



Newsletter of the San Diego Chapter of "TCF"

The Compassionate Friends

A non profit self-help organization for families who are grieving the death of a child.



November /
December 2022

Issue 164

Dedication and Love Gifts 1-2

Mission Statement
Meeting Location 3
Telephone Friends

Loved, Missed and Remembered 4

Articles 5-10

Websites
Steering Committee 11

Next Meetings

In Person Meeting
See page 3

Wednesday
November 2nd

Wednesday
December 7th

These pages Dedicated with Love to:



Malini Elizabeth Sathyadev



Andrea Lynn Montisano



Esther Janus
Kristina Michelle Bennett
Naomi, baby sister

♥ Always In Our Hearts ♥



Allen J. Kha



Ethan Estlin Wozniak



Joshua James Lubrich

San Diego Chapter of TCF
3805 Garden Lane
San Diego CA 92106
(619) 583-1555
www.sdtcf.org

Chapter Co-Leaders
Lisa Hohman 619-701-5641
Sandi Terrell 619-562-3949

The National Office of TCF
P. O. Box 3696
Oakbrook, IL 60522-3696
Phone toll free (877) 969-0010
Web Site: www.compassionatefriends.org/

Donations and Love Gifts

Dedications and Love Gifts go towards the cost of: printing and mailing of this Newsletter; outreach activities to the newly bereaved; and other expenses necessary to continue our chapter in San Diego. These donations are tax deductible. Our sincerest thanks that honor their children in this way.

- ♥ Steve & Suzanne Wozniak — In Loving Memory of their son Ethan.
- ♥ Yvonne & Lucien Bennett-Niang — In Loving Memory of their daughters. “Tina”. “Missing you at Christmas!!” “Esther” “Happy heavenly birthday.” “Unforgettable sisters.”
- ♥ Allan Sathyadev — In Loving Memory of his daughter Malini.
- ♥ Susan Wen & Long Kha — In Loving Memory of their son Allen.
- ♥ Debbie & Dominic Montisano — In Loving Memory of their daughter Andrea.
- ♥ Patty Terrell — In Loving Memory of her grandson Joshua.
- ♥ Sandi and Mark Terrell - In Loving Memory of Joshua (Joshy). Happy 33rd Birthday Joshy!! To our beloved son & brother, Joshua: "We Love You and Miss You Forever and Always!! You will always be our "Jewel" in the family, one to be "Gone But Never Forgotten!" We miss you more with each passing day! "You're still a part of everything we do; you're on our hearts, just like a tattoo, just like a tattoo, we'll always have you." Song by Jordan Sparks. Love, Mom, Dad, Best Friend Zachary, Ryan and Kiersten with granddaughter Lily Mae, Andrew and Virginia with grandsons Andrew Joshua and Austin Lee, Best Friend Jason and Brittney with grandsons Dylan Amir and Jayce Benjamin and Best Friends Forever, Persio!"

BIRTHDAY TABLE

Every month at our meeting, we provide a birthday table. In the month of your child's birthday you may bring pictures and/or other items for the table. Near the close of the meeting, you'll have a chance to share thoughts of your child's life with us.

About our Annual Picnic; A Big Thank You to:

Robert, Gary, and Mark for supplying and preparing the meat dishes and several other items.
 Gary for securing the Gazebo pavilion for the first time which we're all thankful for!
 Debbi, Carol, Dom that made our beautiful butterfly planters for each member.
 Many who pitched in and helped with setting up and bringing dishes to share.

The Compassionate Friends

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".



Telephone Friends

Ever feeling blue and need someone to talk to, who understands and cares. Just pick up the phone and call:

LONG TERM ILLNESS Lynn Lyon
 (760) 639-4601

ONLY CHILD

ALCOHOL RELATED Elizabeth Richardson
 (619) 245-3515

PARA HABLAR EN ESPAÑOL David Bolaños Keyser
 (760) 310-3632

Wednesday in-person meetings at the Legacy Church.

Meetings first Wednesday of the month

Virtual meetings offered. Contact Gary Hochstetler
gshoch@cox.net

Legacy Church 8076 La Mesa Blvd. in La Mesa. The Church is within the La Mesa Springs Shopping Center.

No food. (7-9 PM)

Directions:

From I-8 going east exit Fletcher Pkwy.

Right turn on Baltimore Blvd.

Right turn to University Ave.

Pass traffic light at Allison Blvd. turning left into “Vons La Mesa Springs” shopping center. Pass Von’s entrance continuing to the end of the parking lot, Legacy Church on left. Ample parking.

For another entrance to the “shopping center”. Left turn on La Mesa Blvd (next intersection). Left turn next traffic light into the parking lot. Church toward the right.

About TCF and Our Newsletter

Cost of printing and mailing our newsletters is expensive. Thanks to all of you who send in a Love Gift whenever you can, we are able to keep our monthly newsletters going. It encourages us when we hear from you.

We hope to hear from each of our readers sometime during the year. Your gift does not need to be a great amount to make a difference. It all helps...and it offers each of us the opportunity to remember your child, too, in a special way when we see his or her name. Each child touches our hearts, and in various ways, bonds us together.

To Place Child’s Picture In Newsletter

If you wish to have your child’s picture in our newsletter please use the Application / Love Gifts form on the back page. Recommended donation is \$30. Donations / Love Gifts are always appreciated.



***Our Children – Loved, Missed and Remembered
November & December***

We remember the families of:



Birthdays

***Luis Walter & Teresa Carolina
Bernal, born 11-1***
Sammy Fishkin, born 11-2
Davey Johnson, born 11-2
Gregg Garon, born 11-3
Joshua James Lubrich, born 11-3
Sumi Suresh, born 11-4
Monica Castellozzo, born 11-7
Allen J. Kha, born 11-10
Rick E. Pieramico, born 11-19
Jameson Connor Segel, born 11-13
Craig Thomas Markley, born 11-16
Kristy Shoemate, born 11-24
Eddie Diaz, born 11-27
Josh Forness, born 11-27
Dylan Libby, born 11-28
Mikael Larson, born 12-2
Stephen Mathew Kraft III, born 12-4
Ronald Jack Drew, born 12-7
Malini Elizabeth Sathyadev, born 12-7
Tavion Jackson, born 12-8
Rick Nolin, born 12-21
Anthony James Shott, born 12-13
Milton (Danny) Smith, born 12-28
Jasmine Bellofatto, born 12-29
Ron Laverty, born 12-30

Anniversaries

Azja K. Ostrye, died 11-4
Gary R. Lopez, died 11-12
Alan H. Balsam, died 11-13
***Luis Walter & Teresa Carolina Bernal,
died 11-1***
Philippe Leyva, died 11-17
Reese Kaitlyn, died 11-19
Monica Castellozzo, died 11-24
Alan James Hein, died 11-25
Alexander Joseph Niazi, died 11-26
Allison Anne Dunn, died 11-30
Daniel R. Keyser, died 12-2
Christopher L Mariano, died 12-7
Justin Scott, died 12-9.
David Sullivan, died 12-9
Stephanie Johanna Westrich, died 12-10
Riley Gail Horgan, died 12-11
Vincent Glen Ruddy, died 12-13
Megan Ashley Landis, died 12-17
Marsha Cushing, died 12-19
Wallace Michaelson, died 12-19
Andrea Lynn Montisano, died 12-19
Ryan Kelley Spohr, died 12-20
Amy Sara Bowden, died 12-21
Andres Saputo, died 12-23
Anthony James Shott, died 12-25
Ethan Estlin Wozniak, died 12-26
Anthony William Bane, died 12-30

Annual Holiday Program And Candle Lighting Ceremony

“...and that their may always shine”

Sunday December 11, 2022

—Start Time—6:00 to 8:00 pm

—New Location—

Pioneer Ocean View United Church Of Christ

Fellowship hall

2550 Fairfield St.

Directions: From I-5 exit Clairemont Dr. east, about ¾ mi. to Fairfield St.

From Balboa Ave., exit Clairemont Dr. heading south, about 1 ½ mi. to Fairfield St. Fairfield St. only goes south, follow to end, enter church parking lot. Fellowship hall is to the rear, follow walkway.

The Compassionate Friends hosts a Worldwide Candle Lighting around the globe on the 2nd Sunday of December annually. This creates a virtual 24-hour wave of light in each time zone honoring the memories of the sons, daughters, brothers, sisters, and grandchildren gone too soon.

This night is dedicated to our children. We invite parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, brother, sisters and friends in this night of sharing.

Light refreshments will be provided by the SDTCF Committee.



Creating Luminarias

Families and friends will have an opportunity to create a luminaria in honor of their son or daughter, brother or sister, or a grandchild. All materials will be provided and available at Dec. 7 monthly meeting and Dec. 11 day of candle lighting.

For more information contact:
Lisa Hohman 619-701-5641 or
Louise Hendrickson 303-663-3450

Our children's photos will be shared in a power point presentation. If you wish your child's photo to be in the presentation, please have it available by the November monthly meeting or email photo no later than December 1st to Gary Hochstetler at gshoch@cox.net. If you do not have online resource, Gary's mailing address is 4605 Palm Ave., La Mesa, CA 91942. Tel. 602-459-3246.



HEART CONNECTIONS – THE BONDS OF SHARED GRIEF

Divisiveness and intolerance for others' views seem prevalent all around us today. We see it in our political beliefs, social justice concerns, and health environment. It is apparent within families, workplaces, and organizations. When we are grieving the painful death of a child, grandchild, or sibling, this divisiveness creates walls that can make our sorrow even deeper. It's difficult enough when we're grieving to feel connected to the people around us, and these dividing walls can further isolate us.

The Compassionate Friends credo begins with these words:

*We need not walk alone.
We are The Compassionate Friends
We reach out to each other with love, with understanding, and with hope.
The children we mourn have died at all ages and from many different causes,
but our love for them unites us.*

Uniting people who share this deep grief was the premise that started The Compassionate Friends. The death of our brother, sister, child, or grandchild permeates all aspects of our being. It's something that can't easily be explained to those who have not experienced it, while those who have, possess a deep and compassionate understanding that requires little explanation. The bonds within our TCF community can bridge these chasms we see around us. Rather than being further isolated in our grief, we can feel surrounded by understanding, community, and shared hope that can be lifesaving during this time.

While none of us would choose to be a part of this community given the reason that brought us, we are connected at a deeply meaningful level. It's hard to see someone across the table with a similar loss and stay in a place of intolerance and anger. When we remember what binds us as a group and honor our shared losses, we focus on supportive and comforting connectedness. When we reach for the love in our hearts that's bolstered by our shared sorrow, we can model a greater energy that's needed in our world. Our child, grandchild, or sibling who died and brought us to TCF is honored each time we choose this path of connection through our differences rather than more division because of them.

SHARI O'LOUGHLIN

Looking for Your Gift

Bereaved families often face the holidays with fear and trepidation. Just the fact, holidays continue to go on, can cause outrage. Our sadness is monumental, and causes our bodies to resist moving on. We need to be gentle with ourselves; we are going through an emotional rehabilitation. Holidays often renew our grief, even if we are a distance from fresh grief.

We need to selectively choose what traditions are important to our family. If we over commit, we set ourselves up for a letdown when we cannot meet our goals. If you have some traditions that are very important and you are not physically up to doing them, you will find friends and extended family will feel honored if you ask for their help. Most people want to help you get through the holidays, but don't know what to do. Give them the opportunity to feel they are helpful in your healing.

Grieving cannot be put on the shelf until the holidays are over. We need to take time to feel our grief, and express our sadness. We also need to take time to try and put a bit of normality in our lives. We must remember it is not disrespectful to laugh. I'm sure our loved one would want us to surround ourselves with caring people who can help us through the holidays. A caring supportive person is one who encourages us to be the best we can be, not one who expects us to be as we used to be.

Our healing will eventually cause our pain to move out and make room for our loved ones memories. We learn to make a new life for ourselves. Holidays get better and we learn how to live again.

We tend to think of life's richest moments as being the joyous, fun filled, carefree days prior to losing our children and siblings. But, as I search for the most meaningful things that have given me strength and a real appreciation for life, they certainly do include the pain, overcoming my despair, losing my son, grandson, and six siblings. We cherish the friendships that doesn't always demand a smiling face, and those with the warm touch that says, "share your pain, let me be a part of your grief, don't worry about making us uneasy with tears, we have all been there." Much healing can take place through sharing as we learn to be very honest and courageous with our feelings, which helps us to find hope. Hope helps to restore our love for life, and gives us the strength to survive.

This holiday we will all miss our loved ones, who are no longer with us. Though it has been through much pain, you probably have never been so close to your child or sibling, or shared such a large part of your life with them. We hope the memories that ache with pain, can also bring you thoughts of love. For those of us who are further removed from our early grief, who can look back and appreciate the strength for our struggle, the compassion from seeing other's pain, wanting to become functional human beings again so we can contribute to making a better world, are gifts our children and siblings have given to us for our survival. These gifts are greater than any fancy bow tied box can contain. Look for your gifts and cherish them.

Marie Hofmockel
TCF Valley Forge, PA

Thanksgiving Marks Beginning Of Holiday Madness and Sadness

In our society we have turned the Holidays into a never ending round of parties, shopping, cooking, preparations for guests or travel and stress, lots and lots of stress. It begins in October with the not so subtle reminders from our friendly retail stores. Most of us dread this time of year because as members of Compassionate Friends, we have one more item on our list and it invariably is at the top.....my child is gone.....how can I handle the holidays?

This will be my third Thanksgiving without my son. We had 35 wonderful Thanksgiving celebrations together, and now it's just me. My only child is gone, my grandchildren now live solely in their mother's world. I am not a part of that world. But I am learning to cope with this reality. I am learning that I can hold on to the traditions that don't cause me sadness and let go of those that do. As bereaved parents we fall into a unique category. As humans we accept that the loss of parents, spouses, aunts, uncles, siblings, friends and acquaintances is inevitable. But never, never, were we taught or conditioned to the idea that our children would or could precede us in death. The very notion of this shook us to our core.

Now we have lost our child to death. Nobody prepared us for this mind numbing loss. The rules have been broken. We have no coping skills. Our friends usually can't help. Our families try, but until one endures a loss of this magnitude, the ability to fully comprehend the never ending rounds of sadness is simply not there.

We do have a support system.....we can choose to participate or simply be there, in the moment, at our Compassionate Friends meetings. Here we find our most meaningful and helpful connection with other parents.....parents who are walking the road we now walk. These bereaved parents are here to help us on this unfamiliar road. They cannot answer every question because the

answers don't exist to most questions. When will this pain end? When will life go back to "normal"? There are different types of pain and new kinds of normal. We gather each month to help each other, to lean on each other, to find hope in each other's ability to function. From this meeting of kindred souls we do derive some solace, some peace and some hope. I have watched the newly bereaved, raw in their sadness when they first attend a meeting. As the months move forward, I begin to see a change in these parents. Each changes in a different way, for each experiences their loss and their grief process in a different way. Some changes aren't apparent for months, even a year or two. Learning that we are not alone in the grievous burden of our loss is comforting. Learning that others have developed ways to cope with the holidays, the birthdays, the death anniversaries and other special occasions gives us the hope that we, too, will one day feel comfortable in our new "normal."

I have chosen to accept this group of gentle, kind and compassionate friends as an integral part of my life. The first holidays were horrible. I learned that I had to do what I felt was right. I learned to let go of the expectations of others and live in the moment. Even if I plan to do something and change my mind, I feel no guilt. I learned that those who truly love me understand. I have found that I am truly becoming myself....my new self. It is a slow process. There are setbacks.

Holidays are extremely difficult for every parent who has lost a child.....it matters not how long ago our child died. The pain is fresh, new and raw at this time of year. This is the season for leaning on our compassionate friends, for asking questions, expressing fears, anxieties, doubts, depression and anger and for finding the comfort, hope and understanding that each of us so desperately seeks.

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



OCTOBER MEMORIES

Posted on September 30th, 2022

October's here, the air is bright,
The leaves decked out in fancy dress,
The clouds in shapes of animals
Hang in the sky so blue.
This was our time of year, your favorite.
How many times did you come in,
Cheeks glowing, eyes sparkling,
Smelling of the leaves you jumped through
As a child and even after you grew up.
How many times did you say
"Just smell, just feel the air.
love it, crisp,
With a hint of winter coming."
Our time, but now only my time.
Time to dream dreams that won't be.
Time to wish wishes that can't come true,
Time to remember & treasure each day we had together.
Time for October's memories.

ARDEN LANSING

Ten Tips to Surviving the Difficult Holidays After Your Child Dies

FROM: Wayne Loder, Public Awareness Coordinator
The Compassionate Friends, November 1, 2005

Oak Brook, IL—With Thanksgiving and the normally festive holidays around the corner, millions of families throughout the United States that have lost a child are struggling with how they can simply survive to see the new year.

"The stress that bereaved parents, siblings, and grandparents face during the hustle and bustle of the Holidays can feel overwhelming," says Patricia Loder, executive director of The Compassionate Friends. "It is difficult for those who have not gone through the death of a child to understand the depth of despair which such a loss brings."

The Compassionate Friends, with nearly 600 chapters and locations in every state, as well as Washington, DC and Puerto Rico, is a mutual assistance self-help organization for bereaved parents and families where more seasoned grievers help support the more newly bereaved.

Mrs. Loder, whose two young children died in a car crash in 1991, says there are many tips that can help a grieving family prepare for the holidays.

- 1) Plan ahead. Realize you will not be able to do everything with everyone. Decide what is truly important to you and your family.
- 2) Don't be afraid to ask friends for help. Tasks which may normally take little effort can feel overwhelming, whether it's fixing a meal, cleaning the house, or putting up decorations.
- 3) No one expects you to string rows and rows of lights just to prove you have the holiday spirit. If you don't feel up to past efforts, you may simply want to place an electric powered candle in your window in memory of your child.
- 4) Just because you've hosted holiday gatherings in the past doesn't mean you're obligated to this year. Others will understand.
- 5) After a child dies, old traditions are often left behind and new ones that incorporate the child who died can take their place. Honor the memory of your child in unique ways that have meaning to you.
- 6) Surviving children should be included in your plans. They, too, mourn their sibling, but need a normalcy the holidays can provide .
- 7) If you don't get everything done you plan, be easy on yourself. Grief is tough work and you should never feel guilty for not getting everything done.
- 8) If you must shop for others, find a time when the stores are not extremely busy like early morning, order through the Internet, or ask others to shop for you.
- 9) Participating in a memorial service, such as The Compassionate Friends Worldwide Candle lighting the second Sunday in December, can be very meaningful. This can be done in a formal service with others or through a short private candle lighting in the privacy of your home.
- 10) Remember that the fearful anticipation of an approaching holiday is usually worse than the day itself .

"Many people believe they can escape the holidays by leaving home on a vacation," adds Mrs. Loder. "This rarely helps because grief can never be left behind and it is important to have the support of relatives and friends . Talking with others who have also lost a child can help those facing grief to understand they are not alone. Others have survived the holidays and they will, too."

The Compassionate Friends has a presence in an estimated 29 countries around the world. For information on a local chapter or for other means of support, call toll-free 877-969-0010 or visit The Compassionate Friends national website at www.compassionatefriends.org .

**THE
COMPASSIONATE
FRIENDS
SAN DIEGO CHAPTER
STEERING COMMITTEE**

CHAPTER CO-LEADERS Lisa Hohman (619)701-5641
Sandi Terrell (619) 562-3949

TREASURER Long Kha long.kha@gmail.com

SECRETARY Nik Sada aniksada@yahoo.com

NEWS-LETTER EDITOR Del Hohman us030424@gmail.com

OUTREACH Diane Hochstetler dianerhoch@gmail.com

REFRESH-MENTS Debbi Montisano (858) 274-5724

LIBRARIAN Grace Saputo Gmsaputo@gmail.com

SUPPORT:

John Rooks (619)654-0141
Elene Bratton
Yvonne & Lucien Bennett-Niang ybennettniang@yahoo.com

Web Master	Jason Kha webmaster@sdtcf.org
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① OUR LOCAL WEB SITE

Visit the San Diego Chapter homepage:

www.sdtcf.org

Email: leaders@sdtcf.org

The San Diego chapter home page has information about our chapter and links to more grief resources.

TCF Regional Coordinator

① OTHER LOCAL RESOURCES

MADD 858-564-0780
Empty Cradle 619-595-3887

Survivors of Suicide 619-482-0297
info@SOSLsd.org

Bereaved Parents of the USA
www.bereavedparentsusa.org

Parents of Murdered Children
National 888-818-POMC
Local 619-281-3972

Alive Alone - for now childless parents www.alivealone.org

① INFORMATION ON THE NET

Visit the TCF national homepage:
www.compassionatefriends.org

The national home page is filled with information and grief resources on-line. A “chat” room for on-line discussion with bereaved families is available.

Chat Room schedule:

Mon 9-10 pm EST: General Bereavement
Mon 10-11pm EST: Men’s Chat
Tue 9-10 pm EST: Pregnancy and Infant Death
Thur 8-9 pm EST: No surviving children
Thur 9-10 pm EST: Siblings (Minimum age is 13)
Thur 10-11 pm: Grieving Alone (Single parents)

member web/e-mail

<http://www.RickPieramico.com>

Charlene Tate caricat83@hotmail.com

Elene Bratton jamiesjoy@simplynet.com
www.jamiesjoy.org

Tami Carter haley1@san.rr.com

TCF INFORMATION PACKAGE

If you would like to send an information package on TCF to someone you think could benefit, (either for themselves or others) phone 619-583-1555. Leave a message with your name and phone number and the name and full address of the person you would like to receive the package.

Be a compassionate friend

Our Lost Children’s Photos for Newsletter

The recommended donation for your child’s photo in our newsletter is \$30. Children’s pictures will be in color. Donations and love gifts are always greatly appreciated.

WE WELCOME YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS



Deadline for submission to the January / February 2023

Issue of The Compassionate Friends is December 15, 2022

We warmly welcome your contributions, both original and inspirational writings. Please indicate sources of any non-original texts.



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

Supporting Family After a Child Dies
San Diego County Chapter

3805 Garden Lane, San Diego CA 92106

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

November / December 2022

Love Gifts

Donations and love gifts in memory of your loved one enable us to reach bereaved parents with telephone calls and information, and help defray newsletter and mailing expenses. Please indicate any special tribute you wish printed in our newsletter. When making a donation, please specify the San Diego chapter. Make your checks payable to:

TCF, San Diego Chapter, 3805 Garden Lane, San Diego CA 92106 (619) 583-1555

From: _____ In Memory Of: _____

TCF The Compassionate Friends *newsletter application*

New Address

New subscription

Remove from list

Please send newsletter by regular mail.

By email, address _____

Your name: _____

Child's Full Name: _____

Address _____

Birth date: _____

City: _____

Date of death: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Cause: _____

Home phone: () _____

Your relationship to child: _____

Siblings/Ages: _____

Yes, I would like my child's name to be listed on the anniversary pages of the chapter newsletter

Yes, I would like my child's name to be listed on the anniversary pages of the chapter web site

If you have lost more than one child, please use a separate form for each child.