Veard)	11/24
Van Jarchow (son of Mike & Dixie Jarchow)	10/26	Amber Mastey (daughter of Brett & Amanda Mastey)	11/25
Shane Hopfensperger (son of Mike & Joann Hopfensperger)	10/28	Jimmy Wanner Jr. (son of Keith & Pam Blondeim)	11/25
Troy Milan (son of Pam Milan)	10/28	Michael Kirst (son of Kris Kirst)	11/27
Jaysen Calkins (son of Kate Calkins)	10/30	Joe Hinton (son of Tom & Kathy Hinton)	11/28
Thea L Jacques (daughter of Sally Martin)	11/01	Federico Abarca (son of Concepcion Melgar)	11/29

Austin Cottrell (son of Jeff & Nan Cottrell)	11/29	Joseph Jacques (son-in-law of Pat Wojcik)	12/17
Amanda Rose Skar (daughter of Wayne & Kim Skar)	11/29	Jeremy DeMille (son of Marysue Gerondale)	12/23
Shane Lambert (son of Kim Lambert, grandson of Maria Lambert)	11/30	Andrea Eve Wirth (daughter of Thomas and Angela Wirth)	12/27
Kyle Barr (son of Karen Strickfaden)	12/02	Nathan Axelrod (son of Johanna Axelrod)	12/28
Chris Krueger (son of Cheryl Krueger)	12/05	Tom Manning (son of Peggy Manning)	12/29
Crystal (Falish) Peterson (daughter of Steve & Darlene Enderby)	12/06	Matthew Shukoski (son of Darlene VanHorn)	12/30
Tara Reetz (daughter of Daniel & Jean Reetz)	12/08	Marjie Duerr (daughter of Linda Duerr)	12/31
Travis Stelzer (son of Don & Pam Stelzer)	12/13	Darrian Seppanen (daughter of Janet Deterville)	12/31
Jessica Demo (daughter of Sheila & Chuck Henrichs)	12/16		

ANNIVERSARIES

Matthew Kiefer (son of Mary Jo Hempel)	10/04	Jacqueline Evers (daughter of Joe and Alice Evers)	10/27
Dillon J. Mueller (son of George and Angel Mueller)	10/04	Ryan Rockstroh (son of Molly Rockstroh)	10/27
Caitlin Van Duyse (daughter of Brenda VanDuyse)	10/04	Jeffery Skenadore (son of Jude Skenadore)	10/29
Justin Banaszynski (son of Donna Baranczyk)	10/05	Aidan Hammer Fry (son of Linda Hammer & Megan Fry)	11/01
Seth Philhower (son of Shaun & Stacy Philhower)	10/09	Karen Mary Schley (daughter of Jon & Ann Schley)	11/01
Jason Ison (son of Rene Ison)	10/10	Lance Vlies (son of Wendy Vlies)	11/01
George Stoneburner (son of Chuck & Judy Dams)	10/10	Joel Bagneski (son of Bill & Kelly Bagneski)	11/02
Wendy Jacques (daughter of Sally Martin)	10/12	Kira Smith (daughter of Tara Smith)	11/04
Jaysen Calkins (son of Kate Calkins)	10/16	Jason Banaszynski (son of Donna Baranczyk - Pagel)	11/06
Kelby Bagneski (daughter of Bill & Kelly Bagneski)	10/19	Cody Green (son of Dan and Gwen Green)	11/06
Jessica Lindberg (daughter of Dana Ewald)	10/20	Andy Haroldson (son of Ralph & Jean Haroldson)	11/06
Lailah Faith Pouwels (daughter of Carrie & Ed Pouwels)	10/20	Marjie Duerr (daughter of Linda Duerr)	11/07
Ryan Bader (son of Cheryl & Mark Bader)	10/24	Ryan Brunner (son of Bill & Sue Brunner)	11/08
Andrew Sorensen (son of Wendy Sorensen)	10/24	Mariah Early (daughter of Melissa Early)	11/17
Doug Cole (son of Don & Karol Cole)	10/25	Todd Konop (son of Dorothy & Tom Konop)	11/17
Gary Glebke (son of Joyce Glebke)	10/25	Shane Lambert (son of Kim Lambert, grandson of Maria Lambert)	11/17
Jessica Lindberg (daughter of Dana Ewald)	10/26	Tami (Sam) Cornelius (daughter of Brenda Cornelius)	11/18

Tara Reetz (daughter of Daniel & Jean Reetz)	11/18	Adam Lee Schultz (son of Stan & Deb Schultz)	12/15
Alex Wolf (son of Keith Wolf)	11/20	Darrian Seppanen (daughter of Janet Deterville)	12/15
Jessica Demo (daughter of Sheila & Chuck Henrichs)	11/23	Aaron Lison (son of Adele Coopmans)	12/18
Benjamin Edinger (son of Rosanna Scannell)	11/23	Joe Hinton (son of Tom & Kathy Hinton)	12/20
Nicole Kowalkowski (daughter of Sharon & Roman Kowalkowski)	12/01	Kyle Barr (son of Karen Strickfaden)	12/24
Jacob Peters (son of Jerry & Natalie Peters)	12/01	Dana Kapla (daughter of Bob Kapla)	12/26
Paul Stone (son of Joan Stone)	12/01	Timmy Parent (son of Steven & Cindy Parent)	12/26
Mylisha Klapatch (daughter of Dennis Klapatch & Tamara Walker)	12/02	Thea L Jacques (daughter of Sally Martin)	12/27
Jack McDonough (son of Carrie Harrison)	12/03	Cassandra LeMere-Zeller (daughter of Donald & Judith LeMere)	12/29
Ross Ambrosius (son of Melissa & Rob Ambrosius)	12/09	Christopher Voght (son of Tammy Viegut & Timm Gay)	12/29
Brittani Walker (daughter of Mary Walker)	12/09	Ryan Jozwiak (son of Lenee & Eddie Jozwiak)	12/30
Brandon Scheider (son of Deb Scheider)	12/10	Joey Wesolowski (son of Jennifer Heller & John Wesolowski)	12/30
Jason Kurey (son of Deb Kurey)	12/11	Kevin Betker (son of Roy "Pete" & Renee Betker)	12/31
Austin Cottrell (son of Jeff & Nan Cottrell)	12/15		



ANNOUNCEMENTS, COMMENTS, & MISC.

Calendar of Events 2024

- October 15: What Keeps you going on Difficult Days
- November 19: Signs from our Loved One
- December 8: Candle Lighting at 3 pm
(Please note our new location)
- December 17: Guest Speaker: Margaret Meder

Please Visit Our Website:

www.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

Wintersong

Sascha Wagner from "Wintersun"

Season of lights, season of love and peace,
Season of shadow, season of memories,
Season of warmth and joy,
Season of secret tears.

Give us the courage to laugh again,
Give us the power to love again,
For all our new seasons
And all our new years.

Love gifts were recently given by:

Ken and Mary Gehm, in memory of Jared Gehm
Todd and Sandy Scheffen, in memory of Sam Compton



**THE
COMPASSIONATE
FRIENDS
of Northeastern WI**
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 15, 2024
at 6:00 p.m.

at OneWay
Christian Church
2071 9th Street
Green Bay
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 8th at 3:00 pm instead of 1:00 pm. Please note the new time change from previous years.