

# The Compassionate Friends

for families who are grieving the death of a child.

November / December 2017

Issue 134

**Next Meeting** 

Wednesday **November 1st** 

Wednesday **December 6th** 

#### These pages Dedicated with Love to:



Malini Elizabeth Sathyadev



Rick E. Pieramico

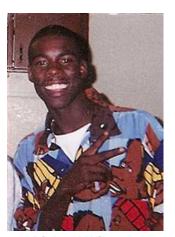


Allen J. Kha

### Always In Our Hearts



Stephen Matthew Kraft III



**Richard Wilson** 



Joshua James Lubrich



**David Michael Ellis** 

San Diego Chapter of **TCF** 11582 Fury Lane #118 El Cajon, CA 92019 (619) 583-1555 www.sdtcf.org

**Chapter Co-Leaders** Lisa Hohman 619-287-4253 Sandi Terrell 619-562-3949

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www.compassionatefriends.org/



## November / December 2017

#### Issue 134

Dedication and Love Gifts 1-2

Mission Statement Meeting Location Telephone Friends

3

5

Loved, Missed and 4 Remembered

Annual Candle
Lighting with
Love In Motion
Signing Choir

Articles 6-10

Websites Steering Committee 11

#### **Next Meeting**

Wednesday November 1st

Wednesday December 6th

Location, see p. 3

#### **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 to all who honor their children in this way.

- ✔ Allan Sathyadev In Loving Memory of his daughter Malini.
- **♥** Susan Wen & Long Kha In Loving Memory of our Son Allen.
- ♥ Hedy Pieramico In Loving Memory of her son Rick. "Happy birthday dear Rick. Time does not heal all wounds. You remain in our hearts forever." Mom, Neil & Lisa
- ♥ Vercia Kraft In Loving Memory of her son Stephen.
- Marchell Crain In Loving Memory of her son Richard.
- ▼ Sandi & Mark Terrell Happy Sandi and Mark Terrell-Happy
  28th Birthday Joshua!! To our beloved son & brother: "We Love
  You and Miss You Forever and Always!! 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!! Mom, Dad, Best Friend Zachary and Stephane, Ryan
  and Kiersten with baby Lily Mae, Andrew and Virginia with
  baby Andrew Joshua and the next boy along the way, Best Friend
  Jason and Brittney with baby Dylan Amir and baby Jayce
  Benjamin and Best Friends Forever, Persio!"
- **♥** Maxine Ellis In Loving Memory of her son Ellis.

#### **Benchmarks**

Good bye would be too difficult, Although I know you are gone. Instead, I keep you in my heart And your memory lives on.

I have redefined my purpose, son, Since you are no longer here. With your death I faced a choice To die, exist or to live free. My life has changed forever, child, I'm redefined each week, You would call these "benchmarks" Of goals set and then achieved.

And so I set my benchmarks, Achieving many, reshaping some... But everything is different now Except your mother's love.

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

## 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 Wendy Jones

Wendy Jones (619) 371-2335

ALCOHOL RELATED Elizabeth Richardson

(619) 280-1832

PARA HABLAR EN David Bolaños Kevser

ESPAÑOL (760) 310-3632

## Meeting Place and Times THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS OF SAN DIEGO MEETS ON

1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of each month at 7 P.M. at: Community of Christ Church 4811 Mount Etna Dr. 92117 In the Clairemont area of San Diego

Take I-805 to Balboa Ave. west. Turn right (north) on Genesee Ave. one block, Left turn (west) on Mount Etna Dr.; One half mile or so.(Church is on left side.)

Genesee Ave. runs north and south about one mile west of I-805 and can be accessed from Balboa Ave.; Clairemont Dr.; or Hwy 52.

#### **OF NOTE**

The Compassionate Friends is not a religious organization. All bereaved parents, siblings, and grandparents are welcome to TCF no matter your personal religious beliefs.

#### **About 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 for Love Gifts is \$30. Donations / Love Gifts are always greatly appreciated.



#### Our Children – Loved, Missed and Remembered November & December We remember the families of:



#### **Birthdays**

Luis Walter & Teresa Carolina Bernal, born 11-1 Davey Johnson, born 11-2 Sammy Fishkin, born 11-2 Gregg Garon, born 11-3 Joshua James Lubrich, born 11-3 Sumi Suresh, born 11-4 Allen J. Kha. born 11-10 Craig Thomas Markley, born 11-16 Rick E. Pieramico, 11-19 Kyle Goff, born11-21 Kristy Shoemate, born 11-24 Josh Forness, born 11-27 Dylan Libby, born 11-28 Mikael Larson, born 12-2 Stephen Matthew Kraft III, born 12-4 Malini Elizabeth Sathyadev, born 12-7 Ronald Jack Drew, born 12-7 Anthony James Shott, born 12-13 Collin Barnes, born 12-15 Rick Nolin, born 12-21 Ginger Melania Walker, born 12-24 Milton (Danny) Smith, born 12-28 Jasmine Bellofatto, born 12-29 Ron Laverty, born 12-30

#### **Anniversaries**

Luis Walter & Teresa Carolina Bernal, died 11-1 Azja K. Ostrye, died 11 Mark E. Gannon, died 11-11 Gary R. Lopez, died 11-12 Alan H. Balsam, died 11-13 Reese Kaitlyn, died 11-19 Skip Anaya-Summers, died 11-21 Alan James Hein, died 11-25 Alexander Joseph Niazi, died 11-26 Allison Anne Dunn, died 11-30 Daniel R. Keyser, died 12-2 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 Jennifer Ann Donnell, died 12-24 Anthony James Shott, died 12-25

# Annual Holiday Program And Candle Lighting Ceremony





Join the San Diego Chapter of "The Compassionate Friends" in this annual worldwide candle lighting ceremony

"... that their light may always shine."

Sunday, December 10, 2017

-New Start Time— 6:00 to 8:00 pm



#### Community of Christ Church 4811 Mount Etna Dr 92117

In the Clairemont area of San Diego

Please join us as the light is passed on from the Mountain to the Pacific Time zone. It is then passed on its 24-hour trip around the world in our children's memory. This night is dedicated to our children. We invite grandparents, aunts, uncles, brother, sisters and friends in this night of sharing.

If you wish, please bring a finger food to share.

#### **Share your memories**

This year a part of the holiday program will be dedicated to non-denominational remarks from family members or friends. These special memories or poems should be two minutes or less.

This will allow more to participate.

If interested please contact Barbara at (619) 660-5115.



#### **Directions:**

Community of Christ Church 4811 Mount Etna Dr.

Take I-805 to Balboa Ave. west. Turn right (north) on Genesee Ave. one block, Left turn (west) on Mount Etna Dr. ½ mile or so. (Church is on left side.)

Genesee Ave. runs north and south about one mile west of I-805 and can be accessed from Balboa Ave.; Clairemont Dr.; or Hwy 52.

Our children's photos will be shared in a video presentation. If your child's picture is not on our picture board and you wish it to be in the video presentation, please try to have it available by the November TCF meeting. Or e-mail picture to: Norval Lyon <a href="mailto:sphere:2zimba2@gmail.com">2zimba2@gmail.com</a> or send by regular mail to: SDTCF, 11582 Fury Ln. #118, El Cajon, CA. 92019. Please have it available no later than November 15.

The Compassionate Friends offers our Deepest Sympathies to Barbara Lopez in the loss of her son Vince. She is a dear friend, worker and supporter of our cause. "Barbara, we love you." Her message follows:

I always said the only thing worse than losing a child would be losing two. It has happened to me. My oldest, son Vince died Oct.12, sixteen years and one month after my son, Gary. It is awful but so different. Vince was 59 years old and had been in bad health for the last five years. The last few months were torture for him. He suffered from anxiety, depression and had an eating disorder. We all tried to help as much as he would allow. Now he is at peace and there is some comfort in that. I will turn once again, to my friends in The Compassionate Friends for help and friendship. Thank you all for all of your kind words and thoughts. It helps.

Barbara (Vince's Mom) 1-31-58 - 10-12-2017

For Gary:

"No matter how much time has passed, I still feel your touch, see your light and will love you eternally"

Gary 5-18-66 - 11-12-01

From his Mom, Barbara





LOVE IN MOTION is a Signing Choir that has performed at the National and International TCF Conference for many years. They have offered to be a part of our Annual Worldwide Candle Lighting on Sunday, December 10, 6:00 - 8:00 PM at Community of Christ Church. Their music is uplifting, inspiring, and hopeful. We are very grateful they can participate.

#### The Silent Accident

It was terribly cold, even for a January morning in northern New Jersey. Two feet of snow had fallen during the night, leaving the little hamlet where the child and her family lived isolated from the rest of the world.

Area schools were closed. Workers were requested to remain at home unless their jobs were essential to public welfare. Everywhere families were stranded. Since they had just moved into their new home, the child's family was totally unprepared. With practically no food in the house, the decision was made for the child's father and two older sisters to follow the snowplow to the nearest grocery. The child, only five years old, would stay with her mother. She was usually obedient and no one expected her to disobey. But she did.

Slipping on her boots, without bothering with socks, and her coat, the child sneaked out to where her family had parked waiting for the snowplow to complete its task on the next road.

Seeing the child as she crossed the street, the family rolled down the windows and shouted, "Go back, go back!" Only after their screams to go back, only when the child obediently turned to cross the street, only then, when it was too late did they notice another car gliding past them.

Her curly blond hair without a cap, her unbuttoned jacket clasped around her small body, her bare, cold feet covered only by rubber boots, all disappeared from view as the big car pressed forward past the now hushed family car. Twenty feet later the car slid to a halt. The child was gone. Not a sound could be heard.

It was terribly cold and now terribly quiet. The stillness of the moment was broken only by the echoing screams of the child's family. Then quietly, each filled with his own dread, the father, the sisters and the driver left their cars, moving cautiously over the slippery ice to the front of the offending car. Stiffly they inched their way forward, experiencing such fear that no one could speak. Only one thought was in their minds. "What would they find?"

Tiny red rubber boots lay scattered in opposite directions on the frozen earth; small hands clutched the bumper; large blue eyes were open wide with fright—still no one spoke. After a long moment the tiny child's voice broke the chilling

silence with words of wisdom born of five years experience. "I think I did something wrong."

This declaration was followed by muffled cries and tears wiped on cold jacket sleeves, solemn promises made in the hearts of two older sisters, relief that defies description for both the father and the driver.

The child was checked for injuries and then checked again. She was bundled into fresh warm clothes and cuddled in front of the fireplace in her cozy home. Loved more that day than in the weeks before. She had sustained no bruises, no scratches, no breaks. The family and the driver would never forget that terrifying, silent accident. The child would never remember.

There came a time when she would die, this precious child of mine . . . twelve years later, with her father in a small plane crash. I don't know why they died so young and so healthy, any more than I know why she was spared so many years before.

But I do know that I would endure all the pain again just to have her grace my life. Even now memories of this wondrous child make my heart sing.

Sue Holtkamp

Sue Holtkamp is an author, having written several books including Grieving with Hope and Catherine: in search of something more. She earned her Ph.D. in 1991 with a focus on traumatic loss and recovery. Founder and director of Something More Bereavement Programs, Sue has served as a consultant to organ and tissue procurement organizations, hospices, funeral homes, and other organizations. She has been a keynote speaker at a past national conference.

Reprinted from We Need Not Walk Alone, the national magazine of The Compassionate Friends.

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#### The Holidays Are Coming!

"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 trail 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.

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

#### Counting Time In The Night

Without warning
So invisible and so quiet
Came horror and tragedy
Counting time in the night

It was June fourteen
No chance to change that date
It was written in the books
And already marked fate

In anguish, and great despair I cry out Helplessly knowing they will not be back Could anything hurt me so much Reaching for them finding nothing to touch

Hovering above so silent
Is the stealth cloud of horror and fear
Never are we prepared for tragedy
For it is unknown where next it will appear

Donald Moyers TCF Galveston County, TX

## THE GIFT OF THE TCF WORLDWIDE CANDLE LIGHTING

May 11, 1995: 45 years after I had taken my first breath of life would now sadly and incomprehensibly mark my precious daughter's last. Blisteringly hot day six of our family vacation in Orlando on a freeway many hundreds of miles from our home in Minnesota, an alcohol-impaired driver fell asleep at the wheel crashing into the side of the car where Nina was seated thereby ending the promising life of my vibrantly beautiful 15-year-old daughter, killing her instantly. A week that began in joyful family togetherness ended in unspeakable tragedy.

Brokenhearted, we returned home to begin the daunting task of learning to live without Nina. We catatonically walked through the mind-numbing chore of making arrangements for our daughter's funeral, our house filled with people aiding us however they could. But soon after the service, the silence in our home was deafening. My son wondered aloud where everyone had gone. Though hard to conceive that the sun still rose and set every day; that people continued to work, breathe, laugh and love, I undoubtedly knew the answer to his question; they had returned to the normalcy of their untainted existence while our lives felt irreparably shattered.

While others had gone back to the "real world", even in the midst of my cavernous grief I knew I had to preserve Nina's memory: I needed to find others who also desired their loved ones not be forgotten, realizing that it had to be another bereaved parent. I also needed reassurance there was hope that the raw pain of my loss would not continue forever, and that I was not alone on this most difficult of journeys. Thankfully, the funeral director in our city led me to The Compassionate Friends (TCF), a self-help group for bereaved parents, siblings and grandparents. There I found the support and understanding that I so desperately craved, along with many distinctive, creative ways from seasoned grievers to ensure that Nina would be forever remembered.

This became particularly important as I neared the first Christmas without Nina. They showed me I could bring her into the holiday season she loved so much by attending our chapter's annual holiday candle lighting. A few short years later, I became involved in chapter leadership.

During that time, the TCF Worldwide Candle Lighting (WCL) came into existence and culminated into what is believed to be the world's largest candle lighting. Held the second Sunday of December at 7:00 p.m. in each time zone around the world candles are lit for one hour. As the candles burn down in one time zone, they are lit in the next, creating a virtual 24-hour wave of light around the globe.

The past few years I have been the MC for our chapter's program in conjunction with the WCL. From my vantage point, I clearly see each tear-stained face. Though the room is dimly lit in the beginning, as each flame is lit for a child gone too soon, the room gradually becomes bathed in a warm and peaceful glow. The candles are held proudly aloft in a show of fortitude and solidarity, with the belief that our children look down and see our lights of love and hope lifted heavenward, signifying that though gone is the life, never is their light.

The TCF Worldwide Candle Lighting is the gift I give myself (and Nina) each holiday season, and many family members and friends gift me with their presence at the chapter event or light a candle at 7 p.m. in remembrance of Nina. For all of us whose precious children have died it is a beautiful and special way to ensure forevermore "...that their light may always shine."

With gentle thoughts over the holiday season, and always,

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

Our grief always brings a gift.

It's the gift of greater sensitivity and compassion for others.

We learn to rise above our own grief

We learn to rise above our own grief by reaching out and lessening the grief of others.

Dr. Robert Schuller—submitted by Judi Hale

#### Golden Train

I rested awhile in a dream
Where you were home again.
Trains chugged around a Christmas tree
On track that had no end.
Children watched in moonlight glow
As you laughed and spun a yarn
About a magical place so far away
Where children are free from harm.

You said, "Fancy trains go to and fro
And circle back again.

The rails are golden like woven thread
Laid out upon the sand.

Time stands still, there is no pain
And hearts are free as birds
All children walk and run and play"

You laughed as you spoke these words.

Checking a watch like grandpa wore
You said, "I have to go real soon
But I'll be back next Christmas Day
In the night but the full of the moon"
An hour more the children played
Round the Christmas tree that night
When I awoke from the lovely dream
Snow sparkled like gold in the light.

Oh, my son, could that be true Were you really home last night? Did you stop and rest awhile with me On a golden train that has no end?

From a dream, Christmas Eve, 2005

Katy Womack TCF Arlington, VA



#### **Lights of Love**

Can you see our candles Burning in the night? Lights of love we send you Rays of purest white

Children we remember
Though missing from our sight
In honor and remembrance
We light candles in the night

All across the big blue marble
Spinning out in space
Can you see the candles burning
From this human place?

Oh, angels gone before us Who taught us perfect love This night the world lights candles That you may see them from above

Tonight the globe is lit by love Of those who know great sorrow, But as we remember our yesterdays Let's light one candle for tomorrow

We will not forget,
And every year in deep December
On Earth we will light candles
As.....we remember

Jacqueline Brown TCF Peace Valley, PA



#### THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

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#### (i) 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

**A** 

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 <u>www.alivealone.org</u>

#### i) 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

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and the state

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 2018

Issue of The Compassionate Friend is

#### **December 15, 2017**

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

11582 Fury Lane #118, El Cajon, CA 92019

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

November / December 2017

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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:

The Compassionate Friends, San Diego Chapter, 11582 Fury Ln. #118. El Cajon, CA. 92019 From: \_\_\_\_\_ In Memory Of: \_\_\_\_ TCF The Compassionate Friends newsletter application Remove from list New Address New subscription ☐ Please send newsletter by regular mail. □ By email, address Child's Full Name: Your name: Address Birth date: Date of death: City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ State: 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.