



# THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

North Shore-Boston Chapter

Newsletter

June 2011

To all those newly bereaved, who are receiving this newsletter for the first time and to all our Compassionate Friends, we wish you were not eligible to belong to this group, but we want you to know that you and your family have many friends. We, who received love and compassion from others in our time of deep sorrow, now wish to offer the same support and understanding to you. Please know we understand, we care, and we want to help. You are not alone in your grief.

**Meetings are held the 1<sup>st</sup> Monday of each month** at the Aldersgate Methodist Church, 235 Park Street, North Reading at 7:30 P.M. We are a self-sustaining organization with no funds except what we receive through donations from members and newsletter recipients. Please join with us at a meeting.

### **Grief support after the death of a child**

The Compassionate Friends is a national nonprofit, self-help support organization that offers friendship, understanding, and hope to bereaved parents, grandparents and siblings. There is no religious affiliation and there are no membership dues or fees.

The secret of TCF's success is simple: As seasoned grievers reach out to the newly bereaved, energy that has been directed inward begins to flow outward and both are helped to heal.

*The vision of The Compassionate Friends is that everyone who needs us will find us and everyone who finds us will be helped.*

#### **National Office:**

The Compassionate Friends, Inc.  
P. O. Box 3696  
Oak Brook, IL 60522-3696  
Toll-free: 877-969-0010  
PH: 630-990-0010  
FAX: 630-990-0246  
[www.thecompassionatefriends.org](http://www.thecompassionatefriends.org)

### UPCOMING MEETINGS

**6/6/11 Missed Milestones – 2 groups**  
**Young children – Marianne**  
**Older children - Scott**

**7/5/11 Ask-It-Basket**  
**(Tuesday) Jeff and Pat**

Chapter Co-Leader: Carmen Pope 978-998-4087  
[connect@tcfnoreshore-boston.org](mailto:connect@tcfnoreshore-boston.org)

Chapter Co-Leader: Mariann Lindquist 781-938-5562  
[connect@tcfnoreshore-boston.org](mailto:connect@tcfnoreshore-boston.org)

Newsletter Editor: Cindi Bolivar 781-944-0016  
28 Colburn Rd  
Reading, MA 01867  
[newsletter@tcfnoreshore-boston.org](mailto:newsletter@tcfnoreshore-boston.org)

Regional Coordinator: Rick Mirabile 781-740-1135  
[Rmirabile@comcast.net](mailto:Rmirabile@comcast.net)

*This month's website is sponsored  
in memory of:*

**Eric Smith**

Eric, You will always be loved.

Mom

-and-

**Todd MacDonald**

In memory of Our Son and Friend

You are with us every day, Todd,  
and your friends are always with you.  
Your little Godson, James, is 4 now  
and will never forget you.

Watch over and protect all of us if you can!

Love always from Mom, Dad, and Tracy!

# Our Children Remembered

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## June Birthdays

*Eric Kronk son of Kathy and Walter Kronk*  
*Joseph Matthew Liguori son of Marie Liguori*  
*Michael Edward Lindberg Jr son of Sylvia & Michael Lindberg*  
*John Joseph Nelson son of Gladys & Robert Nelson*  
*Jeannie O'Hare daughter of Jean and Tom O'Hare*  
*Jason Peary son of David and Donna Peary*  
*Christopher John Pope son of Carmen and Jeff Pope*  
*Donald Tottingham son of Mal and Bobbie Tottingham*



## June Angel Dates

*Erik W Dill son of Kathy Cunningham-Dill*  
*Todd MacDonald son of John and Janet McDonald*  
*Bobby Moore son of Jeff Moore*  
*Jason Peary son of David and Donna Peary*  
*Christopher John Pope son of Carmen and Jeff Pope*  
*Megan Lee Power daughter of Margaret Power*  
*Jon Paul Rahall son of Bernadette Rahall*  
*Debbie Sevier daughter of Fred and Trudy Sevier*  
*Andrew Adams Wilder son of Mark and Betty Wilder*  
*Harold E. Williamson son of Sandra Williamson*

As a regular feature, the newsletter is used to acknowledge the Birthdays and Anniversaries of the death of our children/siblings at the request of parents/siblings. Permission must be given for us to print your child's date. If the information is missing or not correct please send the correct data to:

Cindi Bolivar                      Childs Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
28 Colburn Rd,  
Reading, MA 01867              Birth Date: \_\_\_\_\_      Angel Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parents: \_\_\_\_\_

*All entries will be listed in the appropriate newsletter as accurately as possible. We are all grieving parents and mistakes can happen. Please let me know immediately if there is a problem and it will be corrected in the next issue*

## Chapter Sharing Pages

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### From the Chapter Leader

We had a nice evening for the balloon release. This time, the balloons took off in the opposite direction from last year, a reminder that no two moments are the same. The food was delicious, the conversations flowed, and the raffle was lots of fun. Thank you to everyone who came and participated. It's nice to have an evening that can bring more smiles than tears - I looked forward to the opportunity to send Joel a message via balloon with great anticipation all that day. It's also nice to see the leaves coming out on the trees, the flowers blooming, and everywhere the promise of renewal. After a long winter, it's good to have something to look forward to, a feeling of hopefulness.

Some of our steering committee members met recently with Rick Mirabile, the Regional Coordinator, for a facilitator training session. Rick asked our chapter to take on a substantial role in the 2013 TCF National Conference that will be held in Boston during July 4<sup>th</sup> weekend. We have agreed to lead the Hospitality Committee, which means that the TCF NorthShore Boston Chapter will be in charge of hospitality at the conference. This will provide many opportunities for all of our Chapter members to volunteer, both in advance and during the conference. More information will follow. We are excited to have this opportunity, and we're sure our Chapter can do a great job. On another note, we decided to add a second meeting night on the third Wednesday of each month, so that starting in August there will be two meetings per month. This seems to be a good decision, based on the large size of our Chapter, and the fact that we have sufficient members who are willing to help set up and facilitate the meetings. In addition to offering more times to meet, we'll have an alternate night for those who cannot attend on the first Monday of the month. Information about the upcoming meeting dates and topics will appear in future newsletters and on our web site. While you're there, check out our new link to the TCF National Facebook page.

Our June meeting will be about missed milestones. My son Joel was in the second grade when he died about 9 years ago. He would now be a Junior in high school. One of his best friends is graduating this year, and we will be awarding him a scholarship in Joel's memory. It's really hard to believe that so much time has gone by. My younger son Andrew is almost done with his Freshman year. When I think about these

milestones, some missed, some not, it seems that time is very fleeting and sometimes almost not important. Nine years ago, I worried about how I would get through this time in our lives, when Joel would not be graduating from high school. It seemed virtually impossible that it could happen, and yet here we are, surviving and in some ways even thriving. Each milestone seems to get a little easier, because I realize that there are so many things I cannot control.

I hope to see you at our June meeting. In the meantime, take some time to relax and enjoy the nice weather as we move from spring into summer.

Mariann

### Holding Onto Love

*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.*

**By Chuck Collins  
Burke/Springfield/FairfaxChapter TCF**

# Chapter Sharing Pages

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## Child Loss often Makes a Father Feel Like a Failure

Men go through all kinds of identity changes when they experience the loss of a child, especially a child who is older and has lived long enough to create established memories with his father. A man identifies himself by mainly two things: the job he has and the family he has. When a child is taken away by death, a man suddenly loses the largest, most important part of his identity and a real crisis situation has been created, not just for the father, but also for the role the father plays with the family. Fathers love to feel needed, and they love to feel like they are the one responsible for the happiness of the entire family.

Men are far less verbal than women by nature, and it makes it much more difficult for family members and friends to understand the changes that are taking place with a father when he loses a child. He often feels like a total failure because he was unable to prevent the death or to fix the death once it took place. This is especially true if the child's life was lost due to an illness. Fathers are notorious for fixing things that are broken or in need of repair, and when they cannot fix their child's illness and the end result is death, a father goes through a deep grieving period of feeling tremendous guilt and failure.

A father who loses a child also loses such a large part of his dreams. Fathers don't always openly talk about their dreams of hunting and fishing with their children, or of taking bike rides together, going to ball games together or of tossing a ball in the backyard, but they think about these events all of the time. Fathers of girls daydream about walking their daughter down the aisle and dancing that first dance at the wedding. They dream about taking care of all of their child's hurts, wiping their tears away, and being called "hero" for all of the ways they show their strength to their son or daughter. Child loss, in a father's eyes, often represents weakness. Men believe fathers are to be strong and in charge, not at a loss for knowing what to do when death turns life upside down. Child loss is such a helpless feeling, and often this is a foreign emotion for fathers who have been immersed in the lives of being a tower of strength for their child.

What is a father to do? How can a father go on and feel whole once again? It takes time to work through the pain of loss. It takes a long time to build back a feeling of belonging as a father. It will often

take years for a father to be able to reclaim his identity of a father. It will take lots of working through feelings of failure and loss to feel like a man who can always proudly wear the name father.

Take it a day at a time, a step at a time. Begin by telling yourself over and over that you will always be a father. Nothing can change that – not even death. Remind yourself often that some things cannot be fixed by you. Remember often that lost dreams are part of the pain every parent feels when a child dies. It takes a lot of tears and years to work past the milestone markers of such things as dreams of your child playing ball, driving a car, dating, getting married, and having children. These are not easy dreams to release, but with time you will be able to more vividly remember the times you had with your child than to sorrow over the time you never had. Be patient with yourself! Be kind to yourself! And, when you fall into the emotional pain of feeling like a failure, remind yourself that you will always be a father and nothing can take away that badge of honor, not even death!

Lastly, remind yourself that you will make it! There will be a day when you can say with confidence, "I am a father – always and forever, and I am so thankful for that!"

Written by Clara Hinton

From the web site [www.silentgrief.com](http://www.silentgrief.com)

## A Beautiful Dream

Eyes open wide  
I awake from a beautiful dream  
Within seconds the painful reality of my life sets in  
I find myself wanting to scream

Grief so strong  
Impossible to explain  
Living with a broken heart  
Struggling with the pain

Eyes closed tight  
I pray for that beautiful dream  
A short escape from the painful reality  
That makes me want to scream

Robert Willis  
TCF, Frederick, MD

# Chapter Sharing Pages

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## THE SCREAM

The smile you see is not all of me,  
For I'm not what I seem.  
I laugh and smile but all the while,  
My smile holds in a scream.

For when I see a little girl,  
So innocent and free,  
I think about my little girl,  
Who died at seventeen.

And then the scream comes welling up,  
From in my soul so black,  
And so my smile must block it in,  
And laughter hold it back.

I saw her born and watched her grow,  
from child to blooming lass,  
But through the years I couldn't know,  
I'd have to see her pass.

The suffering within my heart,  
I hide from all the world.  
I do my job, I play the part,  
And miss my little girl.

A song about a father's love,  
So sweet with tenderness,  
Awakes in me the horror of,  
My loss and loneliness.

So, if they say "He takes it well,  
He'll be OK we all can tell.  
How well his life continues on,  
It's almost if she wasn't gone."

Remember that I'm not so sane,  
Playacting, keeping up the game,  
My nightmare life trapped in a dream,  
You see, my smile holds in a scream.

Steve Tutt ~ TCF, Tyler, Texas  
Remembering our daughter, Lisa  
1987-2004

## ON NOT SAYING IT

I never got around to saying it.  
There was always tomorrow,  
When the time would be more appropriate.  
Besides, you hated "embarrassment,"  
Or was the embarrassed one really me?  
Now I say it a lot,  
To the sky, to your photo, to a gravestone.  
Knowing facts say you cannot hear it,  
But believing, inside me, you can.  
When a child, a youth, then a young man,  
I remember how you watched my face.  
First as your god, then as your monitor,  
Finally, I hope, as a friend.  
But "I love you," as years went by,  
Were words we kept bottled inside.  
Now that you've left, the bottle overflows.  
Until I, too, cross the Divide,  
I have to believe you knew.  
And forgave me for not saying it.  
Leonard Ruppert  
TCF, Atlanta, GA

## Lost Graduation

Pomp and Circumstance,  
Speeches,  
Happy faces,  
Proud parents,  
It's not fair  
Because you're not there.



Mortar boards flying,  
Diplomas,  
Tassels tossed,  
It's too much to bear  
Because you're not here.

School song playing,  
Gifts,  
Celebrations,  
Laughing friends,  
We cannot share,  
Because you're not here.

*Sue Snapp, Tucson TCF  
—dedicated to the children who graduated only in our hearts*

## Chapter Sharing Pages

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	<b>TELEPHONE FRIENDS</b> Our telephone friends are here to help you if you feel the need to connect with someone outside of our usual meeting night. We are not professionals - we are all bereaved parents seeking to find a way through our grief. <b>Please be considerate in the timing of your calls to these volunteers.</b>	
Beverly	Carmen Pope, infant son, anencephaly; 11 year old son, boating accident	978-998-4087
Billerica	Jeff Moore, son 17, moped accident	978-663-8539
Cambridge	Lin Campbell, daughter, 23, drug overdose	617-576-9290
Lynn	Pat Karakashian, son, 29, drug Overdose	781-593-5875
Marshfield	Trudy Sevier, daughter 27, suicide	617-791-0439
Malden	Marnie Smithers, son 13, ATV Accident	781-322-1722
North Andover	Catherine Olson, daughter 27, pedestrian accident	978-681-8341
North Reading	Margo Vogis, son, 20, automobile accident	978-664-0688
Reading	Reggie & Cindi Bolivar, son 22, automobile accident	781-944-0016
Winchester	Maureen McCormack, son 20, drowning	781-729-1878
Melrose	Wayne Patick, son 22, suicide; intentional heroin overdose	781-622-9094
Everett	Steve Robinson, daughter 24, domestic violence	508-728-4040
Campton, NH	Melinda & David Paul, daughter, 20, sudden cardiac arrest	603-726-8190

### Help Our Chapter and Create a Memorial Website in the “Friends Asking Friends” Program

You can help the **North Shore/Boston** chapter of The Compassionate Friends and create a website to honor the memory of a child in your family by participating in the Walk to Remember through the Friends Asking Friend fundraising program. Many chapters raise enough money through this program to fund their chapter’s financial needs for the entire year.

Everything happens on TCF National’s Friends Asking Friends site at [www.tcfwalktoremember.org](http://www.tcfwalktoremember.org) We have created a team website called **TCF North Shore/Boston** and you can find us by clicking on “more” under Team Rank. If we become one of the five top fundraising teams, you’ll find us listed on the Home page with the other leaders. Once you find our team, you can join it by clicking on “Event Enrollment” and then “join a team.” Scroll down to our team and then click on it and fill out the personal information requested. List your personal fundraising goal on behalf of the chapter (minimum goal is \$500, but whatever you actually raise is great). You’ll then see a confirmation page. Hit “Continue” and you can now create a website in memory of your child.

The website is very simple to make and you can upload a picture of your child (sibling or grandchild), use the default picture (the Walk to Remember logo) or a generic picture from the library. You can actually upload up to two pictures. You can then preview your website and when done, click on “submit.” That’s all there is to joining the team and creating your website. After that, you can use “tools” to help you send e-mails to friends, relatives, and business acquaintances asking them to make a donation to honor the life of your child, sibling, or grandchild. Or you can contact your friends on Facebook.

Please join with us in this great event! For more information, write Mariann at [rdlindquist@rcn.com](mailto:rdlindquist@rcn.com) or by calling 781-938-5562.



# LOVE NOTES



*From Malcolm & Roberta Tottingham. In Loving Memory of our son, Don, on his birthday, June 30 1954. Love, Mom & Dad*

*From Sandra Williamson. In Loving Memory of Harold Williamson, Jr. Thinking of you at this time on June 10<sup>th</sup> being the time you left us in 2003. We all miss you very much and we think of you all the time. We love you very much and will always be in our hearts and minds. I think of you every day. You're two sisters and three nieces talk about you and so do your two daughters, Faith & Haley. I will think of you on Mother's Day as I always do and miss you so much. With Love and Hugs to you. Mom xoxo*

*From Jody Marchand. In Loving Memory of Olivia. Even though you would be turning 19 on your birthday, you'll always be my little angel. I hope you are in a better place & happy. Miss you & love you with all my heart. Love Mom*

*From Mark, Betty & Doug Wilder. In Loving Memory of Andrew Wilder. Always Mom's sweetie boy & forever our angel. We'll miss you forever & Aunt Peg too!*

*From Elaine & John Kingston. In Loving Memory of our daughter Patricia "Patty" Kingston. You are always in our thoughts. Love, Mom & Dad*

*From Jeffery & Carmen Pope. In Loving Memory of Christopher Pope. Thinking of you on what would have been your 17<sup>th</sup> birthday. Love Mom, Dad, Kelly & Dave.*

## PLEASE NOTE THE DEADLINES FOR SUBMISSIONS:

Please send your Love Notes and donations by mail to **TCF No Shore/Boston, PO BOX 1117, Billerica MA 01821**. (do **NOT** send them to the editor), or give them to the leader at the monthly meetings. Please use the form below to assure notes are posted exactly as you want them.

Love Notes must be received by the **15<sup>th</sup> of the month before** you with the note published.

Notes for the **JULY** newsletter must be received by **JUNE 15<sup>th</sup>**.

**Love Gifts for future dates may be sent at any time – month to be published:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Love Gift from** \_\_\_\_\_ **In memory of** \_\_\_\_\_

**Message:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Coming to your first meeting is the hardest thing to do. Try not to judge your first meeting as to whether or not TCF will work for you. The second, third, or fourth meeting might be the time you will find the right person or just the right words that will help you in your grief or comfort you. Remember we have all been there and even though circumstances may be different we really do understand. You are not alone

## TO OUR OLDER MEMBERS

We need your encouragement and support. You are the string that ties our group together. Each meeting we have new parents. Think back.... remember hearing from others farther along than you...“your pain will not always be this bad it really does get better” Come to the meetings and share your wisdom. Show others that there is hope, from someone who has found it.

## THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

NorthShore/Boston Chapter

PO BOX 1117

Billerica, MA 01821-0961

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

DATED MATERIALS  
PLEASE FORWARD



**THE  
COMPASSIONATE  
FRIENDS**  
North Shore-Boston Chapter

NEWSLETTER – JUNE 2011



National Website: [www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org)

The mission of The Compassionate Friends is to assist families toward the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child of any age and to provide information to help others be supportive.

\*\*\*\*\* CHAPTER WEBSITE: [www.TCFNoShore-Boston.org](http://www.TCFNoShore-Boston.org) \*\*\*\*\*

Help us save money and paper.....

To receive these newsletters via email please send an email to the editor.