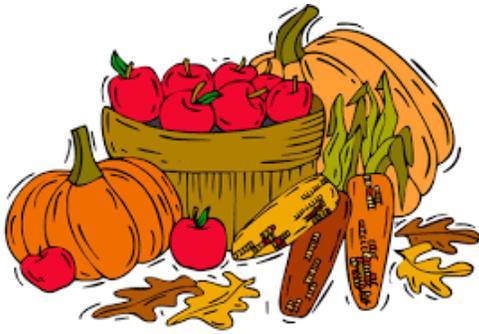


The Compassionate Friends, Inc.

Livonia, Michigan Chapter



October, 2019
Volume 31, Number 10

The Compassionate Friends is an international self-help organization offering friendship, understanding, and hope to bereaved parents and siblings.

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Meeting Information

When: First Thursday of
each month. 7-9 p.m.
Where: St. Timothy's Church
16700 Newburgh Road, Livonia,
East side of Newburgh, 1/4 mile S. of
Six Mile

Coming Events:

NEXT MEETING- October 3 -First time tables, sibling table, Infant loss table, topic table: Do you wear a mask most of the time, or just around some people?

October 5: 10 am - 1:30 pm -

Fundraiser : Painting with Monica - see Page 1

NO Craft Day

October 15: 6:30 pm TCF Dinner-at Richard's Family Restaurant, 39305 Plymouth Rd., Livonia 48150. sign up at meeting or call Kathy 734-306-3930 or katjrambo@gmail.com



FUNDRAISER

for

The Compassionate Friends Livonia MI Chapter

WHEN: October 5, 2019 – 10 am to 1:30 pm

WHERE: Plymouth District Library, Plymouth, MI

COST: \$25.00 Per Person

Monica Imielowski will share her artistic abilities with us and show us how to paint the frame shown here. You may choose either the butterfly or the dragonfly. Her husband, Roman, handcrafted the frames. Monica and Roman offer this painting opportunity to us in memory of their beloved son, Andrew. The Imielowski's are members of our Livonia chapter

Wearing a Mask

Halloween is a great time to pretend to be someone else. You can be mean and nasty even though you're usually a pretty nice person, or you can be scary when you usually are the one that gets scared. You can pretend to be strong and powerful or beautiful or mysterious or famous. You can pretend to be anything on Halloween.

It isn't fun, though, to try to always wear a mask. Sometimes for a person who is grieving, it seems like you need

to always pretend to be your old happy self. Your friends and others may want you to forget about your loss and go on as if nothing much has changed.

But it is really hard to mask your true feelings all the time. It is much better for you if you can "take off your mask" and just be yourself sometimes. If you let your feelings out, then you are being honest with yourself and others. By taking off your mask and revealing your

(continued on page 4)

Our Children Loved and Remembered Always

This month, we remember the children who are so deeply and sadly missed. Please take a few moments to place them and their parents in your thoughts.

Let Us Remember Them Always

<i>Child</i>	<i>Parent, Grandparent, Sibling</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Age</i>
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Names withheld except from members.



Let Us Celebrate Their Births

Names withheld except from members.

*Softly ... may peace
replace heartache
and cherished memories
remain with you always on
your child's birthday*

true self, you will be a much more REAL person. It's better to save masks for Halloween.

From the Inside Fernside Newsletter

Tears

There is a sacredness in tears. They are not the mark of weakness, but of power. They speak more eloquently than ten thousand tongues. They are the messengers of overwhelming grief, of deep contrition, and of unspeakable love. Washington Irving

Let your tears fall with pride for they are not a sign of weakness or self-pity, but an authentic expression of sorrow. It takes great courage to feel your feelings, to express your feelings openly and honestly. It takes great strength to tend to your sorrow. Crying is not for the weak of heart. Crying expresses what few words can or ever will. Our work in grief is to feel, to express, to accept, to integrate, to heal. Grief work takes guts, persistence, patience, self-compassion, and courage-lots and lots of courage. Tears are the sweat of grief work.

It is not the job of the griever to make others comfortable with their expression of grief. It is the job of the griever to grieve. To grieve is to actively feel and express sorrow. If your tears appear to make others uncomfortable, calmly speak your truth, teach them about your tears. I cry because I grieve. I cry because I am profoundly sad over the loss of my loved one. I cry because life will forever be bittersweet. I cry because there are no words to adequately express how I am feeling. I cry because I am brave enough to face another day, to endure, to push forward, to live with grief in my heart. I cry to express, to relieve, to release.

Witnessing the tears of friends or family reminds us of our own fragility, powerlessness, inability to fix or lessen the pain and suffering of another. The most compassionate and supportive thing we can do is create space for those tears, to breathe, to sit with the discomfort and to understand that crying is an expression, a release, a healing...not something to be ana-

lyzed, feared, or stopped.

Dr. William Frey, a biochemist and "tear expert," discovered that emotional tears have special health benefits. Reflex tears are 98% water while emotional tears also contain stress hormones that get excreted from the body through crying. Emotional tears release stress.

In an article by Judith Orloff, M.D. in *Psychology Today*, she discusses the health benefits of tears. She describes a good cry as cleansing, a way to purge pent up emotions, and to release stress symptoms such as fatigue and pain. Crying stimulates the production of endorphins which are natural pain blockers.

Crying is good for your health, your mind, your body, and your spirit. It is a natural cleanse stimulating the release of pain. Give yourself permission as well as the time and space to work through your grief, to feel and to express your feelings as they come. So often we judge our healing by our tears. Find solace in knowing that tears are an expression of our unspoken words, our sadness, our pain leaving our bodies. There will come a day when tears are not a part of our daily expression. Until that day comes, let the tears fall and know that they are a powerful component of healing. Practice self-compassion, patience, and the active nurturing of your soul and remember that every tear shed carries with it pain and stress.

Jennifer Stern, LISW

"Reprinted with permission from Grief Digest, Centering Corporation, Omaha, Nebraska."

Halloween

This month is the time for the funny looking creatures appearing at our doors for a trick or treat. Halloween was never my favorite time of the year. I think it was because I could never come up with those cute original costumes for my girls like every other mother managed to do every year. It seemed like after answering the door and seeing 200 original costumes I'd always think to myself, "Why didn't I think of that?" I'd tuck a few ideas

away in my head for the next year, but when the time came to execute those ideas, I had tucked them so far away I couldn't remember them. Once again we were scrambling around on October 31st trying to come up with ideas that both girls would be happy with.

There were six years' difference between our two daughters. That wasn't the only difference. Our oldest girl, Kirsten, could have her Halloween candy last until Easter and then we'd throw it out. JoAnn, our youngest, would eat her candy from house to house and would come home with a full stomach and empty bag. In the summer of 1978, JoAnn had her second open heart surgery. She died July 2, 1978 at age six. When October rolled around that fall, I dreaded that evening of seeing the little children coming to the door and remembering how JoAnn loved the candy and the enthusiasm of the evening. As the evening wore on, I realized that the doorbell wasn't ringing very much. I went to the window and saw that there were plenty of children walking in little groups but they were walking past our house.

I realized then that the neighbors and people who knew us had, no doubt, told the children not to come to our house. My emotions were very mixed up. On one hand I knew the parents were trying to protect us from this first experience of not having JoAnn. It was very kind of them. On the other hand, it only reminded me of how different our home was now. When nine o'clock came it was a relief to know the first event was over. It has been five years now since JoAnn died. Halloween doesn't bother me but we all know that the next day we turn the calendar and November is here with the holidays around the corner. For us as bereaved parents these are hard times whether you are a new bereaved parent or have had a number of years since your child died. We need not walk alone but reach out to each other. One of the greatest blessings to me now is the gift of memory and I cherish the happy memories that I have

been blessed to remember JoAnn in all seasons of the year.

Cindy Holt TCF, Jamestown, NY

10 Years After – Already?

In June I saw one of Sean's classmates at a local store. She mentioned that the Class wanted to represent the two classmates that were no longer with us. She told me the other mom was writing something and asked me if I would like to write something. After I realized that she was talking about his 10-year class reunion, I told her that I would be delighted to write something. It's hard to believe Sean has been out of school for 10 years already and of course there's the denial of it being nearly 10 years since his death. The following is what I wrote from him:

Congrats Class of '93 ~ Hi – This is Sean Anderson from somewhere – out there.

Erin Swantner asked my mom to write something in my behalf and to bring a picture. If I know my mom, she probably went over board. I really can't believe it's been 10 years since graduation. I know that you have all been busy continuing your education, pursuing careers, and beginning families. Some have accomplished all three.

Just because I'm not physically there doesn't mean that my legacy isn't being established. My legacy is ~ my family. My folks have made it their job to make sure that I am not forgotten, that my name is still spoken. Even though I'm not there, you would be very surprised to know some of the places that I do show up.

At the Angel of Hope in Blanchette Memorial Park, in St. Charles, MO ~ there is a brick inscribed with my name and a song title "He Sleeps with Angels too Soon."

Every year in December my name is read (along with 400 plus other kids names) at a Candlelight vigil at Temple Shaare Emeth. Two years ago my mom created a 465 picture slideshow and now when our names are read ~ our pictures are shown. Over 1000 people from St. Louis and out lying areas attend every year. Last year my mom gave the keynote speech about what else ~ ME.

My mom is the Bereaved Parents of the USA St. Louis Chapter Chairperson and

this year she and dad helped sponsor the BPUSA National Gathering. Over 400 parents from across the US came together for 3 days to attend seminars, share stories and simply love each other.

I also have my own web page on the BPUSA St. Louis website under the "Meet Our Children" segment.

And of course I can always be found at Wentzville Eternal Peace Cemetery not far from Erin's baby sister Sarah.

Speaking of babies ~ not only do I have a beautiful blonde 10 year old niece and godchild ~ Chelsea ~ that I did get to meet; there is a new little person with my name. I am so proud that my new niece is my namesake and now my legacy truly does continue. Her name is Sean Isabel Anderson Morlock.

My message – life is precious, embrace every day. Take time to hug harder, love longer, savor nature and protect all of God's gifts. And above all; make a difference, create your legacy.

Peace ~ C-YA

Sean Christian Anderson

From Sean's Mom & Dad ~

Again, Congratulations Class of '93

This will be the first time that we have had the opportunity to thank many of you for your support. Our family was very touched by the number of young people that attended Sean's funeral. It warmed our hearts to know that you took the time to remember Sean. We send a special thanks to Shawn Peterson for his wisdom and his kindness. Thanks so much to Erin for asking to include Sean tonight and thanks to all of you for taking these few moments to remember him.

Sean will always be our son and we will always love and remember him. Just as with our living children, Sean is never very far away from us ~ for you see ~ he IS Always In Our Hearts. Always remembering Sean ~ Carol & Steve Welch

Carol Welch

BPUSA – St. Louis, MO

To the Newly Bereaved

As the years pass, we see new members come into the chapter, and we try to help them with their grief as we progress in our own. Over and over

again I have seen newly bereaved parents come to their first meeting totally devastated and convinced that their lives are over. Through the months (and years) I have seen them struggle and suffer and try to find meaning in their lives again. And they do! Through all the anger, pain and tears, somehow the human spirit is able to survive and flower again in a new life – perhaps a changed life and possibly a sadder one, but a stronger one nevertheless

We feel so weak and crushed when our beloved children die, but I know – because I have seen it countless times in the years I've been involved with The Compassionate Friends – that we can make it together. When you walked through the door for the first meeting, you were frightened and nervous; but with that step you made a statement about your life. With that first step through the door, you said you wanted to try; you wanted to find a reason for living again, that you weren't willing to be swallowed by your grief. You wanted to go forward, and those first steps into The Compassionate Friends began your journey.

The journey will be a long one, for you loved your child with all your heart and soul. When that child died, a part of you was ripped away. It takes a long time to repair that large hole. The journey will not always be steady or constant; there will be many setbacks. Those of us who have taken the journey before you can assure you that, while there may be no rainbow at the other end, there is indeed "light at the end of the tunnel." We want to help you as we were helped, but in the beginning and in the long run, you must help yourself. You have to want to get better, to talk about your loss, to struggle through the grief. We will listen, suggest, share and laugh and cry with you; and we hope, at this time next year, you'll be several steps along in your personal journey through grief. Then you can begin to help others.

Karen Schendel

TCF Houston, TX

SIBS

Little Brother

Someone took you away from me
 And I wonder if they cared
 About the ones they left behind
 And the pain that each must bear.

Why did you have to leave me
 When there was so much left to do? I
 'm not sure if I can go on
 If I have to go on without you.

But life dictates the rules.
 There are things that I can't change.
 When you left, my heart was torn in
 two.
 My life got rearranged.

I have to believe
 I'll see you again.

It keeps the hope alive and new.
 So until we meet again, little brother
 Never forget that I love you.

Jenny
 TCF, Indianapolis, IN

Rest, My Brother

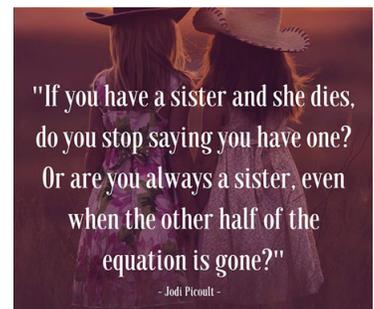
Rest, my brother
 You now have peace.
 The wars within you
 All have ceased.
 And the rising sun
 Each day,
 Upon the heaven
 You will play.
 Until that day
 We meet again,
 Know I love you,
 My brother,
 My friend.

Sandra Evens TCF,
 Kearsarge, NH

Complications of Sibling Grief

Mourning after the loss of a sibling can be complicated for several reasons. The ambivalence that is normally present in a sibling relationship may give rise to guilt, and guilt is known to complicate mourning. You may have had a close relationship with your sibling or a distant one — either extreme and everything in between can affect your guilt or feelings of abandonment after your brother or sister's death. You may experience guilt, sadness and regret if the relationship was never what you ideally would have wanted it to be. Perhaps you had not spent as much time together since you became adults with your own careers and families. Your survival itself can be another source of guilt, especially if you recall the times when you wished your sibling would disappear. These are all normal reactions to sibling loss, and you shouldn't judge yourself if these feelings arise in you. Another factor that complicates sibling grief is the need to support your parents in their grief. This can draw on your energy and emotional reserves, making it harder to care for yourself. You may question if you have the "right" to mourn as deeply as they do, or as a surviving spouse or children do. Know that you do have the right and the need to mourn, and deserve the same support and care as others affected by your sibling's death.

There are also online and local groups for those who have lost a sibling — being part of a community of people who have suffered a similar loss may be helpful.



"If you have a sister and she dies,
 do you stop saying you have one?
 Or are you always a sister, even
 when the other half of the
 equation is gone?"

- Jodi Picoult -

Need to Talk to Someone Between Meetings?

TELEPHONE FRIENDS:

The people listed below have volunteered to take your calls:

Linda Houghtby - Long term illness - (734) 591-3062

Catherine Walker - Loss of Only Child - (248) 921-2938

Charli Johnston - Suicide - 734-812-2006

Joe Hofmann - Drug related death - 734-331-9919

Bob Vitolins - A father's grief - (313) 882-8632

Dana and Brandy Bumstead - Loss of an infant -(313) 447-8144

Kathy Rambo - Sudden Death - (734) 306-3930

Remember that our chapter has a Facebook page. It is a closed page, so you just need to search for The Compassionate Friends of Livonia, Michigan and ask to join.

TCF CHAT ROOM

www.compassionatefriends.org

The chat rooms are moderated and are open at different times. There is one open most evenings from 10-11 p.m. They are all moderated which means that all the chat rooms have a trained facilitator in them.

National Mailing Address: PO Box 3696, Oak Brook, IL 60522; Phone: (630) 990-0010; Toll Free: (877)969-1101; Website: www.compassionatefriends.org

OTHER TCF CHAPTERS IN OUR AREA:

Ann Arbor: Mike Fedel: MikeFedela2@gmail.com; 734-998-0360 ; 3rd Sunday, 2:30 to 4:30 pm - First Presbyterian Church (Vance Room) 1432 Washtenaw, Ann Arbor

St. Clair Shores: 2nd Wed. Kathy Joerin ; 586-293-6176, KJMac21@aol.com

Detroit: Kellie West Outer Drive Methodist Church, 12065 West Outer Drive, Detroit ; 2nd Wed., 6:30 - 8:30; 734-660-9557.

Troy: St. Paul's Methodist Church, 620 Romeo, Rochester, MI 3rd Thursday 7-9; Tina@586-634-0239

South Rockwood TCF Chapter: Southwood United Methodist Church, 6311 S. Huron River Drive. South Rockwood, MI 48179; 3rd Tues. of month meeting - 7 pm; Sheri Schooley, Leader; Contact Karen 734-672-7469

Tecumseh TCF Chapter: First Presbyterian Church, 211 W. Chicago, Tecumseh, 4th Sunday of the month, 2-4 pm, Rose Hatchett, 517-270-3308.



Livonia Chapter Page



Annual Picnic

"I would like to take a moment to THANK everyone who attended our 3rd annual picnic on Saturday, September 14th. We had beautiful weather and enjoyed seeing everyone who came. I would like to take a minute to give an extra thank you to the parents who came and helped setup, breakdown and ran the raffles; Cindy and Matt Stevens, Judy Cappelli, Mary Hartnett, Gail Lafferty, Catherine Walker, Joyce and Rob Gradinscak, Janet Schatz, Sharon Schatz, Sherry Temple -- they truly made the event a huge success. Love, Lee and Rhonda Temple"



Our Livonia TCF Chapter gives a special thank you to Rhonda and Lee Temple for all their work in making our TCF Picnic a success! Thank You!

Names withheld except from members.

A Love Gift is a gift of money to Compassionate Friends. It is usually in honor of a child who has died, but may also be from individuals who want to honor a relative or friend who has died, simply a gift from someone who wants

- ♥ Tom & Connie McCann "In memory of our son Ryan "Ryfro" McCann on his birthday, 10/26"
- ♥ Tom & Connie McCann "In memory of our sons; Ryan "Ryfro" , Tom Jr., Bryan "Bryfro" Soupis considered a son to our family, Mark "Sparky" Abbott, Joe Coffey & Jim "Jimmy" Vick"
- ♥ Mike & Mary Hartnett" In memory of Michael Anthony. Michael Anthony we miss you so much as yet another year passes without you. We love you so much! Mom, Dad, Katie, Dakota & Brooklyn"
- ♥ Judy Cappelli "In memory of my son Christopher. It's been 5 years and I am still learning to live without you. I see your smile in every sunrise and sunset. I love you Christopher"
- ♥ Carol Lacasper " In memory of Stephen Lacasper his birthday (50th). I love you & miss you. Mom"
- ♥ Denise & Chris Falcon "In loving memory of our son Brian. Happy 45th birthday Brian. If wishes could come true, we would be celebrating here with you.

New Members

We welcome new members. We are so sorry for the circumstance that has brought you here. Although we have no easy answers, we can offer you understanding through our common experiences. We also know how much courage it took for you to attend.

Jan Santomauru whose beloved son, **Todd Jeffrey**, Born 1/22; Died 2/5; 49 years

TCF Livonia Chapter
Brenda Brummel
10531 Calumet Trail
Gaylord, MI 49735

October 2019

If any of you would be willing to get the newsletter via the internet,
please email me. Thanks, Brenda Brummel

LOVE GIFTS

Your Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____

Love Gift Donation of \$ _____ in Memory of _____

Message: _____

Direct my gift to: _____ Outreach (Printing, postage, phone , web
_____ General Fund (90% local; 10% national)

Mail to: Rhonda Temple, 25164 Hanover St., Dearborn Heights, MI 48125

Please contact the editor, Brenda Brummel at 10531 Calumet Trail 49735, Gaylord, MI or bbwriter59@aol.com or 810-623-1691.

If you read or write an article or poem bereaved parents and would like to share it.

If you find any errors.

If you move and would like to continue receiving the newsletter, send us your new address.

If you know someone you think would benefit from receiving the newsletter send his/her/their name and address.

If you prefer to no longer receive the newsletter or if you prefer to receive this newsletter via email.