



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.



September /  
October 2019

Issue 145

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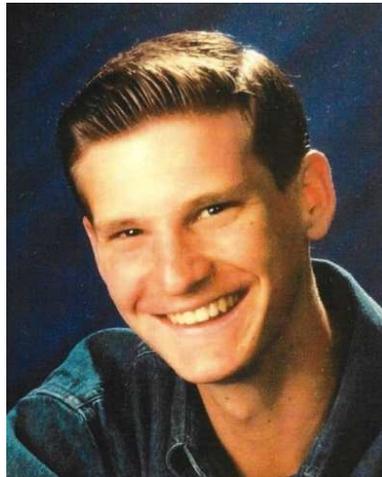
**Location,  
see p. 3**

**Next Meeting**

Wednesday  
Sept. 4th

Wednesday  
Oct. 2nd

**These pages Dedicated with Love to:**



Ethan Estin Wozniak

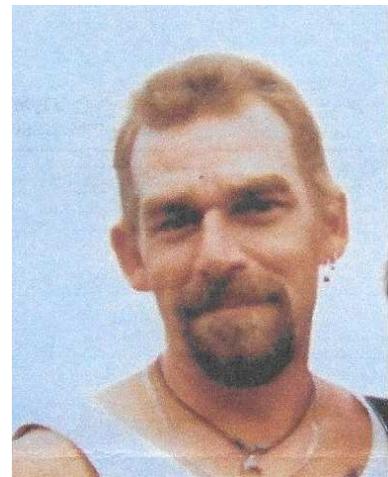


Christopher L Mariano

**♥ Always In Our Hearts ♥**



Philippe Leyva



Duane Charles Alley

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Web Site: [www.compassionatefriends.org/](http://www.compassionatefriends.org/)

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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.**

- ♥ Steve & Suzanne Wozniak — In Loving Memory of their son Ethan.
  - ♥ Gloria Hurtado — In Loving Memory of her son Philippe.
  - ♥ Tula Kareotes — In Loving Memory of her son Christopher.
  - ♥ Marc & Barbara Allen — In Loving Memory of their son Brian.
  - ♥ Louise Hendrickson — In Loving Memory of her son Duane. “For my dear son, Duane I shed a tear each day for you since you've been gone and my heart aches more each day for you since you've been gone. Happy Birthday to you my son. Someday, someday I will be with you again. I miss you with every breath I take.” Love Mom
- 

### Not the Same

He was a very nice man, like so many others, and yet he was so different.  
 His quick smile and gentle ways were like those of others and yet, he was so uncommon.  
 He was kind and loving with unshakable faith like others, and yet he was so unique.  
 He was a dutiful soldier who gave his life like many others, and yet he was so special.  
 The same as others? No  
 Not to those who knew and loved him.  
 He was himself, and individual, and he was my brother!

Pam Miller Farrell  
 TCF Evansville, IL

*Friendship doubles our joy and divides our grief. ~ Swedish Proverb*

# 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

## Meeting Place and Times

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS OF SAN DIEGO MEETS ON

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

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

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

## OF NOTE

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

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## 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.

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## 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 September & October***

### **We remember the families of:**



#### **Birthdays**

*Ronald Paul Jones, born 9-1*  
*Creta (CJ) Smith, born 9-4*  
*Dan Gerald Bruce, born 9-6*  
*Klay Budz, born 9-7*  
*Megan Ashley Landis, born 9-8*  
*Lindsey Faye Whelchel, born 9-8*  
*Blake Christopher Whelchel, born 9-9*  
*Vincent Glen Ruddy, born 9-10*  
*George Brers IV, born 9-13*  
*Guy Charles Green, born 9-14*  
*Duane Charles Alley, born 9-16*  
*Brian Michael Bennett, born 9-19*  
*Vinny Palermo, born 9-21*  
*Philippe Leyva, born 9-22*  
*Aubrey Apodaca, born 9-24*  
*Brent Foster Whelchel, born 9-24*  
*Lucas Daniel Giaconelli, born 9-30*  
*Michelle Weihe, born 10-1*  
*Kristina Michelle Bennett, born 10-07*  
*Mark Metz, born 10-7*  
*Joshua Michael Jensen, born 10-10*  
*Ethan Estin Wozniak, born 10-10*  
*Brian James Gillis, born 10-11*  
*Kathleen Bohanon, born 10-12*  
*Jennifer Ann Donnell, born 10-12*  
*Nathaniel Poteat, born 10-12*  
*Skip Anaya-Summers, born 10-16*  
*Renee Eleonor Dawson, born 10-17*  
*Jennifer Ann Greenwald, born 10-24*  
*Pamela Broderick, born 10-24*  
*David Sullivan, born 10-25*  
*Michael Dylkiewicz, born 10-28*  
*Leonard Valadez, born 10-31*

#### **Anniversaries**

*Ryan McDonough, died 9-3*  
*Nicole Clark, died 9-3*  
*Blake Christopher Whelchel, died 9-4*  
*Cynthia Lee Kessler, died 9-6*  
*Matthew Steven Spiewak, died 9-9*  
*Vince Lopez, died 9-12*  
*Jason Lee Hansen, died 9-13*  
*Teresa Bowers, died 9-15*  
*Alexander Nicholas Model, died 9-15*  
*Ron Laverty, died 9-16*  
*Jered Dillard, died 9-18*  
*Stephen William Anderson, died 9-19*  
*Nicholas Ferrell, died 9-20*  
*Michelle Weihe, died 9-24*  
*Aubrey Apodaca, died 9-28*  
*William Scott Virdee, died 9-27*  
*Spencer Clay, died 9-30*  
*Lawrence O'Brien, died 10-3*  
*Matthew Scott Lewis, died 10-5*  
*Kai Wright, died 10-9*  
*Duane Charles Alley, died 10-10*  
*Vince Lopez, died 10-12*  
*Emil Ian de la Barrera, died 10-18*  
*Julie Elizabeth Richardson, died 10-21*  
*Michael Scott Ayers, died 10-24*  
*Rory David Boyer, died 9-28*  
*Brittany Dawn Williams, died 10-29*  
*Davey Johnson, died 10-30*



David and Ruth Keyser love the conference experience. It's an opportunity one may find very helpful in many areas including visiting and making new friends; and see a little more of America. Below a few pictures from the Keyzers.



Ruth & David at the Liberty Bell



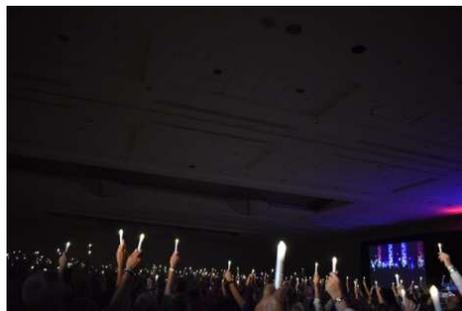
Ruth with Alan Pedersen



Ruth and Nivia Vasquez at Daniel's picture



"A Walk to Remember"



David & Ruth with our San Diego TCF Banner

The 43rd TCF National Conference will be in held in Atlanta, GA on July 24-26, 2020

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San Diego Chapter, CA



**The Compassionate Friends**  
San Diego, CA Chapter  
Supporting families after a child dies.

# Annual Memorial Balloon Release Picnic

Sunday, September 22, 2019

11:00 AM – 2:00 PM

Lunch 12:00 Noon, Balloon Release 1:00 PM



## Admiral Baker Field

2400 Admiral Baker Rd.

San Diego, CA 92120

**Bring your family for a day of memories and friendship**  
**Please bring your child's favorite side dish to share**  
**The Compassionate Friends will provide the meat dish and drinks**  
**No Pets Please**



Directions: I-15 to Friars Road. Head East for about one mile

Make a left turn onto Santo Road

Take immediate right onto Admiral Baker Road

Go downhill into the parking lot



## “SIGNS”

*Posted on July 30th, 2019*

Do any of you believe in signs or messages from your deceased child? I do, and it helps me with the grieving process and to overcome tough days, like her birthday.

Every time I see a penny that shouldn't be there or wasn't there the last time I looked, I think of it as the presence of Samantha. I could be having any type of day – good, bad, indifferent – and when I see a misplaced penny, I instantly sense a presence of her and say to myself “Samantha is thinking of me”. I know this might sound crazy, but it makes me feel happy to believe that she's thinking of her dad and wants to let me know that.

The most impactful penny sighting happened on Samantha's birthday – April 25, 2018. My birthday is on April 27th. Samantha would have been 14 in 2019. (She died in 2006 at the age of 17 months.) I was walking into work, and feeling absolutely horrible. Her birthday and death day are terrible triggers for me, and I was depressed and feeling a very heavy sense of grief that day. As I approached my desk, I saw a penny on my chair. In my 17 years of working at my company, I've never seen a penny on my chair, so this sighting was completely unexpected and a total shock. It wasn't there last night when I left work for the day. I asked around and nobody claimed putting the penny there. I immediately called

my wife and said “You're not going to believe what's on my chair! A penny and it wasn't there when I left work last night.” She said “What date is on the penny?” I picked it up, looked closely at the date, and couldn't believe my eyes that the date was 2006, the year she died.

I knew Samantha was thinking of me and telling me that she was OK and that I should not be sad. I instantly went from deep longing and sadness to euphoric. It was the best birthday present I've received in the 13 years since Samantha has passed away.

We all know that the grieving process is unique and personal. Some might believe in signs. Others may not. The bottom line is that if it's signs or looking at photos or visiting the grave site that gives you moments of happiness, then embrace it. I did and it's turned some pretty painful days into a positive.

## JONATHAN BAER

When Jonathan Baer's 16-month-old daughter Samantha died suddenly and unexpectedly, he faced the toughest journey any parent could ever be confronted with; how do you continue to be a parent, husband and friend after such a loss? “Gone Too Soon” is written for dads and those who love and support them. The book describes strategies to deal with grief, and suggests a game plan to persevere. This uplifting story provides hope and courage to dads who have lost a child. Jonathan is a husband, father and business owner.

*Death leaves a heartache no one can heal,  
Love leaves a memory no one can steal. ~ found on a headstone in Ireland*



## BACK TO SCHOOL FOR THE CHILD LOSS PARENT

It's mid-August in Nebraska which marks another school year starting. To some it's the thrill of having their kids gone all day so they can get things done at home. To others it's the stress of wondering if their child is making friends, behaving, and understanding the material; however, to the bereaved parent it marks another anniversary of not having a First Day of School picture. I see you. I hear you. I feel it too.

I think about another school year starting, specifically 3rd grade. I walk through Target seeing all of the school supplies, the Back to School display with shiny backpacks, thermoses and lunch boxes. There's so many choices, a lot more than I had to choose from when I was starting 3rd grade. It's almost too many choices. From animals, sparkles, super heroes, sports teams, Disney characters, and plain ones; I look at them all, wondering.... Would Macie have wanted everything princess like her little sister or would she be a "tom boy" wanting everything Cornhuskers like her daddy? We live in Nebraska and everything is Go Big Red in our house.

Then I stroll over to the supplies, there was always something about a freshly sharpened pencil and the smell of the paper of a new notebook that excited me when I was little. The brand new markers that are so new the caps are still hard to take off! I've always had a passion for learning and a love for "school" supplies and at 35 this hasn't changed. I'm still a book nerd. I wonder if she would have had my love of learning. If she'd be excited to pick out supplies. If she'd have a

preference for a freshly sharpened pencil or mechanic pencil? Things that seem so simple to parents. Things that most parents may even rush through. It's okay.

I wonder who her teacher would be. What school she'd attend? Would we have moved back from Lees Summit if she hadn't passed away? The truth is, as much as I love being back home in Nebraska, I simply do not know. I wonder who her friends would be and what'd they'd be like? Would she be into wearing dresses or athletic shorts? Would the first day of school be as monumental to her as it was to me? Would she have to try everything on to make sure she had just the right outfit for the first day? Would she let me walk her in on her first day or tell me good-bye from the sidewalk while she ran independently inside to her class?

I want to hug my 3rd grader and to hear all about her day. To see if she liked her teacher. To ask the daily question "what was the best part of your day today, Macie?" and "what was the worst part of your day, Macie?" If Maxene learns one thing from me, I hope it's to find the good in people, in every situation, in all of life and everything in general. You may have to really look to find the good, but it's always there just below the surface, waiting.... I digress, we're talking about my other daughter Macie.

I'm always going to wonder because Macie died. The day she died part of me died as well. A part of me that hasn't come back to life just yet and probably never will; there is forever this tiny little void that is empty in my heart, for that is the spot where Macie's love lived; the very essence of me that was all hers.... and it is forever gone now. The day she died all of my hopes for her died. My dreams for her. My plans for her, plans that she probably would have changed because, let's face it, she's my kid.

With all of this said, here is what the take away is: Enjoy the small things because when you look back they truly will be the BIG things. In the hustle and bustle of everyday life it's okay to take that extra minute to enjoy the moment. Cherish it! Give that extra hug or kiss, give two or three! Take the picture, take a hundred of them! Capture that moment, remember it, love it and share it!

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There will be a graduation day in 2029 and there will be one missing. And, on that day, please say a quick prayer of comfort for us as well.

All my love,

Forever Macie's Mama.

Should be 3rd grader.

Forever 3 months and 19 days.

Class of 2029.



## LISA BARTON

Lisa Barton is currently on the Board for the Nebraska SIDS Foundation and understands grief after losing her daughter, Macie, to SIDS in 2011. She is married to her husband, Chris, and they are the proud parents of Maxene and beloved Macie. They currently reside in the Omaha, NE area where Lisa is the CFO for Makovicka Physical Therapy and Chris is a Nursing Recruiter at [Fusion](#) Medical Staffing.



## CHOOSING TO SURVIVE

*Posted on August 18th, 2019*

I went to a wedding last weekend. It was the wedding of my son Davey's first love. She is a beautiful girl and I have kept in touch with her since

losing my son almost five years ago. When I accepted the invitation, I figured it may be a little difficult for us (my daughter was attending as well), but we wanted to be there for her special day. Boy, did I get that one wrong. It was brutal and it brought all kinds of [pain](#) and what if's that I had been able to keep at bay for a while.

My son Davey passed away in April 2014, the result of a car accident. It's still very difficult to talk about the immediate aftermath of that night. I was shocked and hysterical and in denial. My son had just landed his dream job three months earlier. The day he died was the day he had finished training and had been assigned to his unit. I just couldn't grasp what had happened. The week of his funeral, I barely remember a thing. I was so angry. Angry at the young men who had been carelessly street racing. Angry that they took off like cowards and left my son there to die alone. Angry at God. Why on earth would he take my baby?

That first year was so awful. I was despondent, I was angry and the worst part was, I felt so alone. I was surrounded by my family who would have done anything to get me through the pain. I just didn't think they could relate. I had lost my child. I had convinced myself that unless someone has lost a child, they just didn't get it. It wasn't true, of course, we were all hurting, in different ways.

I did something that I am convinced saved my life and that was to [start](#) seeing a grief counselor. She helped me to understand my grief and how it works. Dealing with so many other emotions along with the pain. There was so much soul searching during this time. I had to figure out how to survive in a life I didn't want or ask for. I had to eventually resolve my anger at God. Although I will never completely understand why my son had to be taken. It is comforting to me to think he was needed for a bigger purpose.

All the hard work I put in with the grief counselor (and continue to put in) has a way of crashing down around me when faced with a trigger. Normally, I keep things safely tucked into my heart and then BAM, something like the wedding comes along. We were robbed of Davey. Of his own wedding and maybe a family of his own. Seeing people that he knew and grew up with. Getting on with their lives. While Davey's was cut short. I was sitting at the wedding and those feelings swirled around me and

Next page

for a minute, I couldn't breathe. Through all the reading, reflecting and counseling I have done, I was able to calm down. Before, I would just dive right into my pain. Now, I have learned that I can get through these moments even if it does take a while. And then I try to tuck it away until the next trigger.

Those triggers will always come, regardless of how long it has been since Davey passed. I have a beautiful new grandson. When I look at him, I can see Davey. And that makes me both happy and sad and can even trigger that pain.

Losing a child is probably the worst thing one can endure. I have had to become a new person. The old Debbie is gone forever. I have learned the simple things in life are what matters. I have worked hard to find joy in my life again. I have decided that I can be kinder and more grateful for what I do have. I wrote a book, *Follow Your Bliss*, because I want to reach out to others who have lost a child. I want readers to know they aren't alone and to offer love and support to them. I want to do these things because they honor my son's memory and they bring me a little bit of peace. And because my son would expect no less from me.



## DEBBIE TIMMS

Debbie Timms lost her son Davey when he was 25. After almost giving up on life, she decided to share her story. It's a story about loss, despair and finally acceptance and healing. She has spent her career in [health](#) care and lives in Prescott, AZ with her husband and the greatest golden retriever on the planet, Shay. <http://www.christianfaithpublishing.com/books/?book=follow-your-bliss>

## Journaling to Heal

Each time I look back over my grief journey, I remember the important role that journaling played in my first and second years of grief. Handwritten entries, some sentences, sometimes just a few words describing my emotions, helped me to define where I was in my daily life. As I review the tear-stained pages, I am reminded of the deep, deep pain and the catharsis of the journal. Whether I was angry, in pain, deeply depressed or just too exhausted to think, I wrote a few words, maybe even a few lines each day. I saw it as my connection to my son.

As time progressed, my journaling became writing and eventually I returned to the computer and began forming coherent thoughts and sentences, with subjects and messages to my child, myself and to others. But the process started with the healing of the journal. I learned to be very honest with myself in my journal because I never shared it with anyone. I didn't put on a mask or rationalize in my journal, as no one else would be reading it. I was completely candid, and I soon recognized my weaknesses, regrets, strengths and successes. Pure honesty and great insight were achieved in my journal's conversation with myself.

Grief therapists recommend journaling to bereaved parents quite frequently. Some people are able to find an outlet for their daily roller coaster of emotions through journaling. Some seek answers and others seek questions. Many parents feel they are connecting with their child through their journal. There are as many reasons to journal as there are types of journals.

While journaling may not be for everyone, we encourage each of you to at least attempt it for a week. Give it your best effort. If, as some have found, it offers you nothing and is a chore, not a treasured time, then stop and seek other forms of outlet. But if, as many have found, it offers you a place for your thoughts, your messages, your self-revelation and self-evaluation as well as a refuge from the world, then by all means, continue to journal.

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

**THE  
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**① OUR LOCAL WEB SITE**

Visit the San Diego Chapter homepage:

[www.sdtcf.org](http://www.sdtcf.org)

Email: [leaders@sdtcf.org](mailto: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](mailto:info@SOSLsd.org)

**Bereaved Parents of the USA**  
[www.bereavedparentsusa.org](http://www.bereavedparentsusa.org)

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

**Alive Alone - for now childless parents**  
[www.alivealone.org](http://www.alivealone.org)

**① INFORMATION ON THE NET**

Visit the TCF national homepage:  
[www.compassionatefriends.org](http://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](mailto:caricat83@hotmail.com)

Elene Bratton  
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[www.jamiesjoy.org](http://www.jamiesjoy.org)

Tami Carter [haley1@san.rr.com](mailto: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 **November / December 2019** Issue of The Compassionate Friend is

**October 15, 2019**

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

3555 Rosecrans St. #114-569, San Diego CA 92110

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

September / October 2019

## 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, 3555 Rosecrans St. #114-569, San Diego CA 92110**

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.