



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
 2018

Issue 140

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

**Location,
 see p. 3**

Next Meeting

Wednesday
 November 7th

Wednesday
 December 5th

These pages Dedicated with Love to:

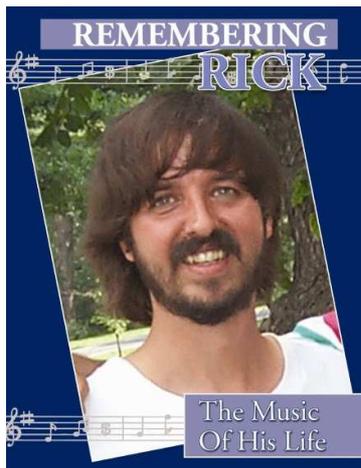


Allen J. Kha



Malini Elizabeth Sathyadev

♥ Always In Our Hearts ♥



Rick E. Pieramico



Joshua James Lubrich

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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.

- ♥ Con Am is proud to support the efforts of TCF in Loving Memory of Joshua Lubrich, son of Sandi Terrell. TCF gratefully acknowledges Con Am, a business in our community for their generous donation.
- ♥ Sandi and Mark Terrell- In Loving Memory of Joshua. Happy 29th Birthday Joshua!! On Mother's Day, May 11, 2008 has been 10 years now since you've left our home! 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. Love, Mom, Dad, Best Friend Zachary and Stephane, Ryan and Kiersten with baby Lily Mae, Andrew and Virginia with baby Andrew Joshua and Austin Lee, Best Friend Jason and Brittney with baby Dylan Amir and Jayce Benjamin and Best Friends Forever, Persio!"
- ♥ Allan Sathyadev — In Loving Memory of daughter Malini. "It's been a long 15 years without you. Miss you so much....," Love, mom and dad.
- ♥ Susan Wen & Long Kha — In Loving Memory of our Son Allen, from his parents Long Kha & Susan Wen.
- ♥ Hedy Pieramico — In Loving Memory Of her son Rick. "Happy birthday dear son and brother. We still hear your music." Love, Mom, Lisa and Neil

Remember

Light a quiet candle
 Send a quiet kiss
 Say a quiet fare-thee-well
 To the one you miss.
 Light a quiet candle
 Shed a quiet tear
 Sing a quiet lullaby . . .
 And the quiet
 Christmas Star will hear.

Sascha Wagner
 TCF Des Moines



***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
Monica Castellozzo, born 11-7
Allen J. Kha, born 11-10
Craig Thomas Markley, born 11-16
Rick E. Pieramico, born 11-19
Kyle Goff, born 11-21
Kristy Shoemate, born 11-24
Josh Forness, born 11-27
Dylan Libby, born 11-28
Mikael Larson, born 12-2
Stephen Mathew Kraft III, born 12-4
Malini Elizabeth Sathyadev, born 12-7
Ronald Jack Drew, , born 12-7
Anthony James Shott, born 12-13
Rick Nolin, born 12-21
Milton (Danny) Smith, born 12-28
Jasmine Bellofatto, born 12-29
Ron Laverty, born 12-30

Anniversaries

Azja K. Ostrye, died 11-4
Mark E. Gannon, died 11-11
Gary R. Lopez, died 11-12
Alan H. Balsam, died 11-13
***Luis Walter & Teresa Carolina Bernal,
died 11-1,13***
Reese Kaitlyn, died 11-19
Skip Anaya-Summers, died 11-21
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
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
Amy Sara Bowden, died 12-21
Andres Saputo, died 12-23
Jennifer Ann Donnell, died 12-24
Anthony James Shott, died 12-25
Ethan Estin Wozniak, died 12-26

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 9, 2018

— Start Time— **6:00 to 8:00 pm**



Community of Christ Church

4811 Mount Etna Dr 92117

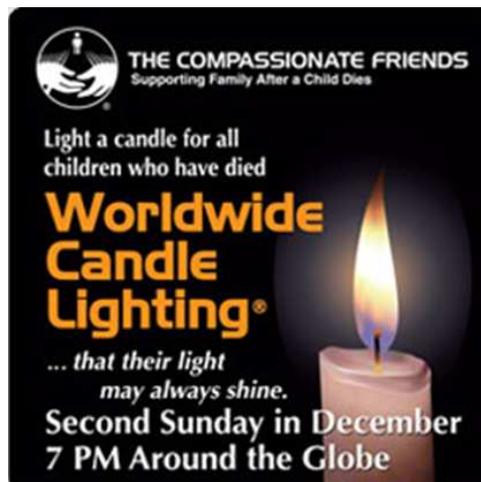
In the Clairemont area of San Diego

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.

Limited Readings Two on program Creating Luminarias

In place of having individual readings this year, families/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. 5 monthly meeting and Dec. 9 day of candle lighting.

For more information contact:
Lisa Hohman 619-287-4253



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 email picture to: Norval Lyon 2zimba2@gmail.com or send by regular mail to: Norval Lyon, 3754 Scenic Way, Oceanside, CA 92056. Please no later than November 15.

“The Twelfth of Never”

“The Twelfth of Never” is a popular song recorded by Johnny Mathis and later by Donny Osmond. The song's title comes from the popular expression "the 12th of Never," which is used as the date of a future occurrence that will never come to pass. In the case of the song, the 12th of Never is given as the date on which the singer will stop loving his beloved, thus indicating that he will always love her/him. The song draws a similar link between the cessation of love and a number of other events expected never to happen

My sons both died on the 12th of the month. My youngest died on November 12 at age 35. My oldest son died on October 12 at age 59. I call those dates my "Twelfth of Never." I will always love them and they will always be gone except in my heart.

In the Fall

"When amber leaves are shed, softly, silently,
like tears that wait to flow
I watch and grieve.
My heart beats sadly in the fall
tis then
I Miss You Most of all."

In memory of my sons,

From Vince and Gary's Mom, Barbara Lopez

About Pictures for the Annual Holiday Program Slide Presentation

Origin of pictures for the Slide Presentation: the picture boards.

If your child's picture is not on the picture board or in the slide presentation;

Submit picture to Norval Lyon:

By email: 2zimba2@gmail.com

By regular mail: **Norval Lyon, 3754 Scenic Way,
Oceanside, CA 92056.**

Please no later than November 15.

THANKSGIVING PRAYER

I'm thankful this Thanksgiving
That my grief is not so new.
Last year it was so painful
To think of losing you.
Death can't claim my love for you
Tho we are far apart,
Sweet memories will always be
Engraved upon my heart.
Time can never bring you back.
But it can help me be
Thankful for the years of joy
You brought our family.
To all the parents with grief so new
I share your loss and sorrow.
I pray you find with faith and time
The blessings of each tomorrow.

Charlotte Irick
TCF, Idaho Falls, ID

September Picnic And Balloon Release



An Enjoyable Picnic

So many stepped up in helping to make this event a success.

Thanks to All.



HOW CAN ANYONE EXPECT ME TO BE WHO I WAS BEFORE

If you know what I have been through, and you said "I can't even imagine"
If you took time to go to the service, and you said "Call me if you need anything"
If you sent a card or brought a cassarole
If you called a handful of times for a couple of months
If you went home and thanked God for your family
If you said a prayer for me or even shed a tear

How could you ever say you miss the person I used to be?
Don't you think I do too?

If you never lost a child, be it yours or a grand, a brother or a sister
If you never had to kiss your cold child goodbye for the last time
If you never had to pack up their things to never be used again
If you never had to make phone calls to notify people of your great loss
If you never had to cry yourself to sleep while living in a nightmare
If you never had to watch your family fall apart knowing there was nothing you could do
If you never had to read an autopsy or place an obituary

How could you ever think I could go back to how I was?
Don't you know that I would if I could.

If you went back to work a week after my loss
If you went on a vacation or sang in the shower within the next year
If you went grocery shopping and did not breakdown sobbing uncontrollably
If you look forward to the holidays
If you don't fear listening to the radio
If you do not envy all other families around you
If you don't live life divided in before and after
If you can't feel the real and constant ache in your chest

How could you ever expect me to move on?
And where do you want me to go without my child?

If you don't speak of my child
If you go on as normal like nothing happened
If you talk in front of me of things about your children
If you take family pictures and your child is not missing
If you don't have an Angelversary on your calendar with your child's name
If you don't fight back the tears at family gatherings amongst all the laughter and joy
If you never said "I wonder what my child would look like and what they would be doing"
If you never think about being reunited away from this earth
If you have had one day that you didn't cry or scream the word "Why"



How could you understand or even have a clue of what I go through?
And why would you think that it could be so easy to do?
To act like my life was not shattered and torn in two!
If I could it would make it better for you
The person I used to be died with my child and left me with the shell that you recognize
And I am trying to build another version of myself
But it is so hard to do when you only want the old me and who I used to be
So please don't ask the impossible and please be patient
I have never had to do this, and I hope you never have to too
Don't wait for me to be who I was before, that person had their child, and I can't make it like that now or evermore

Ruth Harris © 7/20/2018

From TCF group in Colorado
Submitted by Louise Hendrickson

Thanks for the Little While

It was a long time ago, our first holiday season with the empty chair. It was dark and cold, but everything was ready. The table was set, the turkey cooked, the candles lit and the seats filled - except one. I stood at the kitchen sink and wondered how I was going to act as the cheery hostess to family and friends who had gathered to celebrate Thanksgiving.

Thanksgiving! What was there to be thankful for this year?! It had been a year of struggle, each day being worse than the last until they all had just blurred into a nightmare. Whoever said, "Time heals all wounds" had never been as mortally wounded as I had! Time had healed nothing! In fact, I think I was suffering more as the weeks and months went by. It was as if I had been frozen in the early days and weeks after the death and only now, months later, was I beginning to thaw. And as I began to defrost out of my icy numbness, it only seemed to hurt more. That didn't make sense, but it was true.

And now, the holiday season had arrived and that only served to send me deeper into the gloom. I found myself wanting to hide, to cancel family gatherings. I wanted to run away. I did not want to shop for gifts, and I certainly did not want to send holiday greetings. A snarl or a frown swept over my face more often than a cheery holiday hello.

I kept thinking of all the things I would never enjoy again: the smell of Mom's pumpkin pie, the happy chatter around the table as Dad carved the turkey, the sweet silliness of his happy grin. The list of what I was missing grew longer and longer each day that I survived. Every day brought new discoveries of the most painful kind.

I kept seeing empty spaces at the table and feeling empty places in my heart. It seemed to hurt more now than it did earlier in my grief. Surely I must be slipping into insanity! I thought it was supposed to get better, not worse!

I had tried to cancel the family celebration, but they wouldn't hear of it! "Oh No!" they said. "We can't miss _____ (whatever I had suggested not doing)." "It wouldn't be the holidays without _____." That was exactly my point! I didn't

want the holidays to be here, and I certainly did not want to celebrate anything!

I tried passing off certain family "chores" to other members and once in a while that worked. I decided not to send holiday greetings to anyone, and my gift shopping was limited to catalog browsing and telephone ordering. I couldn't bear the mall crowds, the noise and that horrible, happy holiday music everywhere! Every time I went out, I felt as though I had been assaulted by the Holiday Spirit. The only thing that seemed to sparkle for me were the tears that left little icy streaks across my cheek once in awhile.

I even tried to move, but the family voted to come to my house for the turkey dinner, and so, now, they were gathering in the dining room, waiting for the festivities to begin. The turkey was stuffed, the pies baked, the gravy lump free as best I could without Mother's gentle guidance. But, there was little Thanksgiving or holiday spirit within me. Thank heavens I didn't have to come up with a blessing to say this day!

It is a tradition in our family for the youngest at the table to say the blessing. And so it fell to our six-year-old daughter, now an "only child," to find some words of thanksgiving to share with the ever-growing-smaller family around the table. She refused, of course, adding more stress to an already impossible day.

No amount of yelling, coaxing, bribing, pleading or threatening had inspired her to serve as the family spokesman. It had become a battle of wills between a mother and a daughter, something similar to several "engagements" that my mother and I had endured.

Finally, at the last moment, alone with me in our kitchen, she sighed and relented. "But I will only say grace at dessert," she said.

"Good enough," I said with relief. I had always been thankful for dessert - just like my dad, her grandpa!

It was a quiet meal, filled with awkward moments and many sniffled tears. After the pie was served, our daughter asked us to join hands in a circle (ala Walton style) and she looked around the table, giving each one of us a full moment of her gaze. Then, she drew a long breath and said, in her

small, but clear, child voice, "Thanks for the little while.. ."

Ahhhh! What other words could have said so much! It took a child to remind us of the moments we did have!

We each loved someone, and someone loved us. Find those memories and cherish them. Remember first that they lived, not that they died. I want to remember the life, not just the death!

Live through the hurt so that joy can return to warm your heart. No matter which holiday it is for you, and no matter the season of your grief, say thank you for a life well lived and loved. It wasn't long enough - it never would have been. But it was a little while.

They lived. We loved them. We still do. Thanks for the little while.

Darcie Sims

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This article was reprinted from "Bereavement and the Holidays". A "Best of Bereavement" compilation containing stories, articles and poems about coping with grief during the holidays.

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www.bereavementmag.com

Vinnie and the Sunflower

A part of life is death.
And a part of death is remembering.

And for a little boy named Vinnie, there are two sisters who are determined that every time you spot a towering sunflower plant, you'll think of him and remember him, too—even though you never looked into his sweet face, heard his infectious laugh, nor felt his unconditional love.

Thirteen year old Angela and nine year old Elyssa Rubertino of Ohio figure they have distributed thousands of sunflower seeds originating from a single special sunflower planted by their four year old brother for a preschool project

in April of 1993, only two weeks prior to his death. A victim of a hit and run drunk driver, Vinnie was struck after purchasing ice cream from a truck on the street outside his home.

The sunflower, which was sprouted in a paper cup, was carried home by Vinnie only a week prior to his death. It sat on a kitchen counter, overlooked in the aftermath of the accident.

"After Vinnie was killed we kind of forgot about it for a week or two," says Angela. "Once we realized that we still had it, Mom and Dad wanted to do everything they could to make sure the sunflower lived. We took care of it and my dad, sister, and I planted it together in the garden. Dad watered and cared for the sunflower everyday."

Family members were astonished to see it not only thrive, but eventually reach 8 feet 5 inches, towering over the eaves trough to their family home.

As fall came and the plant started to droop and die, the family removed the head and saved it through the winter, planting 200 seeds in cups in the spring, giving them to family members and friends.

"After we had planted them my father was talking to our reverend and he said that a way to keep Vinnie's memory alive would be to keep the sunflower and replant seeds from it every year," recalls Angela. "Last year we planted them ourselves and started little seedlings so they were actually growing when we gave them to people. This year we only did that for family members and friends. Everybody else got seed packets that they could plant themselves."

Elyssa, then seven, who first noticed the sunflower plant still alive in the kitchen, honored Vinnie's memory with a poem that the family attached to a green (Vinnie's favorite color) straw and put in with each seedling. The poem provided the explanation of why the family was giving people the sunflower:

*This plant we started as a tiny seed
From our little treasure "Vinnie"
He watched as the little plant grew...
Until that very day, he saw no more.*

*We cry a lot as days go by,
We watched it grow from bottom to top.
Of course we always have that memory
In our very own backyard.*

The poem was especially appropriate this year as the Rubertino's backyard was filled with

more than 35 sunflowers, giving the family thousands of seeds from the original replantings.

Some of the plants came from Vinnie's original sunflower while others were from sunflowers grown last year from the seeds of Vinnie's plant. "It's kind of like the sunflower's children and grandchildren," observed Angela.

During his short life, Vinnie was very close to his family—especially his two sisters.

"He's definitely the best person I've ever met in my life," says Angela. "He was very wonderful, kind, always polite. Everyone he met would always say how wonderful he was.

"I love him so much! It is very different not having him around. Every day when I would come home from school he would always be right there to say 'Hi, how was your day?' He would be kind of like a second dad to me because he was always asking me questions about what I would do at school and about what it was like. He liked to play with me a lot but he was really Elyssa's constant playmate."

Vinnie enjoyed all the things a typical 4 year old would like including Nintendo, Disney movies, Ninja Turtles, fishing, and his special shirt, which was his security blanket. He even liked to play golf. One of his prized possessions came from his dad, Vince who spotted it at a golf show. Vince agreed to purchase a new golf bag and new golf clubs—but only if the seller would include a matching miniature golf bag that was being used to hold business cards. The deal was struck and Vinnie received the special present for Christmas in 1991. He was only two and had two clubs to go in it. He and his sisters often golfed in the backyard and Tuesdays were special because he and his "Papa" always went putting.

Angela and Elyssa honor the memory of their brother in many ways. They have spoken at the Victim's Rights Vigil held annually in Painesville, evoking both smiles and tears as they remember their brother.

Last year *The News-Herald* praised the sisters who, surrounded by speechmaking dignitaries and polished politicians, "spoke more eloquently than anyone else of the loss they experience as victims of crime." Following the service, the girls handed out 200 packets of sunflower seeds in memory of Vinnie and planted a tree and sunflowers at the Victim's Rights Memorial Garden.

The paper quoted Elyssa: "I miss my brother every morning and night. I used to play house with him and swing him in a laundry basket. It was fun. All that is gone forever . . . Please don't drink and drive."

Just two weeks after Vinnie's death, Angela began speaking at high schools about drinking and driving and what effect it has had on her family and friends. She also attended a police officers training seminar and spoke of the importance of doing drug and alcohol tests at any crash.

"I do keep a journal of my daily thoughts and feelings. And we have various photo albums around. Anytime we are missing him or just want to see a picture of him, we go through and look at our favorite pictures. We have a lot of videos that we can watch anytime we want.

"I go into his room a lot to look at his things. We've left his room the same. I won't allow my parents to change it. It is exactly the way he had it the day he died. Nothing has been moved or changed. I wanted that to stay the same and my parents are allowing it to be the way it was. I like to go in there and when I see it the way it was, it reminds me of him. I can almost see him there."

Now that thousands of seeds have been harvested from the sunflowers, a green ribbon highlights each packet of sunflower seeds given away and instructions on the care of the sunflower plants are attached with the request to continue Vinnie's memory by replanting the seeds:

"His short lived life was bright and strong like his sunflower. Your plant was started from a seed from the head of his sunflower. As you watch it grow may a part of Vinnie shine through."

As the sunflowers borne from Vinnie's lone plant spread across the country, increasing in numbers each year, "it just reminds me that people do care about Vinnie and are trying to keep his memory alive," says Angela. "They remember him by planting the seeds. So when I see one, I always think of Vinnie as being remembered and well loved!"

Wayne & Pat Loder
Lakes Area MI TCF

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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
January / February 2019

Issue of The Compassionate Friend is

December **15, 2018**

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 2018

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.