



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.*



March / April
2017

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see p. 3***

Next Meeting

Wednesday
March 1st

Wednesday
April 5th

These pages Dedicated with Love to:



Dee Louise Hochstetler



Allison Anne Dunn

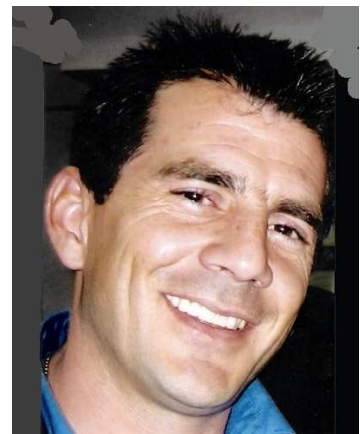


Cynthia Lee Kessler

♥ **Always In Our Hearts** ♥



Daniel R. Keyser



Ramiro Zuñiga-Cedillo

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El Cajon, CA 92019
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www.sdtcf.org

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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 to all who honor their children in this way.

- ♥ David & Ruth Keyser — In Loving Memory of their son Daniel. "Love You & Miss You with every Beat of My Heart." Always & Forever, Your Mama & Brother Patrick
- ♥ Diane & Gary Hochstetler — In Loving Memory of their daughter Dee Louise.
- ♥ Gordon R. Collins — In Loving Memory of his daughter Cynthia Lee.
- ♥ Chris Stearns — In Loving Memory of her daughter Allison Anne Dunn.
- ♥ Gloria C. de Zuñiga — In Loving Memory of her son Ramiro. "RAMI; ALL THOSE WHO LOVED YOU, ESPECIALLY YOUR FAMILY, WILL MISS YOU FOREVER. WE MOURN YOUR ABSENCE, BLESS YOUR MEMORY AND ACCEPT GOD'S WILL FOR WE KNOW HE GIVES ETERNAL LIFE". ZUNIGA FAMILY AND FRIENDS.
- ♥ Del & Lisa Hohman — In Loving Memory of their son Darryl.
- ♥ Bill & Sandy McGee — Loving Donation.
- ♥ TCF Appreciates Loving donations from our monthly meetings.

There is no death. Only a change of worlds.

Chief Seattle, 1855

Reflections

With the death of my sister came some painful realizations: that life isn't always fair or predictable; that sometimes even my best still isn't good enough; and that from the day of her death, the happy events in my life would always be tinged with sadness.

Despite the pain and loss, death has also left me with some valuable lessons and precious gifts. As a result of my sister's death, I have a greater appreciation of life and a greater compassion for those who hurt. I have learned to be a survivor and to have a successful career and productive life in the face of tremendous grief and loss. I have been gifted with good friends and special people to help me through the rough times. But most of all, I have been given the gift of time – time to heal and time to replace those painful memories of death with priceless memories of my sister's life.

Cathy Schanberger
from *This Healing Journey – An Anthology for Bereaved Siblings*
©The Compassionate Friends

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 (619) 371-2335
ALCOHOL RELATED	Elizabeth Richardson (619) 280-1832
PARA HABLAR EN ESPAÑOL	David Bolaños Keyser (760) 310-3632

(NEW) Meeting Place and Times THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS OF SAN DIEGO MEETS ON

1st 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.

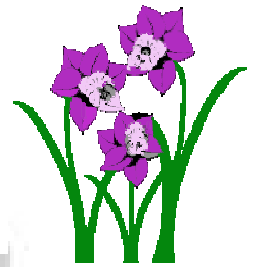
To Place Child's Picture In Newsletter

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 March & April

We remember the families of:



Birthdays

Emil Ian de la Barrera, born 3-1
Nicholas James Reynolds, born 3-9
Cynthia Lee Kessler, born 3-10
Damian "Damo" Reid Carver, born 3-11
Jason Lee Hansen, born 3-13
Michael Lopez, born 3-14
Andrew (Andy) Hale, born 3-14
Amy Sara Bowden, born 3-16
Dee Louise Hochstetler, born 3-21
Joseph Roy Elkins, born 3-24
Hugo Payne, born 3-31
Alan H. Balsam, born 4-2
Alexander Joseph Niazi, born 4-8
Matthew Beaver, born 4-13
Lisa Marie Stoen, born 4-14
David John Merritt, born 4-15
Matthew Raimor, born 4-15
Angela Scarbrough, born 4-14
Jana A. Warda Schott, born 4-15
Spencer Keni Watts, born 4-19
Christopher Andrew Fulston, born 4-20
Teresa Bowers, Born 4-22
Amanda Harrington, born 4-22
Tyler Preston Collier, born 4-24
Mark R. Balsam, born 4-28
Stephanie Johanna Westrich, born 4-30

Anniversaries

Ramiro Zuñiga-Cedillo, died 3-2
Nathaniel Poteat, died 3-3
Mark R. Balsam, died 3-7
Cooper Jancic, died 3-9
Julie Hamilton, died 3-12
Ronald Paul Jones, died 3-14
Jennifer Ann Greenwald, died 3-16
Malini Elizabeth Sathyadev, died 3-16
Leonard Valadez, died 3-17
Gregg Garon, died 3-17
Kristin Elizabeth Hawkinson, died 3-18
Trevor Shane Kirby, died 3-20
Joshua Linzy Fogel, , died 3-27
Dylan Libby, died 3-28
Rick Nolin, died 3-30
Jasmine Bellofatto, died 4-3
Paul Albert Alferos Jr., died 4-4
Brian James Gillis, died 4-4
Mary Ann Valdez, died 4-8
Josh Forness, died 4-5
Son of Kathy Lee, died 4-5
Christopher Andrew Fulston, died 4-8
Mikael Larson, died 4-8
Darryl Charles Hohman, died 4-9
Michael Dylkiewicz, died 4-9
Brian Michael Bennett, died 4-11
Joshua Michael Jensen, died 4-11
Emily Quinlan, died 4-15
Kristine L. Foss, died 4-17
Kyle Goff, died 4-20
Ronald Jack Drew, died 4-20
Spencer Keni Watts, died 4-22
*Jamie Morgan Mychael Bratton-McNeeley,
left his body 4-24*
Brittany Star Curcio, died 4-24
Andrew K. Scott, died 4-28
George Brers IV, died 4-28



THE 40TH TCF NATIONAL CONFERENCE

The Compassionate Friends is pleased to announce that Orlando, Florida, will be the site of the 40th TCF National Conference on July 28-30, 2017. “Rays of Sunshine, Oceans of Hope” is the theme of this year’s event, which promises more of last year’s great National Conference experience. The 2017 Conference will be held at the Hilton Orlando Bonnet Creek. We’ll keep you updated with details here, on the national website as well as on our [TCF/USA Facebook Page](#) and elsewhere as they become available. Plan to come and be a part of this heartwarming experience.

Conference Registration

[Register today](#) for the 40th National Conference. Pre-registration will be available until July 7, 2017. Please note: while on-site conference registration will be available, the Friday lunch and Saturday dinner is only available with pre-registration.

Hotel Reservations

[Click here](#) to make your hotel reservations online or by calling 888.353.2013 at the Hilton Orlando Bonnet Creek.

**A few pictures taken by Uma Suresh of our Annual Holiday Candle Lighting.
More are to be available soon at our local website.**





*A Tree Planting Ceremony
In Memory of
Dee Louise Hochstetler*

*on the 21st day of March, 1995
Whittier College, Whittier, CA*

The Planting of the Tree

After the tree is planted, all present pray

We thank you, O God,
for the life of Dee:
for the love that she shared so abundantly,
for the warmth of her laughter,
for the joy of her presence,
for the easy conversation we knew,
for her clear articulation of thought and
for her openness and direct way,
for her compassion for others,
for the spontaneity of her heart,
for the generosity of her soul,
for the companionship she gave,
for the time we spent together,
for her friendship and love,
for the wondrous beauty of her life.
For these and all the blessings
that Dee gave to us,
we thank you, O God of Love.
Amen.

*Submitted by Dee Louise's Mom,
Diane Hochstetler*

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

Submitted by Lisa Hohman, Darryl's Mom. It will be
twenty years since his passing on April 9, 1997.



Peace

Today is the one year anniversary of the day my son realized he could no longer live. I know this because he told us so in the writings he left behind. It is not the anniversary of his death.

What I remember of the day is that it was not unlike any other. There were no family fights or friend drama. There were no failed tests or poor academic projects.

It was just a day like today.

That week was just like any other as well. Tom attended high school and college classes, and we worked, going through our days just as we always do. But Tom found a way to spend special time with each of us before he left. He and L.J. spent Monday night playing music together. I tried to record it, but it was not perfect, so I deleted the file that night. Tuesday night he and I made his favorite meal together, pasta with hot sausage red sauce. Then, we played a complicated Wii game which consisted of me pushing random buttons to fend off the bad guys while he worked his magic on the most powerful villains. We played for a few hours, until my hands hurt and I could not see straight from all of the blurred images on the television. He played the music he loved and told me which was his favorite song. I listened to it through his ears, but cannot remember the song name. That night, he peeked his head in our room, and played with the light switch, turning it on and closing the door behind him with a mischievous grin. He spent the next few days with his father, doing the things they loved to do together, including gaming with a great bunch of folks on Friday night. He spent Saturday and Sunday at our house, doing homework, playing on the computer, and listening to music.

That Sunday, as I cooked in the kitchen and talked casually with him, he wrote his final farewell to us.

We had no idea of his pain, his plan, or our future.

In his note, he told us that past week had been the happiest he could remember because he was able to live during that time without fear and anxiety of the future. So a part of me is at peace, if that's possible, because he was able to spend his final hours free from his demons. But how I wish, in that

week, he had found the strength to fight through the darkness and tell us of his inner war. How I wish I had seen past his armored wall into his soul, so I could pull him through to the light of our love. I wish we could have shown him how many people appreciated him and were impacted by him, and how many would have stood by his side as he fought his undiagnosed illness so he could win his battle with a full army. I wish...

I miss him every hour of every day. I miss his humor, his intelligence, his presence, his thoughtfulness and his soul. Someone recently responded on one of my posts that maybe Tom misses me, too. I hope he is beside me as I write, and can feel the outpouring of whatever is stronger than love, that I have for him. I pray that through his death, he found the peace he could not find in life.

Kimberly Starr
TCF Facebook Loss to Suicide Group
In Memory of my son Tom



One Moment in Time

As bereaved parents, we have a line of demarcation in our lives. This line is like no other. Other people define their lives by that one big career step, move or degree. But in other people's lives, things are different. We are not like other people.

We experienced a clearly defined moment in time when everything changed. The tectonic plates of our lives shifted at one moment on one date of one year. Nothing will ever be the same. We definitively mark the time before and after our child died. Life was different before our child died. It was easy; it was filled with promises of tomorrow, accomplishments, setbacks, goals set and achieved and happiness that abounds in the natural order of life. But our basic assumptions were shattered and our world turned inside out at that one moment in time when our child died.

Can we ever feel as optimistic about life as we did before that moment in time? Will we ever again believe that one day we will feel balanced, optimistic and serene?

We certainly can, and most parents certainly do. As you read the articles in this month's newsletter about the journey through grief, consider the gentle optimism that presents itself in these parents' words. Each of these parents has walked this lonely road. Each has come through the darkest, rockiest valley into a gauzy sort of light which gradually crystallized into a true sunshine as time moved forward. How did they do it?

Insight is offered in these parents' stories. We must do our grief work, face our demons and stand them down. We must talk with others, set limits on what we will tolerate, and hold our line. We must seek counseling, attend seminars, attend TCF meetings or other offerings that give us the support of parents who have lost a child or help us in acquiring skills to cope with our pain and loss.

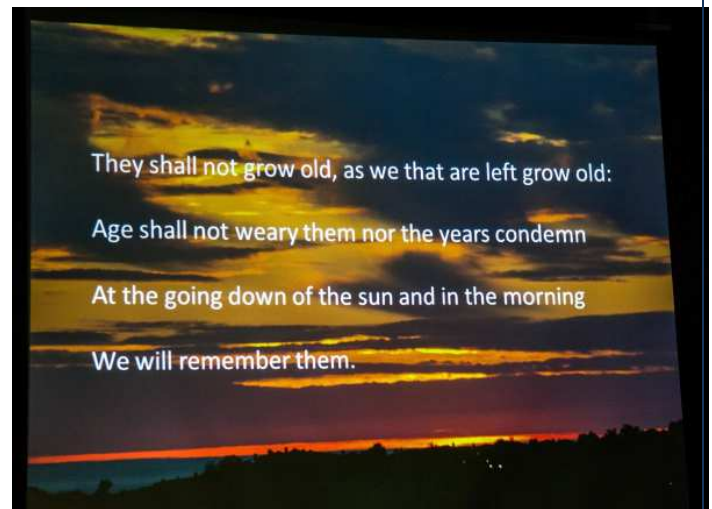
We must take grief breaks in the beginning and for the first year or two. We must take care of ourselves physically, mentally, and emotionally.

But most of all we must keep our child with us as we complete our life's journey. How we choose to complete our journey is unique. The common denominator that all of us share is the need to find a precious flicker of hope which we can nurture and coax to a radiant glow. We all find it in different ways and at different times on our grief journey. But, rest assured, we all find it. I call it "my little light."

One day you will feel the burden lifting. You will laugh about things your child said or did. That moment will gently envelop you. There is hope. Let your little light glimmer and then glow.

Annette Mennen Baldwin
TCF Katy, TX

In Memory of my son, Todd Mennen



WHAT I NEED

TIME ~ Time alone; and time with others whom I can trust and who will listen when I need to talk. Months and years of time to feel and understand the feelings which go along with loss.

REST ~ I may need extra amounts of things I needed before. Relaxation, exercise, nourishment, diversion, hot baths, afternoon naps, a trip, a cause to work for, to help others, any of these may give me a lift. Grief is an emotionally exhausting process. I need to replenish myself – to follow what feels healing and what connects me to the people and things I love.

SECURITY ~ I need to reduce, or find help for financial or other stresses in my life. I need to allow myself to be close to ones I can trust. It helps when I allow myself to get back into a routine, and to do things at my own pace.

HOPE ~ I find hope and comfort from those who have experienced a similar loss. Knowing some things that helped them, and realizing that they have recovered and that time does help, gives me hope that sometime in the future my grief will be less raw and less painful.

CARING ~ I try to allow myself to accept the expressions of caring from others, even though they may be uneasy and awkward. Helping a friend or relative also suffering from the same loss often brings me a feeling of closeness with that person.

GOALS ~ It often feels that much of life is without meaning. At times like these, small goals are helpful. Something to look forward to, like playing tennis with a friend next week, a movie tomorrow night, a trip next month, helps me get through the time in the immediate future. Living one day at a time is a good rule of thumb. At first, my enjoyment of these things just isn't the same. I know this is normal. As time passes, I will need to work on some longer range goals to give some structure and direction to my life. It is OK to get some guidance or counseling to help with this.

SMALL PLEASURES ~ I no longer underestimate the healing effects of small pleasures. Sunsets, a walk in the woods, a favorite food - all are small steps toward regaining my pleasure in life itself.

BACK-SLIDING ~ Sometimes after a period of feeling good, I find myself back in the old feelings of extreme sadness, despair or anger. Intellectually, I know this is often the nature of grief, up and down, and it may happen over and over for a time. I'm told, this is because as humans, we cannot take in all of the pain and the meaning of death all at once. So, I give myself permission to let it in a little at a time.

DRUGS? ~ Drugs are not always helpful. Sometimes, even medication intended to help me get through periods of shock may prolong and delay the necessary process of grieving. I cannot prevent or cure grief. The only way OUT is THROUGH.

Alan Taplow

Adapted by Alan Taplow from Judy Tatelbaum's book, The Courage to Grieve

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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
Olivia Garcia 818-736-7380

oliviabgarcia1@gmail.com

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)

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Charlene Tate

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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
May / June 2017

Issue of
The Compassionate Friend is

April 10, 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

March / April 2017

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:

The Compassionate Friends, San Diego Chapter, 11582 Fury Ln. #118. El Cajon, CA. 92019

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.