



***The Compassionate Friends***  
***Rochester Chapter***  
**Supporting Family After a Child Dies**

March / April 2014 [www.tcfrochester.org](http://www.tcfrochester.org)

**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**



**A Hole in Our Hearts**

There is a hole in our hearts  
 There is a hole in our lives.  
 A hole that opened, when you died.

We go on with our lives,  
 But always with an emptiness, a feeling  
 that something is missing.  
 Something is wrong.

Others don't understand.  
 Have they lost a child?  
 They give advice, which is bad.  
 Not helping many times worsening  
 You see the hole will always be here,  
 You made us whole, your life and ours entwined,  
 parts making a whole.  
 We talk to you, we talk about you,  
 But it's not the same, it's not what we need, or want.

There is a hole in our hearts  
 There is a hole in our lives

We have memories, picture albums, and mementos.  
 All of these will never heal our hearts.  
 Our hearts skip a beat, the beat that was there,  
 when you were here.  
 That beat is gone, gone with you,  
 Gone to heaven.  
 Leaving us with a hole, an empty feeling,  
 A cloud that lies over us,  
 that darkens even the sunniest days.  
 The hole is the love we lost, the love that can't be  
 replaced.  
 The hole in our heart that you filled

There is a hole in our hearts  
 There is a hole in our lives

**TEARS**

Tears come unannounced  
 They come as a trickle  
 Or in a flood

Some can be choked back  
 Other times they come when we  
 Least expect them and we are all choked up.

They remind us of our loss  
 Help us with our grief.

Tears come with music, or  
 In the silence of the night  
 They come when our thoughts are sad  
 They represent our loss  
 Thousands of tears for all the  
 Times we shared and for the  
 Lost moments we wanted to share, with you.

Tears know no time limit,  
 Whether it's a day, a week,  
 or a lifetime.

Tears glisten in the sun  
 Or freeze in the cold.  
 We wear them as a badge  
 To honor our loved one

So when all is said, just  
 Let them flow, without shame, or apology  
 Because you hurt, because you care,  
 The angels will understand.



**George Carafos**  
**In Loving Memory of son, David**  
**TCF Rochester, NY**

**“Reflections of David’s Father”**

**Some things I've learned in the last nine years:**

Grief doesn't leave us, it only abates, even if only for a short period of time. That doesn't mean we don't feel "better" as the years go on, it means that grief is still a real and understandable factor (to those in this room). The heart simply cannot go on grieving as we have done in the early stages of the loss of our loved one without giving out. We have an innate sense of survival – even if we don't wish it.

Grief is somewhat like the tide. One of my favorite things to do is to sit on the rocks in Maine and watch the tide come in and go out. I never realized until recently that as the tide comes in, I feel euphoric and anticipate the full tide. Then as the tide starts to recede, I start to feel uneasy – and then when the tide is low, I feel empty. Now I can relate this to my grief. At times, I look forward to certain events and have a euphoric feeling – then as the event passes, emptiness! My daughter is no longer on this earth.

I've learned that laughter has its place. It's a great escape – but then I must come back to reality. Proverbs 14: 13 says it well – "Laughter can conceal a heavy heart; when the laughter ends, the grief remains."

I've learned that there are people who just can't understand what we are going through – it's no particular fault of theirs. They just don't know how to relate to us. On the other hand, there are people who are understanding, compassionate and will shed a tear with us and give us a hug.

I've learned to put limits on myself. Grieving is hard work – it wears you down after a while. I now know it's o.k. to say "no" and to mean it and stick by that decision. It really doesn't matter what other people think.

Nine years ago, I didn't even know there was such an organization as "The Compassionate Friends." If I had known, I couldn't have related. Now I do, and I commiserate with each of you and also thank all of you who have become my friends. I know we all wish we didn't have a reason to be here. I go through that feeling twice a month when I'm getting ready to come here – but I thank God that we are now all together and that we have this safe place to come to.

**Bonnie Corbett**  
**In Loving Memory of daughter, Kelly Lynne Forrest**  
**TCF Rochester, NY**

*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.*

**Upcoming Events**

**June 10<sup>th</sup>** – TCF Rochester Balloon Release at the JCC Details to follow

**July 11<sup>th</sup> - 13<sup>th</sup>** - 37<sup>th</sup> National Conference Chicago, IL “Miles of Compassion through the Winds of Hope”

*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**

**Carol Ann Britt, in loving memory of son Steven L. Britt**

**NEW Meeting Location:**

**Jewish Community Center  
1200 Edgewood Avenue Rochester, NY**

**Meeting Days :**

**Tuesday the 11th & Tuesday the 25<sup>th</sup> (March)**

**Tuesday the 8<sup>th</sup> & Tuesday the 22<sup>nd</sup> (April)**

**7:00 P.M. to 7:15 P.M. - social**

**7:15 P.M. to 9:00 P.M. - meeting**

**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](http://www.compassionatefriends.org)**

**Send newsletter inputs or web comments to:**

**Joan Carafos, [jcarafos@photikon.com](mailto: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](mailto:alice3970@gmail.com)**

*See Brenda for TCF Bracelets (\$2.00) and Memorial votive candle holders (\$3.00)*

***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

I knew you before you were born.  
I remember dreaming of holding you when the time came for you to arrive  
I gave you your precious name, my son  
You gave me the name of mother  
I recorded your milestones each week in a book  
Took hundreds of photos as you changed your looks  
I taught you things to help you grow-you taught me things you'll never know  
You went to school- it was hard to let go, you waved good-bye as the bus drove away  
You became a good friend, a loving son and brother- this kind of love is like no other  
We talked about your future plans-when you grow up and become a man  
We cried when the first girl broke your heart, got through it all and then moved on  
You shared with me your hopes and dreams and being you meant being me  
There are things we knew that need not be said- a bond so strong that could never end  
You made our house a loving home, a special place to share it all  
And then one day-I got a call- that would change everything forevermore  
My precious son, so young and free- would be gone forever-away from me  
There are no words that could ever describe the loss I feel without you by my side  
You gave me love so strong and true and I was so blessed to have been given you  
My heart still breaks, my soul still cries, I miss you more than can be described  
I know what you would expect from me-to live my life and be set free  
It's not as easy as some may say- I just know it shouldn't be this way  
I will miss and love you until the end- my precious son, who was also my friend.

**In love & loss, Your Mom (Carla Smith)**  
**In remembrance ~ of Paul McManus Jr.**  
**TCF Rochester, NY**



## The Anniversary

It's been five years you went away  
Why do I feel so low  
I thought it would be better now  
The years would make it so

Five years should have some meaning now  
Why do I feel it's getting worse  
Nothing's changed, my heart still hurts  
An anniversary seems a curse

The day gets close and I'm surprised  
I don't know what I expect  
I'm blue and tears still sting my eyes  
There is no time limit met

It's as if it were the very first  
The day slaps me in the face  
I don't know how long I can continue  
To ever run this race

My mind running here and there  
In and out of memories  
It doesn't change a single thing  
But still they come to me

No use, no use, it can't be stopped  
I shouldn't even try  
Did I think it would be different now  
Because five years flew by?

What a fool, what did I think  
How could I be so blind  
The passing years won't cease this pain  
Or bring closure to my mind!

The years just show how much I've missed  
On this fifth year anniversary  
Of all the dreams and expectations  
That will never, ever be

I'll have to face this day each year  
And remember what they say  
You don't forget, you just move on  
And take things day by day

Ok, I'll try my very best  
To get beyond the date  
It's just a number after all  
Left more or less to fate

It really doesn't mean a thing  
Any other would be the same  
To give one day more importance  
Would really be the shame

What difference if I mark the date  
To celebrate his anniversary  
I mourn him each and every day  
It's just another day for me.

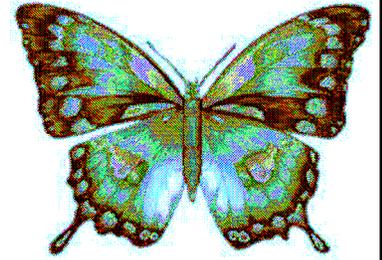


**Deborah Passero Streb  
In Loving Memory of son, Adam Marano  
TCF Rochester, NY**

**“The Poems and Prose of Deborah  
Passero Streb”**



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



**Birthdays**

Chris E. Saunders Jr.	March 3
David Alan. Willmes	March 3
Paul L. Valint III	March 3
William Joseph Purof	March 4
Evan James Parkison	March 5
Kimberly Susan Fitzsimmons	March 7
Brendan T. Barry	March 8
Shontia Charnelle Slade	March 8
Anna M. Kiner	March 11
Aaron Michael Plunkett	March 11
Robert Anthony Yacono	March 12
Robert Joseph Kuitems	March 16
Kalei Dawn Dulaney	March 20
Joey Giardina	March 22
Mindy Grace Buckingham-Line	March 26
Mark F. Buckenmeyer	March 26
Lauren Paige Olander	March 28
Robert "Rob" Stultz	March 30
Devin Donald Kusse	March 30
Paul M. Spinelli	March 31

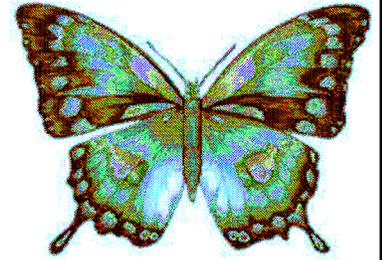
**Remembrance Days**

Douglas Edward Otterson	March 1
Christopher Czerw	March 3
Megan Zielinski	March 3
Austine Robert Codding	March 3
Michael David Mueller	March 5
Paula Mix Spanganberg	March 10
Carrie Jaen Kubarycz	March 11
Peter Genga	March 11
Michael B. Coons	March 11
Molly Katherine Thomas	March 18
Oliver Fox Maira-Walsh	March 19
Diannel Ferris	March 19
Kevin Patrick Lynd	March 23
Shontia Charnelle Slade	March 23
Zackary Monroe McCarthy	March 24
Colleen Josephine Dobbins	March 24
Mindy Grace Buckingham-Line	March 27
Amber Marie Hopkins	March 27
Evan James Parkison	March 28
Jillian Kristine Boda	March 28





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



**Birthdays**

Matthew James Gnage	April 1
Andrew Urquhart	April 4
Christopher Lynn Salisbury	April 4
Ava Marjorie Sorensen	April 7
Kevin Patrick Lynd	April 8
Eric Lorine Rupp	April 9
Stephanie Anne Oliva	April 9
Nate Riley	April 10
Theresa Ann Kohl	April 11
David James Cassell	April 12
Scott Puglisi	April 15
Cameron Jack Vickers	April 15
Robert Jordan Christiano	April 18
Eric Scott Levy	April 18
Paula Mix Spanganberg	April 20
Kyle A. Georgia	April 22
Katie A. Brice	April 23
Caiden Shea Hayes	April 24
Kaylie Jordyn Hayes	April 24
Benjaman Allen	April 25
Michael Hrycyna	April 26
Ann Marie Ericson	April 29
Jonathan Lawrence Mayl	April 30
Daniel P. Fellegara	April 30

**Remembrance Days**

Keith R. Lewis	April 4
Bryson Alexander Sparrin	April 4
Gregory Ray Stephens	April 5
Paul M. Romano	April 5
Ava Marjorie Sorensen	April 7
Michael Schaub	April 8
Kayla R. Nenni	April 10
Shaun Michael Bohrer	April 12
Floyd Zachary Frey	April 15
Randall John Lis	April 15
Amanda Kate Fagan	April 17
Kelly Lynne Forrest	April 19
Katie A. Brice	April 19
Kenneth Vincent Rocco	April 20
Erich Lee Anderson	April 23
Kyle A. Georgia	April 23
Caiden Shea Hayes	April 24
Kaylie Jordyn Hayes	April 24
Daniel P. Fellegara	April 29
Daniel P. Martel	April 29
Michael A. Collins	April 30

