



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

January / February 2017 [www.tcfrochester.org](http://www.tcfrochester.org)



**Heart and Soul**

Through life there were moments where you were so happy that you'd experienced anxiety. Why? When you go through the ups and downs, the mundane, nerve racking situations, heartache, joy, laughter, tears and fears of life, something as important as true joy is so precious you can't bear losing it. The expression "Too good to be true" comes to mind. When you experience that loss, a piece of your heart and soul are torn away. What becomes of a person who has a damaged heart and soul? Another expression: "Time heals all." Those words must have been written by an eternal optimist. Some people "wear their hearts on their sleeves". Those hearts stitched on your sleeve elicit a variety of reactions. Some will feel a deep felt compassion, they either experienced a loss or are genuinely spiritually beautiful. Most people, no fault of their own, will feel a tinge of compassion and then move on. Others will put on a superficial "I care". No heart on your sleeve? Your feelings are no less deep felt. They are just not so obvious. Or are they more obvious then you may imagine? After a great loss you are different. Eventually those close to you will see the difference in you. No matter what your reaction is to loss, be honest to yourself. Not being truthful to yourself can only harm your spirit. In the end you have no other choice but to accept the loss of your loved one. Acceptance of your loss will set your departed loved ones free. They now see reality and also see you suffering. Their wish is to see you embrace life and the beauty that has been bestowed upon all of us. Regardless of the horrors and injustices this life has morphed into, the light of grandeur still shines. Don't misplace the brilliance of the heavens. Don't lose faith. Your loved ones are waiting for you.

**John & Pat Loomis**  
**In loving memory of son, Matt Loomis**  
**TCF, Rochester NY**



## The Paths to Peace

As bereaved parents, we look to others for answers about our grief journey. For eight years I have listened as so many parents spoke about the combination of factors which brought peace to their hearts and allowed them to move forward into a different, less painful, life. I have read books, watched movies, attended seminars and retreats. I have gone to 93 Compassionate Friends meetings. And I have discovered one key factor in finding peace and resolution on this terrible grief journey: there is no single element or singular combination of elements that answers the needs of more than one parent. Each parent must patiently seek those elements that will enhance the individual and a unique personal journey: there is no magic map to finding the path to peace. There is one common denominator in this quest for the peace on our long journey, and that is patience. Patience with ourselves is mandatory, because the grief journey after the death of our precious child is so horrible, so painful, and so isolating that our psyches and our bodies take so very much time to begin the healing process. There are setbacks. There is progress. Each of these comes in spurts. Each is partially reversed and the process begins anew. Friends and family do not thoroughly understand our perspective on our unique journey. We must make allowances for them. But we must ask that allowances be made for us. For we are finding ourselves while on a path that we did not choose. We are lost. We are weakened. We are heartbroken. Each of us in our own way is seeking the formula that is uniquely our own. Some parents find a kind of peace in their religion. Some parents are angry with their God. Many parents seek private counseling. Other parents read prolifically about the grief journey, seeking some element which resonates with them. Many parents come to Compassionate Friends meetings and actively participate. Others attend meetings and say little. Some parents slip into denial and proceed on the old path of their lives. We each make choices. We are different people with different experiences, backgrounds, cultures, genetic hard wiring, education and combination of abilities. The path to peace is found by searching, by reaching out to every resource available. We will reject much of what we find; but if we search, we will find what we need. For many of us, finding other bereaved parents presents an opportunity to listen to the stories of their child and their journey and, within those stories, we find many threads that fit our unique journey. Many stories, many journeys, many new threads are shared in group discussion and in private discussions. We find "seasoned" grievers who provide perspective on our feelings, and listen to our story. We find newly bereaved parents who touch our hearts and remind us how we have built our path to peace brick by brick. Their pain brings reflection and new revelations about our own grief journey. I found kindred souls at Compassionate Friends. These kindred souls have allowed me to explore the various aspects of my being and gradually create a path of peace for myself. But the journey does not suddenly end. We walk this path for the rest of our lives. And if we do the hard work and face our demons early on, we accept the unacceptable and face life on our own terms. And that is as it should be.

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





## **February**

In February we celebrate the birth of George Washington and Abe Lincoln. Lent begins. We wonder if the groundhog will see his shadow, and we have Valentine's Day. Candy, flowers and cards are often exchanged. Many cards are given and received between parents and children as a way of showing love for one another. Valentine's Day is another holiday on which bereaved parents remember the drawings, cards and gifts received from their deceased children. Take time out to be good to yourself. Perhaps you could remember your child with a special flower, or could do something kind in your child's memory for someone in need. Most of all, take time to tell your living children and your spouse or someone special how fortunate you are to have them and how much they mean to you.

**Lorraine Bauman  
TCF, Fairmont MN**

## **February**

Let this cool and  
gentle  
month of the heart  
remind you  
not only of lost  
treasure,  
but also of riches  
(past and present)  
in your life.

**The Poems of Sascha Wagner**



*We want to share these websites:*

*We want to share this support group information:*

**Face 2 Face Friendship Group, Rochester NY.** [face2facerochester.com](http://face2facerochester.com) Providing support & hope to families coping with miscarriage, stillbirth, & infant loss.

**Bereaved Parents.** Bereavedparentsusa.org A national non-profit self-help group that offers support, understanding, compassion, and hope to bereaved parents, grandparents, & siblings. Shared by Pat Loomis.

**Alive Alone.** Alivealone.org. Support for now childless parents. Shared by National TCF.

**“Healing the Grieving Heart” Web Radio Show.** Compassionatefriends.org (left side of the home page, link to “Healing the Grieving Heart”). Live shows are at 11:00 am on Thursdays. The archived shows are available 24 hours per day.

*Many thanks to Pat Wheeler for the donation of all the supplies from the WNY TCF Chapter*

*Many thanks to Christine & Jason Price for working with Paychex on all our printing needs*

### Love Gifts

*Pat Wheeler, in loving memory of son Wyatt Zuber*

*Support for the meeting on November 8th was donated by  
Terry Cicotte, in loving memory of son Rick Nelson*

*Support for the meeting on November 22nd was donated by  
Pat & John Loomis, in loving memory of son Matt Loomis*



**Upcoming Event:*****The Compassionate Friends Rochester Chapter Balloon Release***

***Tuesday, June 6, 2017 7:00 pm First Unitarian Church of Rochester (our TCF Chapter location) 220 Winton Road South Rochester, New York***

**Please note change: This is the 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday in June**

**Meeting Location:**

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

**Meeting Days :**

Tuesday the 10<sup>th</sup> & Tuesday the 24<sup>th</sup> (January)  
Tuesday the 14<sup>th</sup> & Tuesday the 28<sup>th</sup> (February)

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](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  
C/O 3446 Rush Mendon Road Honeoye Falls, NY 14472  
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)

***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***  
***January 2017***  
***Birthdays and Remembrance Days***

## Birthday



Nyzere D. Stanton	January 4
Alexander K. Ketchek	January 8
Alex Robert VanFleet	January 8
Christopher "Chris" D. Fitzgerald	January 9
Benjamin L. Assenato	January 17
Daniel P. Martel	January 21
Cameron Dylan Boyd	January 22
David George Carafos	January 24
Laura Collins	January 25
Sam Lowery	January 28
Daniel Michael Roach	January 29
Patricia Helen Klehr	January 30
Joshua Daniel Price	January 30

## Remembrance Day

Shawn Patrick Viola	January 1
Justin A. McLaren	January 8
Aaron Y. Wallace	January 10
Thomas William Costello	January 11
Adam V. Marano	January 18
Christopher Brian Budwey	January 23
Laura Catherine Mix	January 25



***Our Children Remembered***  
***February 2017***  
***Birthdays and Remembrance Days***

### Birthday



Christopher Bedford	February 5
Greg Paul Crawford	February 10
Jillian Kristine Boda	February 12
Andrew Richard Primerano	February 12
Scott David Swanson	February 13
Molly Katherine Thomas	February 14
Jaden Michael Fournier	February 16
Timothy J. Rumsey	February 19
Amy Marie Iwasko	February 19
Nicholas Jay Kovaleski	February 27
Katie L. Piccone	February 27

### Remembrance Day

Karen Jill. D'Amico	February 4
Ricardo Bernabeu, Jr.	February 6
Jennifer N. Arvan	February 9
Curt AJ Hall	February 10
Timothy E. Hale	February 12
Brian Keith Nelson	February 13
Conor LeVan Driscoll	February 16
Caroline Elizabeth Harber	February 17
Grant Matthew Lintala	February 17
Mark P. Metzger	February 18
Lisa Ann Rupp	February 20
Graham Jackson Knight	February 22
Kimberly Susan Fitzsimmons	February 23
Daniel Michael Roach	February 25
Michael Ruiz V	February 27
Benjamin L. Assenato	February 27

