



The Compassionate Friends
Rochester Chapter
Supporting Family After a Child Dies



March / April 2016 www.tcfrochester.org

The Dandelion

The day was warm. A new spring beginning. We ventured outside for a break from being housebound most of the winter. The summer before, he was too young to understand nature and all of its wonder, but now he was ready to embrace all that he could see, hear, touch, smell and feel. Everything was new and put his senses on alert. How lovely to innocently discover the world around you for the first time- the warm sun on your face, the smell of freshly growing grass, the birds singing their welcoming songs and the budding of trees and flowers.

Then he saw it.....a little yellow fuzzy thing peeking through a patch of green. He toddled over to it, bent down, and grasped it with his tiny hand. He plucked it ever so gently from the earth. I watched as a myriad of expressions crossed his face. I couldn't help but wonder what was going through his little mind as he contemplated its uniqueness, its feel, its smell.

He suddenly turned and ran to me with such excitement brimming from every pore of his body, I thought he would burst! With complete abandon, he surrendered his sweet gift to me exclaiming, "Mommy, for you"! I marveled at his determining that this little yellow thing was something of value, found among the blades of grass. To him, it was a lovely flower to be treasured. Joyfully, he gave it to me. Tears welled up in my eyes. What mother hasn't swelled with pride the first time her little one presents her with a bouquet of dandelions! Such a precious gesture given with love. I pressed it in his baby book to save for a beautiful memory.

There were many "bouquets" after that for the next few years – each one given with the same joy and enthusiasm as the first. I even considered stopping the weed killer so that he would have a new harvest of flowers to pick in the spring. I knew it would end soon enough. He would grow to consider these "flowers" a nuisance, something to be eradicated, done away with. The sea of yellow would no longer delight him. It was not a flower after all; it was just a weed, its former beauty lost.

Oh, there were flowers after that. The kind you buy in the store or have sent for a special occasion – a birthday, Mother's Day, Christmas. All were beautiful and warmed my heart, but nothing like that spring day, a single yellow dandelion and a smile so beautiful it made my heart sing. But just like the dandelion, who only lasts a short while through its season, my son too, only lasted through what was his season. It was all too short, but yielded such freshness and color to an otherwise plain landscape.

I will never again pass a field sprinkled with dandelions and not stop to think of him, the preciousness of his delight at giving one to me and the love with which it was given. A mother holds such things to her heart. Of all the gestures that were yet to come, that small act of love will always be with me.

Occasionally, I will take out his baby book and flip through it. That little dandelion is still there – faded but still with a hint of color and fragrance; to me, its beauty still intact. Just like him.

From the Prose and Poems of Deborah Passero Streb
In loving memory of son, Adam Marano
TCF, Rochester New York

I Am Spring

I am the beginning.
 I am budding promise.
 I spill cleansing tears of life
 from cloudy vessels
 creating muddy puddles
 where single cell creatures abide
 and splashing children play.

I am new green growth.
 I softly flow from winter's barren hand.
 On gentle breeze I fly – embracing sorrow.
 With compassion, we feather nests
 where winged voices sing winter-spring duets.
 As frozen ice transforms to playful stream
 I whisper truth ~ life is change.

I am spring.
 I bless long, dark wintry days.
 I crown mankind's pain
 with starry skies
 in deepest night
 lighting solitary paths from sorrow to joy
 as the wheel of life turns 'round and 'round.

**Carol Clum
 TCF National**

The Solitude of Grief

There are wounds one can't assuage
 For the cut is deep and bleeding
 Some wounds show no outward trace
 For it's the heart that's sore and needing

How does one cope with a broken heart
 A heart that's cold and lonely
 From where the strength to carry on
 From a grief that's shared ... but yours only

Still in dreams we see them yet
 So young, so fair, so alive
 I don't know how we cope with death
 But somehow ~ somehow we do survive

Always a part of this heart of mine
 Now tossed like a windblown leaf
 And I imprisoned in a world not mine
 In the solitude of grief

**Harvey Hockstien
 In loving memory of daughter, Marilyn
 TCF, Morris Area NJ**

**It Will Be Another Birthday Without You**

The sun will shine
 roses bloom, geese fly
 throughout the sky
 stocks will trade,
 the weatherman predict
 politicians debate

It'll seem like another day
 just a day, same 24 hours
 not a special holiday

But to this mother
 who will stand at the grave
 lifting balloons into the sky
 serving angelfood cupcakes
 with rainbow icing
 coated with tears
 fluctuating between emotions:
 the grief over death
 the celebration over birth

For this mother
 It will be yet
 Another birthday without you.

**Alice J. Wisler
 In loving memory of son, Daniel
 TCF, Wake County NC**

What is the TCF Rochester Chapter Steering Committee?

It is a group of parents, family and friends who work to keep the group ongoing for each other and for newly bereaved parents, grand-parents, and siblings. Many find that taking on a committee job helps to heal their own hearts.

We need people to volunteer to be treasurer, greet newcomers, set up and take down meetings, facilitate small groups ... there are several ways one can help. Many of you have special talents to contribute as well.

Please offer your resources and services to the Chapter Co-leader, Mary Ann Dobbins
585-872-0566 or mdobbins@frontiernet.net

If everyone takes on one regular job, it will make it possible to keep our support group ongoing.

Thank you !

**Love Gifts**

Michael Farash, in loving memory of son Matthew Farash
Carolyn Fitzgerald, in loving memory of son Chris Fitzgerald
John Kuitems, in loving memory of son Robert Kuitems
Susan Kaye, in loving memory of son Kevin Pratt

Support for the meeting on February 23, 2016 was donated by
Pati Primerano, in loving memory of son Andrew Primerano



NEW Meeting Location:

First Unitarian Church, 220 Winton Road South
Rochester, New York

Meeting Days :

Tuesday the 8th & Tuesday the 22nd (March)

Tuesday the 12th & Tuesday the 26th (April)

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

7:15 P.M. to 9:00 P.M. – meeting

Contacts:

Mary Ann Dobbins 585-872-0566

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:

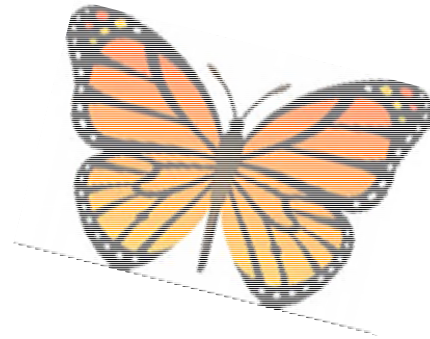
The Compassionate Friends of Rochester

C/O 9 Lakeview Park Rochester, NY 14613

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

***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.

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

Our Children Remembered

March 2016

Birthdays and Rememberance Days

Birth Dates

Chris E. Saunders Jr.	March 3
Paul L. Valint III	March 3
Evan James Parkison	March 5
Kimberly Susan Fitzsimmons	March 7
Shontia Charnelle Slade	March 8
Aaron Michael Plunkett	March 11
Robert Joseph Kuitems	March 16
Greta Elinor Lindboom	March 21
Jason Dobrowski	March 26
Lauren Paige Olander	March 28
Devin Donald Kusse	March 30

Rememberance Dates

Alexander Ryan Fitzpatrick	March 1
Michael David Mueller	March 5
Paula Mix Spanganberg	March 10
Tannya Ruiz	March 10
Michael B. Coons	March 11
Carrie Jean Kubarycz	March 11
Andrew Clay Parkhurst	March 12
Katie L. Piccone	March 15
Molly Katherine Thomas	March 18
Shontia Charnelle Slade	March 23
Kevin Patrick Lynd	March 24
Colleen Josephine Dobbins	March 24
Zackary Monroe McCarthy	March 24
Jillian Kristine Boda	March 28
Evan James Parkison	March 28
Peggy Jane O'Neill	March 31

Our Children Remembered

April 2016

Birthdays and Remembrance Days

Birth Dates

Alvin Metcalf, Jr.	April 1
Laura Beth Specht Monte	April 2
Kevin Patrick Lynd	April 8
Stephanie Anne Oliva	April 9
Eric Lorine Rupp	April 9
Nate Riley	April 10
Theresa Ann Kohl	April 11
Justin D. King-DeSalvo	April 15
Lisa Jean Voltz	April 15
Cameron Jack Vickers	April 15
Eric Scott Levy	April 18
Paula Mix Spanganberg	April 20
Michael Ruiz V	April 23
Ethan Emerson Price	April 28
Ryan Nicholas Elliott	April 29
Daniel P. Fellegara	April 30

Remembrance Dates

Shaun Michael Bohrer	April 12
Kelly Lynne Forrest	April 19
Alani R. Young	April 25
Daniel P. Fellegara	April 29
Daniel P. Martel	April 29
Alvin Metcalf, Jr.	April 30