



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
2022

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Next Meetings

**In Person Meeting
 Legacy Church
 See page 3**

Wednesday
March 2nd

Wednesday
April 6th

These pages Dedicated with Love to:



Kristin Elizabeth Hawkinson



Cynthia Lee Kessler

♥ Always In Our Hearts ♥



Dee Louise Hochstetler



Ramiro Zuñiga-Cedillo

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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.

- ♥ **Tamara & Sigurd Stautland — In Loving Memory of their daughter Kristin.**
 - ♥ **Diane & Gary Hochstetler — In Loving Memory of their daughter Dee Louise.**
 - ♥ **Gordon R. Collins — In Loving Memory of his daughter Cynthia. “Gone but never forgotten.”**
 - ♥ **Yolanda Nerio — In Loving Memory of family friend Darryl son of Lisa & Del Hohman.**
 - ♥ **Gloria C. de Zuñiga — In Loving Memory of her son Ramiro.**
-

I am Spring

I Am Spring
 I am the beginning.
 I am budding promise.
 I spill cleansing tears of life
 from cloudy vessels
 creating muddy puddles
 where single cell creatures abide
 and splashing children play.
 I am new green growth.
 I softly flow from winter's barren hand.
 On gentle breeze I fly – embracing sorrow.
 With compassion, we feather nests
 where winged voices sing winter-spring duets.
 As frozen ice transforms to playful stream
 I whisper truth – life is change.
 I am spring.
 I bless long, dark wintry days.
 I crown mankind's pain
 with starry skies
 in deepest night
 lighting solitary paths from sorrow to joy
 as the wheel of life turns 'round and 'round.
 (written after attending a workshop presented by John Fox, author of 'Finding What You Didn't
 Lose' and 'Poetic Medicine'.)
 Carol Clum



***Our Children – Loved, Missed and Remembered
March & April***

We remember the families of:



Birthdays

Emil Ian de la Barrera, born 3-1
Alexis Morgan Dale, born 3--5
Nicholas James Reynolds, born 3-9
Cynthia Lee Kessler, born 3-10
Jason Lee Hansen, born 3-13
Michael Lopez, born 3-14
Amy Sara Bowden, born 3-16
Dee Louise Hochstetler, born 3-21
Joseph Roy Elkins, born 3-24
Alan H. Balsam, born 4-2
Alexander Joseph Niazi, born 4-8
Mary Ann Valdez, born 4-8
David Michael Ellis, born 4-11
Matthew Beaver, born 4-13
Lisa Marie Stoefen, born 4-14
Matthew Raimer, born 4-15
Angela Scarbrough, born 4- 14
Jana A. Warda Schott, born 4-15
Christopher L Mariano, born 4-20
Teresa Bowers, Born 4-22
Dominique Ynette Young, born 4-23
Matthew Aiden Baxley, born 4-27
Stephanie Johanna Westrich, born 4-30

Anniversaries

Ramiro Zuñiga-Cedillo, died 3-2
Nathaniel Poteat, died 3-3
Kelli R. Smith, died 3-4
Jameson Connor Segel, died 3-6
Kathryn R Main, died 3-8
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 3-17-2004
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
Roosevelt Jerard "RJ" Carter, died 4-3
Jasmine Bellofatto, died 4-3
Paul Albert Alferos Jr., died 4-4
Mario De La Rosa, died 4-4
Brian James Gillis, died 4-4
Mary Ann Valdez, died 4-8
Josh Forness, 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
Spencer Keni Watts, died 4-22
*Jamie Morgan Mychael Bratton-McNeeley,
left his body 4-24*
Brittany Star Curcio, died 4-24
Francisco "Frankie" Morales, died 4-27
Andrew K. Scott, died 4-28
George Brers IV, died 4-28



TCF 45th National Conference
Houston, TX • August 5-7, 2022

Save the Date for Our 45th National Conference being held August 5th - 7th, 2022 in Houston!

Houston Conference Co-Chairs Ghislaine Thomsen and Tricia Scherer

We'd love to have you join us! Save the date for our 45th National Conference in Houston, Texas the weekend of August 5th - 7th, 2022. Please note that we are currently accepting submissions for workshop proposals for the conference and we'd love to have you as a presenter! To find out more, please see the information below in this newsletter. Our conference room block will open in early February and conference registration will open sometime in March. At this time, we are planning for our traditional, in-person national conference in Houston. As more details are finalized they will be posted on the [TCF website](#).



SPEAKING FROM THE HEART

Posted on March 17th, 2017

FINDING SPRING AGAIN

The official first day of spring is only three days away. For many of you, it may not look or feel like spring is nearing at all, especially those who recently got bombarded with over a foot of snow! But, for what will be 22 years in May since Nina's death (and five years in June since Chris's), whenever spring comes around I can feel that tug of sadness in my heart and the what-if's and if-only's rise up into my thoughts. And I remembered this article I wrote back in 2001, six years after Nina's death, and look at the progression made by all those "one step forward, two steps back" I have made over two decades. For those of you in the early years of your grief, perhaps you will see yourself in my words written 16 years ago, and will find hope for renewed meaning in life again..
Hugs, Cathy

It is mid March, which means we are nearing the end of what has often been a brutal winter for many. While gazing

at the mountains of snow piled high in my front yard and the foot-long icicles hanging from my roof, it is hard to imagine that spring will ever come. We have endured bitter cold winds that have chilled us to the bone and treacherous roads that we have cautiously traveled. The days have been long and dark and often free of sunlight. No matter how long you have been a native of the Upper Midwest, I know we will be glad when it comes to an end.

However, as I described these thoughts about winter, I felt as if I was describing the days of my early grief. At that point, I did not believe that a day would ever come when I would thaw from the chill that had consumed my body and mind. The bleakness of my existence during those early months after Nina died is almost frightening to remember; it is so difficult to even conceive of that much pain. I was anesthetized from some of its cruelty by the protective blanket of numbness that blessedly shielded me from the gale force of such overpowering sorrow. How would I ever feel spring in my heart again?

Spring had always been my favorite season. The air had a certain freshness to it that I would drink in. Simply put, it always made me feel happy and light of heart. Spring was our reward for surviving the freezing winter months that preceded it. It brought a smile to my face and a bounce to my step.

However, it was the spring of the year where my heart was irretrievably broken. It was during this exquisite season of warm, lilac-scented breezes and sun-kissed mornings where my precious daughter Nina's life would end.

I wondered if my thoughts about spring would ever be the same. Rather than anticipate with gladness the coming of spring, I dreaded it with the knowledge that it brought with it the anniversary of her death. The smell of the air and the look to the sky that I once found exhilarating now brought me back to my darkest day. I know that anyone, who has lost a loved one, no matter the season, understands.

Will spring come again to your life? In the almost six years since Nina died, has it come to mine? Looking back at my description of the winter of "my early grief", I know that I have come a long way from that time of desolation. I have found, especially after the first few years, that with each subsequent spring, I have rediscovered some of the pleasure I used to feel. I have learned that just because I have found things to feel joyful about again does not mean I am dishonoring my daughter's memory. I now take her along with me in my mind and my heart. I try to retrieve memories of the dandelion bouquets she so carefully gathered for me, the rides to the park in the Radio Flyer, our talks while sunning on the deck, and, of course,

shopping for spring clothes! Her favorite pastime!

I will always feel apprehension and sadness as May 11th draws near, but I no longer hold it against spring. It is a slow, difficult journey, this grief pathway we travel. It is as treacherous as the roads we maneuvered following the winter storms, never knowing when we will hit an icy patch on the road and be thrown into a tailspin. Yet, we must travel it if we are to find any measure of peace, hope and healing.

Please be patient with yourself as you are working hard to survive this winter in your heart. Trust that spring, though a much different one than the one we knew before our beloved child died, will come again.

With gentle thoughts,

*Cathy Seehuetter, Nina's mom forever
TCF/St. Paul, MN*

SARA ZEIGLER



REBUILDING YOUR LIFE ONE PIECE AT A TIME

Posted on September 22nd, 2021

Death, especially unexpected death, changes one's life in ways that cannot be anticipated. With the death of someone close, one's world is forever changed.

One analogy I have found myself using with clients is the following: If you were to imagine the day before your loved one died, there was an intact picture of your life. The picture may not have been perfect, but it was there and it made sense. There was a beginning, a middle and an expected end. With death comes the destruction of that picture. It is as if the picture is taken out of your hands, smashed to the ground in a thousand pieces and then some of the most treasured pieces are forever taken away.

The challenge with grief is to then take all of those pieces which are left and attempt to make a new picture. The picture of the life you once had is impossible to recreate, as much as one may try, it

cannot be recreated with pieces missing. A new picture must be assembled with the pieces that are left and with new pieces that are picked up along the way.

The process of putting the pieces back together is one that often feels chaotic and confusing. It may sometimes be surprising to find out how much thinking is involved in the grief process. Thoughts bounce around trying to connect what was with what is and struggle to make sense out of what seems to be incomprehensible.

With each piece, the bereaved, through trial and error, find where each piece belongs or even if it belongs at all. This process is different for every person and does not adhere to any kind of timeline. This (what feels like endless) thinking is the work that grief demands; it is the creation of a new picture of your life created one piece at a time.



STEPHANIE ELSON

**To our precious daughter Dee on her 49th birthday.
This beautiful poem describes you in your life here on earth. So many
enduring character traits. You loved people and people loved you: You
left a loving legacy with a forever treasure of lasting memories.
Thank you for all the love you shared. How we miss your sweet spirit
and joyous laugh. Mom & Dad Diane & Gary Hochstetler**

As a Daughter,
You Are
This Kind of Beautiful

You have the kind of Qualities and characteristics that make people around you glad that you're in their world. You have the kind of character that reaches out to others to make the world a better and more beautiful place in which to live. Your beauty is not consumed with its own needs and prejudices but finds satisfaction in giving hope and acceptance and approval to others. It is an internal soothing kind of beauty that activates the love and appreciation mechanisms in other people, making it easier for everyone to live together.

You're the kind of beautiful that doesn't change with the weather or a crisis in life. It is a kind of beauty that provides light in the world for others to use to guide themselves out of difficult circumstances. Although its glow may dim at times when presented with a new challenge, yours is the kind of beauty that will survive the hard places in life, allowing you learn from them. It will sustain you. You have that kind of beauty.

This kind of beautiful comes from the heart and is powered by a love for others, a desire to be good, *to do good*, to help and not hurt anyone. It's easy for *someone* to enhance their appearance on the outside, but to be beautiful inside means reaching out to others with kindness and thoughtfulness and generosity. It is wanting the best for everyone, not just yourself. It has to do with compassion. That's the way you are. That's the kind of beauty *you* have.

Being this kind of beautiful allows you to identify with other people's shortcomings in life. This kind of beautiful knows that you must be able to love, forgive, and accept others, or your beauty will lose its essence and its gift, which is the desire to love.

This kind of beauty is soft and easy to be around. It gives more than it takes. It doesn't judge others harshly. It's not egotistical or proud. It doesn't try to change others. It accepts. It shows itself with open arms, not clenched fists; with smiles, not frowns; with joy and laughter, not negativity and reprimands. Being this kind of beautiful is contagious; it lifts others up to accept themselves and to experience their own gift of beauty. Being this kind of beautiful makes others glad to be alive and to know you. You're this kind of beautiful. Thank you for your wonderful example.

— Donna Fargo

Submitted by Mom & Dad - Diane & Gary Hochstetler

From : Blue Mountain Arts Book: "A Daughter is Forever"

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COMPASSIONATE
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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)

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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

**Issue of
The Compassionate Friends is
April 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

March / April 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.