

ANNOUNCEMENT:

The meeting location for The Compassionate Friends - Rochester Chapter is changing!

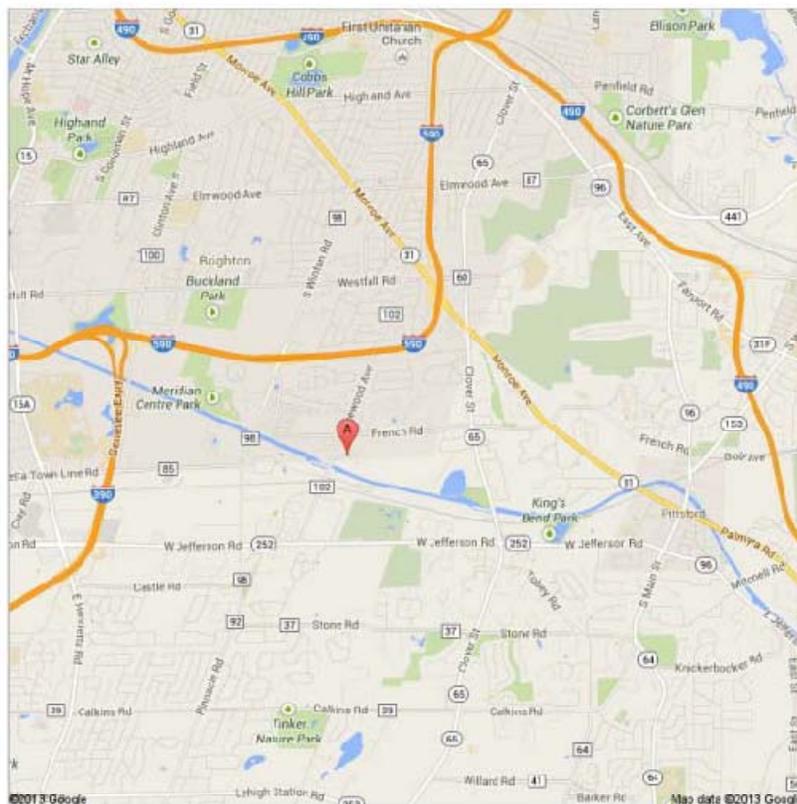
TCF Rochester will be moving its meeting location to The Jewish Community Center (JCC) at 1200 Edgewood Avenue, just around the corner from Lifetime Care.

Our first meeting of 2014, which is January 14th, will be held at the new location. Meetings will still be held the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month from 7 to 9 pm.

Park in the large lot to the north of the JCC facility. Once you enter the building, a receptionist will let you know where our meeting room is located (we will meet in the Senior Adult Lounge).

We are looking forward to our new space and we are sure you will all be impressed with the JCC.

Note: The JCC does not allow pork or shellfish to be brought into the building in order to be sensitive to the cultural and religious of the Jewish Community. We will be allowed to bring any food to our meetings that does not contain pork or shellfish.



A. **Jewish Community Center**
1200 Edgewood Ave, Rochester, NY



The New Year: A Time of Hope

Another New Year has slipped into our lives, radically changing some things and leaving other things to evolve naturally. For bereaved parents a new year marks another year on the calendar without their precious children. It is a new year, but not much has changed since the old year. Why is that?

We act as the catalysts of change for ourselves. We choose to help ourselves; we choose to stay in a specific place in our grief. We choose to reach out for hope or we choose to withdraw into the familiar and postpone facing life and hope another day. There are no set rules or specific timetables in bereavement. We are each unique in our grief.

Eventually we all find hope. We find it in different ways and in different times. There will be no one moment of epiphany for bereaved parents. Instead, there are a series of minutes, hours, weeks, months and often years until we realize that we can truly say we feel the power of hope coming alive from deep within us. This moment will come for each of us. It will come in its own time and its own way.

Even those of us who have found hope and who shine its light on the paths of newly bereaved parents, still regress and withdraw into the dark sadness of our loss. And that is as it should be. For we have lost the most precious gift of our lives...our children's presence with us and their future in this life. Our children live in our hearts and our memories and our dreams. They do not share this plane with us. It is normal and it is good to think of our children often and to shed some tears for all that has been lost. These aren't setbacks as much as sweet memories that bring cathartic tears.

The element we find in these memories is a closeness to our child and our child's life. This, too, is healthy. An often-expressed fear is that our children will be forgotten. Worry not, gentle parent, your child will be remembered for all of your days and for many days thereafter. You will never forget your child. Others who knew your child will never forget. The proof of this is in our memories....sweet memories that take us back to another time when our child was with us.

So this New Year's, whether you are a few months, a few years or many years in your grief, think about hope. You have not forsaken your child when you reach for hope. Your hope brings your child back in a positive way that will warm your heart. Reach for that hope. As you move forward in your grief in the New Year, reach for hope. Your child will still be with you. And one day you will find that your child's presence is sweeter when hope is within you.

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

A Valentine's Day Wish

How I wish I could bring our children back to us for Valentine's Day—24 hours we could spend telling our children of our love.

But, alas, we are doomed to spend another Valentine's Day without our beloved children. Others who have not lost a child, tend to take for granted these special days. A card that says "I love you, Mom and Dad" should be carefully folded and saved in a special place. All too many parents consider these cards to be renewable commodities. There's no need to save this one—"we'll always get another one next year."

For many of us, next year came and there was no card. Tears of sadness replaced tears of joy on this special day. But for many of us the memories remain of those Valentine's Days gone by. Because our child's love remains with us, our child will never truly be gone.

This year on Valentine's Day, let us shed tears of joy that we were given even a short time with our child—for this, no matter how short, can never be taken from us.

Wayne Loder
TCF Lakes Area, MI

Prayers

Each morning
When I awake and rise
I thank the Lord above
For my time in the girls lives

Each day at noon
I take a moment alone
To thank the Lord above
For the strength to carry on

Each evening
When I get home
I thank the Lord above
That Loral and Macy are not alone

Each night at bedtime
I ask the Lord above
To please hear my prayers
Then send Macy and Loral my love

PawPaw, Donald Moyers
In Memory of Loral and Macy
TCF Galveston County, TX



Time Heals

They told me that to comfort me
When my child died.
Four years and two children later
I think maybe they lied.

Friends and family tried their best.
God sheltered me under his wing.
Still, the mother inside me
Cries for that child,
And time hasn't changed a thing.

The gaping wound granulated to a scar.
The tears are now slower to spill,
But deep in my heart there's an empty hole
That only that child could fill.

No, I don't really think that it's true about time,
For I know that the love bond remains.
Time never heals the loss of a child,
You just learn to cope with the pain.

Marsha Fredrickson
TCF, SD

Why We Still Go to TCF

***“Are you still involved with that group?
Aren't you over it yet? Why do you go?”***

These are questions I often hear now that it has been more than seven years since Mark died. I suspect you hear them too. There are easy answers. But not everyone understands, unless you have been there. Here are ten I can think of:

1. Because we never want the world to forget our child, so what we do we do in his or her name.
2. Because when we reach out to help someone else, we also help ourselves.
3. Because someone was there for us when we needed it most; now the best way to say “thank you” is to pass it on by being there for others.
4. Because it is the one thing we do that can bring something positive out of tragedy.
5. Because we have found in TCF better friends and closer bonds than we ever thought possible. Here we can cry and hug people even if we don't know their last name or what they do for a living. And it doesn't matter.
6. Because few people are qualified to walk up to a newly bereaved family and say, “I know how you feel.” And because we can, we must.
7. Because sometimes we need to talk, too, and to remember and share. We are further along than many around us, but we never forget.
8. Because many of us believe that one day we will meet our child, grandchild, or brother or sister again, and he or she will ask, "So what did you do with your life after I left?" And we will have an answer.
9. Because our presence might help newly bereaved families understand that they will survive and even laugh again.
10. Because we love cold coffee, cookies, and hard metal chairs. (Not true of TCF Rochester. We have hot coffee, yummy cookies, and comfy chairs.) ☺

Richard Edler
In Memory of my son Mark Edler
TCF South Bay/LA, CA

Welcome New Friends

At nearly every meeting we welcome new members to our group, always with mixed emotions. We are glad you found us, but we are so sorry for the circumstances that bring us together. We understand your pain; we hope our unconditional friendship and understanding will help you through your grief. Attending a meeting for the first two or three times takes courage, but for many it is the first real step toward healing. It may seem overwhelming, so we encourage you to come to several meetings to give yourself a chance to become comfortable.

***Beginning with the Jan./Feb. Newsletter, Alice Torres will be our new IT Person & she will be emailing the newsletters to you.
Thanks to Steve Haupt for his many years of IT work for TCF!***

Love Gifts

*Linnea and Dewey Hammond, in loving memory of Sabrina L. Joy
Alice Torres, in loving memory of Ricardo Bernabeu, Jr.*



Contacts:

Brenda Schmidt 585-370-6095

Becky Price 585-346-2441

TCF Regional Coordinator:

Jacque Edwards-Mitchell 718-451-0814

TCF National :

877-969-0010 or

www.compassionatefriends.org

Send newsletter inputs or web comments to:

Joan Carafos, jcarafos@photikon.com

If you would like to contribute to our Compassionate Friends Chapter, please forward your Love Gifts and Donations to: The Compassionate Friends of Rochester, 130 Portview Circle Rochester, NY 14617

Please make checks payable to: The Compassionate Friends of Rochester, New York

Sincere Thanks!

To receive this newsletter via e-mail, please contact Alice Torres at alice3970@gmail.com

See Brenda for TCF Bracelets (\$2.00) and Memorial votive candle holders (\$5.00)

Rochester Chapter TCF Mission:

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. Adopted 2-25-12



Coping with Grief: Winter Blues

When the weather gets colder and the days get shorter, we often find ourselves feeling low. Some people call this the Winter Blues. When you are grieving, those blues can feel overwhelming.

Grief itself is hard to cope with and cold winds and longer nights can make those feelings seem more intense. Here are a few ideas that may help you cope with the Winter Blues:

- Winter only lasts a few months. Use this time to reflect on your relationship with the person who died. Sometimes in our efforts to deny our loss, we rob ourselves of precious memories.
- Reach out to friends or family when you can. Often our isolation is worse because we do not allow ourselves time with others. You are not alone. There are many other people going through a similar experience. Although your relationship with your loved one is special, other people can understand. Take the risk to ask someone over for coffee or tea. Share with them.
- Take time to look through picture albums. Gather family to share stories. Make a new tradition during the dreary months of winter for family to gather for an evening of remembering. The holidays are over and the pressure is off. Maybe other people are feeling the same way and are afraid to talk about it.
- Try a grief support group. Sometimes all we need is to know other people hear us and understand. A group can help you to know you are normal.
- Read ... favorite stories, comedies, novels, or information about grief to understand your own reactions better. Somehow reading about such topics helps us know we are not alone. You can look for grief materials in your local library, church, or local TCF chapter.
- Take good care of yourself. Eat right, rest and pamper your body. This goes for any season. Your body is under a tremendous amount of stress in adjusting to your loss.
- Since grief affects us physically, paying attention to our bodies is important. Whether you prefer to do things alone or with others, physical activity helps. Taking a walk, doing simple aerobics, indoor swimming, playing racquetball or other activities can help you keep your body ready for the continued adjustment to loss. Feeling better physically can make a difference.
- If you feel sad and need to cry, know that is a normal reaction. You are not weak if you need to show your emotions.
- Write a letter to your loved one. Sometimes we need to communicate with them. Going to the cemetery is okay and normal. If the weather prevents that, a letter can be very helpful.
- Remember that you will survive this loss. The pain and ache can seem like it will last forever. The intensity will lessen in time, although you will always remember your loved one. Time does not necessarily “heal” all wounds, but it can help us adjust to the change. Take it minute by minute ... then day by day.

**From TCF Newsletter, Pittsburgh,PA
Shared by TCF Lawrenceville, GA**

Why Can't I Let Go

You were always my hero.
I always wanted to be like you.
You were my younger brother,
Still, I always looked up to you.

You were always there for me,
Even when things were at their worst.
You helped me through my hardest trials,
And we always made it through.

Now as I sit here, writing these words,
Remembering you and times gone by, I'm
Trying to say good-bye.

Nineteen years are just too many,
To just let you go,
I can't believe you're gone, you died,
And left me here alone.

Some days I'm fine, some days I'm low,
But most days, I just miss you so.
It was you and me,
But now, what do I do?

Each night I ask why?
Why I'm so angry?
Why I can't cry?
Why I can't let you go?

I know we'll see each other again,
But the years seem so long.
I long for the day I'll see you again.
Waiting for me with open arms.

Brother, I love you and miss you so.
But now I need you most.
This time in my life is oh so hard,
I just can't let you go.

Stephen Welch
TCF St Louis, MO





Our Children Remembered
January, 2014
Birthdays and Remembrance Days



Birthdays

Michael Sebastian Spoto	January 1
Noel Dorothy	January 3
Keith Cyle Kearns	January 4
Cheryl Hinz	January 4
Alex R. Ketchek	January 8
Blair Elliot Phillips	January 10
Blake Cognata	January 14
Nora Elizabeth McMahon	January 15
Paula Cristina Perez	January 15
Gregory Ray Stephens	January 16
Daniel P. Nartel	January 21
David George Carafos	January 24
Amber Marie Hopkins	January 24
Daniel Spoor	January 24
Joshua Daniel Price	January 30
Pat Helen Klehr	January 30
Christa Ann Mertz	January 31

Remembrance Days

Shawn Patrick Viola	January 1
Michael Sebastian Spoto	January 1
Christa Ann Mertz	January 5
William Joseph Puroi	January 5
Robert Jordan Christiano	January 5
Owen William Jeroy	January 12
Blake Cognata	January 12
Matthew J. Hall	January 14
Cheryl Hinz	January 15
Adam Vincent Marano	January 18
Blair Elliot Phillips	January 19
Laura Catherine Mix	January 25





***Our Children Remembered
February, 2014
Birthdays and Remembrance Days***



Birthdays

Kayla R. Nenni	February 5
Greg Paul Wilson Crawford	February 10
Paul M. Romano	February 11
Jillian Kristine Boda	February 12
Scott David Swanson	February 13
Owen William Jeroy	February 13
Molly Katherine Thomas	February 14
Jaden Michael Fournier	February 16
John Eric Yelle	February 19
Amy Marie Iwasko	February 19
Johanna Lynne Falk	February 20
Megan Zielinski	February 21
Michael Paul Phillips	February 23
Briella Ball	February 24
Danielle L. Robinson	February 25
Nicholas Jay Kovaleski	February 27

Remembrance Days

Ryan Brooks	February 1
Katherine Magar	February 3
Karen Jill D'Amico	February 4
Lauren Marie Vassello	February 4
Robin Renee Knapp	February 5
Scott Puglisi	February 5
Kurt William Simmons	February 6
Ricardo Bernabeu, Jr.	February 6
Jay Alan Starman	February 11
Timothy E. Hale	February 12
Brian Keith Nelson	February 13
Conor LeVan Driscoll	February 16
Andrew Dwight Parmeter	February 16
Grant Matthew Lintala	February 17
Caroline Elizabeth Harber	February 17
Kevin B. Pratt	February 19
Lisa Ann Rupp	February 20
Christi Grace Juliano	February 20
David Joseph Groff	February 22
Kimberly Susan Fitzsimmons	February 23
Danielle L. Robinson	February 26
Briella Ball	February 26
Seth Asa Younes	February 26
Edward Vincent Doyle III	February 26
Keith Cyle Kearns	February 27
Brenda Jean Tastor	February 28

