



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.

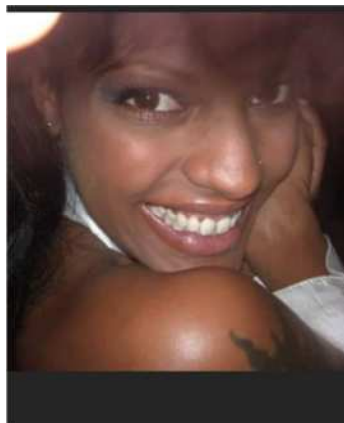
These pages Dedicated with Love to:



Malini Elizabeth Sathyadev



Ethan Estlin Wozniak



Esther Janus



Allen J. Kha



November /
December
2021

Issue 158

Next Meetings

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

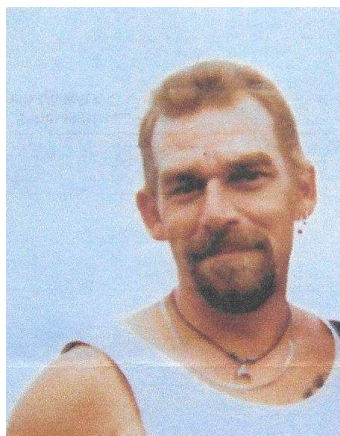
**Wednesday
November 3rd**

**Wednesday
December 1st**

♥ Always In Our Hearts ♥



Joshua James Lubrich



Duane Charles Alley



Christopher L Mariano

San Diego Chapter of TCF
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San Diego CA 92106
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www.sdtcf.org

Chapter Co-Leaders
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Oakbrook, IL 60522-3696
Phone toll free (877) 969-0010
Web Site: www.compassionatefriends.org/



**November /
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2021**

Issue 158

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Next Meetings

**In Person
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Legacy Church
Through December
See page 3**

**Wednesday
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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.

- ♥ Susan Wen & Long Kha — In Loving Memory of their son Allen. Allen: We miss you - Mom, Dad, Jason.
- ♥ Allan Sathyadev — In Loving Memory of his daughter Malini. It's been a long 17 years without you. Miss you so much...., Love, mom and dad
- ♥ Yvonne & Lucien Bennett-Niang — In Loving Memory of their daughter Esther. Esther joined her sister Tina on September 20. We miss these 2 exceptional women. Love Lucien and Yvonne
- ♥ Tula Kareotes — In Memory of her son Chris. My precious baby boy, it's been 3 years since you left and not a day goes by that I don't think about you and cry. My heart aches so so much for you. I miss talking to you, kissing and hugging each other and just being together. The happiest day of my life will be when we meet again, in heaven. I can't wait! Love you with all my heart, Mom
- ♥ Steve & Suzanne Wozniak — In Loving Memory of their son Ethan
- ♥ Louise Hendrickson — In Loving Memory of her son Duane.
- ♥ Gina Baxley — In Loving Memory of her daughter Kathryn.
- ♥ Sandi and Mark Terrell- In Loving Memory of Joshua. Happy 32nd Birthday 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 granddaughter Lily Mae, Andrew and Virginia with grandsons Andrew Joshua and Austin Lee, Best Friend Jason and Brittney with grandsons Dylan Amir and Jayce Benjamin and Best Friends Forever, Persio!"

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) 245-3515

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

Wednesday meetings at the Legacy Church through December.

(Virtual meetings uncertain. Gary will advise.)

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

No food. Must wear mask. (7-9 PM)

Easiest Directions:

From I-8 going east exit Fletcher Pkwy.

Right turn on Baltimore Blvd.

Right turn to University Ave.

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

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

About TCF and Our Newsletter

Cost of printing and mailing our newsletters is expensive.

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

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

To Place Child's Picture In Newsletter

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



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



Birthdays

Luis & Teresa 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
Craig Thomas Markley, born 11-16
Rick E. Pieramico, born 11-19
Kristy Shoemate, born 11-24
Eddie Diaz, born 11-27
Josh Forness, born 11-27
Dylan Libby, born 11-28
Mikael Larson, born 12-2
Stephen Mathew Kraft III, born 12-4
Esther Janus, born 12-5
Malini Elizabeth Sathyadev, born 12-7
Ronald Jack Drew, born 12-7
Tavion Jackson, born 12-8
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 & Teresa Bernal, died 11-1
Philippe Leyva, died 11-17
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
Christopher L. Mariano, died 12-7
Justin Scott, died 12-9
David Sullivan, died 12-9
Stephanie Johanna Westrich, died 12-10
Riley Gail Horgan, died 12-11
Vincent Glen Ruddy, died 12-13
Megan Ashley Landis, died 12-17
Marsha Cushing, died 12-19
Wallace Michaelson, died 12-19
Andrea Lynn Montisano, died 12-19-1998
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
Ethan Estlin Wozniak, died 12-26
Anthony William Bane, died 12-30

Annual Holiday Program And Candle Lighting Ceremony

“...and that their may always shine”

Sunday December 12, 2021

6:00 to 8:00 pm

—New Location—

Central Congregational Church

8360 Lemon Ave.

La Mesa, CA 91941

Directions:

From I-8 going east exit Spring St. next exit after Fletcher Pkwy.

Stay in the right lane crossing trolley tracks heading south on Spring St. away from freeway.

Left turn on Lemon Ave., it's the next intersection after La Mesa Blvd.

Two blocks up, church is on the left. Street parking and parking lot nearby. Parking meters inactive after 6 pm. (Spring St. may be accessed from University Ave. & La Mesa Blvd.)

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.

No food. Drinks available.



Limited Readings 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. 1 monthly meeting and Dec. 12 day of candle lighting.

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

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: Gary Hochstetler at gshoch@cox.net. Please no later than December 1st.

HEART CONNECTIONS – THE BONDS OF SHARED GRIEF

Posted on September 23rd, 2021



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

The Compassionate Friends credo begins with these words:

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

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

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

SHARI O'LOUGHLIN

I



We are excited to announce The Compassionate Friends 2022 National Conference! Our 45th National Conference is going to be held in Houston, Texas from August 5-7, 2022. Join us at the [Marriott Marquis Houston](#) for three days of connection, community, education, and support. In the coming weeks, we will be sending out more information about our conference and how to register. We look forward to seeing you in Houston!

Thanksgiving Memory Is a Treasure

The last time I saw my son was on November 30, 2002. It was a warm, clear Saturday and he and his family had gathered with us at a friend's home for a relaxing Saturday afternoon.

Todd had arrived in Houston on Wednesday, stopped at my office to finish some work and later came home. His daughters and wife were in a different car and had gone to spend the weekend at her parent's house.

Thanksgiving dinner was at our home that year. After dinner, Todd and his family went to the in-laws for dessert. When he and his son came back home about nine, Todd and I set and talked for hours. We talked about the many problems he was facing, the many problems I was facing. We discussed options, solutions, children, his plan for the next two years and much more. We reminisced about past holidays, the history of our family and what contributed to a good childhood. He wanted the same childhood experience for his children that he had; this touched my heart. Most mothers tell their children "someday you'll thank me," but I was able to hear it from my son's heart.

Friday morning found Todd and John changing the oil in the Durango. Todd planned for his son, Clay, to stay and learn to do this chore, but he was overruled by his wife. I could see the pain on Todd's face when she insisted that Clay spend that time with her parents. He wanted a teaching moment with his child; he wanted to spend time building memories that they both would share. Later my husband and Todd went to the annual car show in Houston which was their Friday after Thanksgiving tradition. When they came home, Todd and I spent hours talking. It was wonderful to talk to my grown child as a peer. His ideas were excellent, his temperament always patient. The conversation was easy, no roles, no hidden agendas, no secrets.

On Saturday Todd packed his suitcase and laptop and drove to his in-laws for a brief visit. Saturday afternoon he and his family joined us for a meal at a friend's house. They would leave from there and head back to Austin.

After a pleasant four hours of food and conversation, Todd and his children were loading up for the trip back to Austin. He stood in the driveway, gave me a big hug and said, "I love you, mom. Thanks for a great weekend." I can still see him standing there, herding his little tribe into the two vehicles, watching and smiling as his children exchanged kisses and hugs with everyone.

That's how I want to remember my son.....the good times, the joys and setbacks shared, the great conversations, the deep exchanges punctuated by a marvelous sense of humor.

Less than three weeks later Todd was killed when he was riding as a passenger in John's Durango. I will always remember our last private conversations, the last time he walked through our front door, the last time I saw his handsome face and the last time he told me he loved me. These and so much more are my Thanksgiving memories....memories that are etched forever in my heart.

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

First Christmas

It can't possibly be Christmas
without her being here.
Yet the world is singing round me,
joyful tidings and good cheer.

Though I try to put on armor
and brave the sights and sounds,
a few moments worth of shopping,
and the tears are spilling down.

I pray for strength to do it,
find a path through holidays,
look for shortcuts, good ideas,
some directions through the maze.

Then I find at last the answer:
I'll include her symbolically.
And the giving becomes perfect;
her love's flowing down, through me.

Genesse Bourdeau Gentry
from *Stars in the Deepest – After the Death of a Child*



DO IT FOR BRIAN

Posted on August 24th, 2021

The quality of one's life is not determined by length but by depth...what that person brought to this world while they were here. I can proudly say that in the 17 years that my son Brian was here on earth that he brought so much to so many.

My story began on August 29, 1997, the day I was blessed with this beautiful brown-haired, blue-eyed baby boy...the happiest day of my life. Fast forward 17 years later to November 7, 2014, the day my son was in an auto accident and did not survive. The day my life, as I knew it, would be changed...forever.

The day started off like any other morning. I woke up, got ready for work, and woke up Brian for school. Brian came downstairs while I was drinking coffee, all wet in his towel, asking me to iron his clothes for school that day. I, as usual, said "okay." As I was ironing his clothes, I had a package sitting on the kitchen counter that was delivered the prior evening. New black boots. I told Brian, as I was ironing, that he could open the box for me. He opened the box and started laughing and says, "Mom, really...these are ugly." I came into the kitchen and, my God, they were. We are both laughing and I burst out into song and sang, "These boots are made for walking, and that's just what they'll do. One of these days these boots are going to walk all over you," and as I'm singing I'm poking Brian. We're laughing. As he

is laughing, he hugs me and says, "I love you." Looking back now at that morning, I cherish that hug, as it was the last time I would ever hug my son. I get in my car, Brian gets in his car, and as I look at him he signs, "I love you" with his hands. I signal back. Little did I know that a few hours later Brian would be gone.

The following weeks and months, I just did not know how I was going to do this; how to live my life without him, as if I even wanted to. Each day was filled with endless crying and the why him and how could this happen to such an amazing young man with his entire life in front of him. He was supposed to be getting ready to graduate high school in June, not be gone! Brian is my world...my life...my purpose. What is life without him?

And then it happened about six months later... the first time I laughed. I paused and thought to myself, how can I be laughing? My son is gone and I'm laughing. I felt guilty. But then I realized my laughing didn't mean I have forgotten he was gone. It didn't make the pain in my heart hurt any less. It didn't make me not miss him any less. What it did mean is that I was still alive and that I could miss him, be heartbroken and in pain, but still experience joy. Brian had a mother who was full of life. Who was ditzy, funny and who didn't take life or herself too seriously. What kind of mother would I be if he was looking down from heaven watching me deteriorate? Brian hated when he saw me upset. I know he would not want me to live the remainder of my life in sorrow, every single day. I had to accept joy and happiness again, just like I had to accept the sadness and pain. I had to accept that while I was sad and crying that at the same time it was okay for me to laugh and enjoy life. Not an easy task to do hand in hand.

It literally is like being on a roller coaster, which is funny because I hate roller coasters. Brian, for years, tried to get me on one, but that's what this journey is like. One minute I can be laughing having a good time, and a couple hours later be on the couch crying because I miss my son so much. It took time to accept

and truly understand that for me, in my life now, that sadness and happiness go hand in hand with each other and that's okay. It was okay for me to cry, but it was also okay for me to laugh. I wasn't betraying my son or his memory by still enjoying life. Because of the relationship I have with my son, the opposite would be true. I would be dishonoring him, our relationship, the bond and love we have, if I chose to crawl into a ball, hide in a dark room, and let what is the remainder of my life pass me by.

Our love is too deep for me to allow that to happen. The first day I laughed after Brian's passing was the day I realized there was HOPE.

I have learned so much about myself, about death and about love. Prior to that horrible day, I had thought I knew all I needed to know about life, love, relationships, and heartbreak. I was wrong. The funny thing about death is that it really does not tear two people apart. It never wins.

Here I am, 28 months later, living this life without Brian physically here with me. For 28 months, I have taken deep breaths, holding onto the strength he left behind for me.

When people ask me how have I made it this long, how have I been able to still be moving forward without Brian, my answer is simple.....I don't know. I know that isn't the answer they want to hear, but it is the most honest one.

There are no easy answers after we lose our child. There are no simple directions to follow. You do not go through the "stages of grief" after you lose a child and miraculously wake up after the last one and say, "Hooray, I made it; I am healed." This will last a lifetime.

What I can tell you is that I have made it 28 months without Brian because I had no other choice. I made a choice to rise. I made a choice to take the tragedy of his death and not

have it mean everything. His death shakes me to the core. But his life—his life—brings me so much joy and smiles. Seventeen years of being his mom is the greatest gift I was ever given. The joy he brought to me, the laughs, and the fun memories; the tears, the chats, just everything. There are so many moments that could never be taken away from me; they are what I try to focus on daily.

I have shed tears each day for 28 months. In the midst of my pain, I have learned to laugh again. I have learned to accept joy, in spite of the pain. I am continuously learning how to navigate through this world without my son. I fall...a lot. But I always get back up.

If someone would have told me that I would still be here 28 months later after losing Brian in that car accident I would have told them they were crazy. But I am here. I am living; not just going through the motions each day.

My dad was right, I would find a new purpose. My purpose was Brian when he was alive. My purpose now, funny enough, is still Brian. The greatest lesson that I learned was that I may not be a mom in the typical sense as I was before when Brian was here, but I definitely have not stopped mothering Brian in the spiritual sense. Death could not change that; through me, he lives on...through all that I do for Brian in his name, memory, and honor. This makes me a mom. It makes me Brian's mom.

Because I am Brian's mom I choose to embrace the laughing, the smiles, and the joy.

Today, like every day, I choose to #doitforbrian.

LISA HEATH

Lisa Heath is a resident of Fayetteville, North Carolina. She is a mom to Brian who resides in heaven after losing his life in a car accident. She continues to bring teen awareness of distracted driving to her community, as well as keeping Brian's memory alive through scholarships in Brian's name, volunteer work, her writing, and through her leadership of Finding Light through Darkness, a group she created that helps other grieving parents.

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS SAN DIEGO CHAPTER STEERING COMMITTEE

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① OUR LOCAL WEB SITE

Visit the San Diego Chapter homepage:

www.sdtcf.org

Email: leaders@sdtcf.org

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

TCF Regional Coordinator

① OTHER LOCAL RESOURCES

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

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

Bereaved Parents of the USA
www.bereavedparentsusa.org

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

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

① INFORMATION ON THE NET

Visit the TCF national homepage:
www.compassionatefriends.org

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

Chat Room schedule:

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

member web/e-mail

<http://www.RickPieramico.com>

Charlene Tate
caricat83@hotmail.com

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

Tami Carter haley1@san.rr.com

TCF INFORMATION PACKAGE

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

Be a compassionate friend

Our Lost Children's Photos for Newsletter

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

WE WELCOME YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS



Deadline for submission to
the January / February
2022

**Issue of
The Compassionate Friends is
December 15, 2021**

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



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

Supporting Family After a Child Dies
San Diego County Chapter

3805 Garden Lane, San Diego CA 92106

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

November / December 2021

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.