

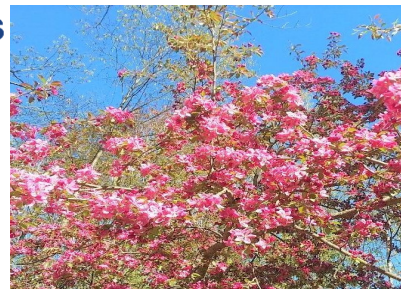


# *The Compassionate Friends*

## *Monadnock Chapter*

### **Supporting Family After a Child Dies**

May- September 2021



# *LOVE LIVES ON*

***Our vision is that everyone who needs us will find us and everyone who finds us will be helped.***

## **From the Steering Committee:**

Even if we are still not able to meet regularly in person yet, we hope parents and their families will find some comfort and support through us. Our group is here for parents who have lost a child of any age, from any cause and for any length of time. Grandparents and adult siblings are also invited to attend meetings or to contact us.

We welcome a new Committee member, Dawn, Alisha's Mom, who is replacing Tammy, Brandon's Mom, as our treasurer.

*Wishing you **Peace** and **Hope** .....*

In friendship, your steering committee

For newly bereaved or first time attendees, coming to a meeting may be very hard, but you have nothing to lose and much to gain. Try not to judge the first meeting as to whether TCF will work for you. We ask that you try to attend at least three meetings, because it may take a while to find the person, words or group discussion that will be the most helpful for you in your grief work. For those further along in the grief journey, we welcome your participation, support and encouragement. You may not believe it, but you have much to offer.

***TCF Mission Statement "The mission of The Compassionate Friends is to assist families toward the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child of any age and to provide information to help others be supportive."***

## **IMPORTANT !!**

Currently our in-person monthly meetings are cancelled due to precautions involving COVID-19. Please check our Website for updated information.

If you would like immediate support or information, please contact us:

**Email:** [tcfmonadnock@gmail.com](mailto:tcfmonadnock@gmail.com)

**Phone:** 603-801-6266

**Website:** [tcfmonadnock.org](http://tcfmonadnock.org)

Facebook: [tcfmonadnockchapter](https://www.facebook.com/tcfmonadnockchapter)

### **Mailing address:**

TCF-Monadnock, PO Box 55  
West Peterborough, NH 03468

### **National Office:**

[www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org)  
Regional coordinator: Linda Riley  
[rileylinda6789@gmail.com](mailto:rileylinda6789@gmail.com)

When we resume, our **Monthly Chapter Meetings** will be on the  
First Tuesday of each month  
6:30pm to 8:30pm  
(new attendees please come at 6:15)

### **LOCATION**

**Please check our website, call, or watch your email for updated in-person meeting info. Before we resume meeting at Scott Farrar we may have an inperson meeting at a different location.**



## LOCAL AREA RESOURCES

**Home Health and Hospice:** offers various ongoing and short term

Bereavement support groups

Keene office, PO Box 564, 312 Marlboro St. (#352-2253)

Peterborough Office (45 Main St.) #532-8353

**Suicide loss: A Safe Place -Support Group**

**The Samaritans Monadnock Region** 25 Roxbury St.,

Keene, NH,

Weekly, Mondays 6:30-7:30

#603-357-5510 ([www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org))

**Grief Recovery After a Substance Passing (GRASP)**

Child and Family Services 464 Chestnut St. ManchesterNH

## OTHER AREA TCF MEETINGS:

**Greater Manchester Chapter**

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

General Meeting First Thursday of the month

Brookside Congregational Church 3013 Elm St. Manchester, NH

6:30 to 8:30PM

Check their website for updated meeting info

Adult Siblings group (age 18+) Feb, April, June, Aug, Oct,

Dec

Men's Group 1st Thursday in June

There are no strangers here only  
friends you have not met yet.

## HELP WANTED

Our Chapter Leaders need some help with clerical and organizational items (assembling information packets, dropping off information, typing up book list, copying info, etc. Please contact Barry or Linda if you would like to contribute some time to our work for members or the community groups.

Thanks to Pearl Patrick's Mom, who sends out cards for Bdays and anniversaries.

Thanks to Dawn, Alisha's Mom who makes our picture buttons and prints our name tags. If there is anyone else who can print our name tags, let us know.

*As always, we welcome you to share in the newsletter*

**IF YOU WISH TO SHARE A WRITING, STORY, POEM OR PHOTO IN A NEWSLETTER, PLEASE LET US KNOW. (Copyright laws apply)**

**If you are having a difficult day or just need someone to talk to we have parents who are available to contact about loss of an only child, substance misuse or the loss of a young child**

**[tcfmonadnock@gmail.com](mailto:tcfmonadnock@gmail.com)**



# Always Loved, Always Remembered

## **BIRTHDAYS**

### **May**

James, son of Pat,  
Bee, daughter of Jean  
Stephanie

### **June**

Patrick, son of Pearl  
David, son of John  
Michael, Son of Karen  
Glenn Michael, son of Mary Beth & Glenn,

### **July**

Ryan, son of Sue & Daniel,  
MaKenzie, granddaughter of Susan & Dan  
Michael, son of Kristen & David  
Erek, son of Linda & Greg

### **August**

Tess, daughter of Marilee & Keith,  
Monica, daughter of Julie & Alan  
Sheena daughter of Tammy  
Beaux, son of Shelia

### **September**

Aurora. daughter of Brianna

## **ANNIVERSARIES**

### **May**

Samuel, son of Abby  
Cara. daughter of Rick & Cyndi  
David, son of John

### **June**

Valerie, daughter of Barry  
Sheena, daughter of Tammy  
Will, son of William

### **July**

Tess, daughter of Marilee & Keith  
Daniel, son of Susan  
Sharon, daughter of Peter

### **August**

Joana Rachel, daughter of Liz & Peter  
Michael, son of Kristen & David

### **September**

James, son of Pat  
Eric, brother of Kim & Jared  
Mike, son of K.  
Anthony

**And when we have remembered everything, we grow afraid of what we might forget. A face, a voice, a smile? A birthday? Anniversary?  
No need to fear forgetting, because the heart remembers always.**

By Sasha Wagner , mother of Nino and Eve



## Mother's Day

### UGLY SHOES

I am wearing a pair of shoes.  
They are ugly shoes.  
Uncomfortable Shoes.  
I hate my shoes.

Each day I wear them, and each day I wish I had another pair.  
Some days my shoes hurt so bad that I do not think I can take another step. Yet, I continue to wear them.  
I get funny looks wearing these shoes. They are looks of sympathy.

I can tell in others eyes that they are glad they are my shoes and not theirs.

They never talk about my shoes. To learn how awful my shoes are might make them uncomfortable.

To truly understand these shoes you must walk in them.

But, once you put them on, you can never take them off.

I now realize that I am not the only one who wears these shoes.

There are many pairs in the world.

Some women are like me and ache daily as they try and walk in them.

Some have learned how to walk in them so they don't hurt quite as much.

Some have worn the shoes so long that days will go by before they think of how much they hurt.

No woman deserves to wear these shoes.

Yet, because of the shoes I am a stronger woman.

These shoes have given me the strength to face anything.

They have made me who I am.

I will forever walk in the shoes of a woman who has lost a child.

Author unknown

In Memory of Stephanie from her  
parents

### The Knot



The chain broke  
The Celtic knot of silver flew off-  
I didn't even know it.  
When did the chain break?  
The links too weak to hold you  
tightly in that knot?  
I did find it, lost ,alone,  
Shining yet.

By Cher

## Best DAD

Warm and sunny day in June,  
Father's Day  
Children small and grown  
give gifts to Father,  
Say thanks to their fathers,  
say I love you.

But there are Father's whose children are  
not here to give thanks and  
say I love you.

Remember the father's whose children are  
gone,  
Because all too often they grieve in heart-  
break and silence.

By Sasha

### Father's Day

As the day approaches, I wonder how I will react. Am I still a father? I will sit quietly, never allowing friends or family to see how I feel. I miss my son, but I can't allow myself to "break." I must remain strong and always be the rock. I wish I could just let someone know how much I miss my little angel. How much I cry and how much I miss hearing, "Dad, I love you." I am a father, but I wonder, "Will I just pretend, as usual, that it doesn't bother me?"

Remember me, for I hurt too, on this special day.

TCF Tampa, Fl newsletter

## July's Child

Fireworks race toward heaven  
Brilliant colors in the sky.  
Their splendor ends in seconds  
On this evening in July.  
"Her birthday is this Saturday,"  
I whisper with a sigh.  
She was born this month,  
She loved this month  
And she chose this month to die.

Like the bright and beautiful  
fireworks  
Glowing briefly in the dark  
They are gone too soon,  
and so was she  
Having been, and left her mark.  
A glorious incandescent life,  
A catalyst, a spark...  
Her being gently lit my path  
And softened all things stark.

The July birth, the July death of  
my happy summer child  
Marked a life too brief that ended  
Without rancor, without guile.  
Like fireworks that leave images  
On unprotected eyes...  
Her lustrous life engraved my  
heart...  
With love that never dies.

By Sally M.  
TCF Babylon, Long Island, NY



Megan, mother of Sean, shares her paintings with us in memory of her son.

*People will forget what you  
said, people will forget  
what you did, but people  
will never forget how you  
made them feel. ~*

Maya Angelou

## SEARCHING

I could wait here forever,  
in this tranquil quiet place.  
Alert, on the edge of this wooded space,  
listening for any sound that might be you.

I could sit on this hard cold rock forever.  
Searching, regretting that I don't have the  
vision of a bird flying overhead,  
A shadow, a falling leaf, even a strand  
of my hair, startles me.

During nighttime I could walk forever under  
dark midnight skies, moonlit clouds,  
odd trails of smoke from silent, distant planes.  
I stare intently at the brightest stars until they  
dance a zigzag. Could it be you?

At the ocean on a warm clear day,  
the waves leave shallow ripples on the sand.  
I search for messages.  
Occasionally, among the rocks and  
bleached shells, it seems you have finally  
sent me a clue.  
We will be everywhere, forever,  
looking for each other.



By L.S.  
in memory of Ereka



## ***Treasured***

**What I love most is  
Waking to the dew of  
The grass upon my boots**

**What I love most is  
Smelling the end of  
The day upon  
My shirt, holding  
My child**

**What I love most is  
Something I don't see  
Everyday or smell or  
Touch**

**What I do love most is  
The memories of those  
Moments if only buried in  
My dreams.**

Scott  
Royal Oak, MI



Cathedral of the Pines, has permitted us to have 2 outdoor mtgs. during the pandemic. They are getting very busy again on weekends but it is a peaceful place to visit and walk, until summer tourism really picks up.

## ***Summer Memories***

Summertime is a happy time for most people in this country: vacations, holidays, family reunions, relaxed days at the pool, evenings in the backyard talking with family and friends, the smell of a fresh rain, the long days, the cooling nights, fresh mown grass and flowers that bloom profusely.

Despite Houston's heat, summer has become a treasured time for me. My son was a child of summer. Born in May, he loved the summer sun on his face and the wind in his hair as he first rode a tricycle, then a bicycle, then drove a car. Those were wonderful times for him. The summer solstice on June 21 was a favorite day for us both. Since the summer solstice is the longest day of the year, Todd particularly loved to watch the sunrise and sunset. I found myself doing that again this year. As I looked at the sun directly overhead at noon (1:00 pm DST), I made the comment that this is the one perfectly balanced day of the year. Later as I watched a beautiful solstice sunset, I remarked to my husband about the light....the gorgeous light. I was seeing Todd in that light. He was laughing, chasing lightening bugs, running and spinning and turning, filled with the joy of summer. He was happy.

I listened to the neighbors' children playing, and I thought about all the wonderful summer days I had spent with my son. I am thankful that I had that time. I am thankful that my child was a son of summer. He found much joy in nature, in the outdoors, in activities that took him out of the ordinary and into the sublime.

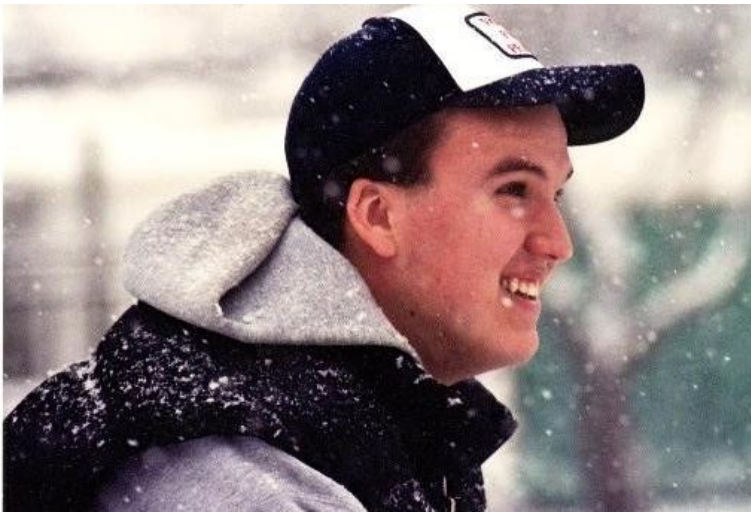
That's how it is for bereaved parents. We eventually come to a place where we realize that our joyful memories have overtaken the pain of the loss of our child to death. We wouldn't trade the time we shared with our children for anything or any other experience. We have many relationships in our lives, but the unique nature of the parent-child relationship is so special, so deep, so life changing, that we endure and even embrace the pain because we had, for that time in our lives, a relationship of pure love and pure joy with our child. There is no way to measure the depth, width or volume of a parent's love. It exceeds every other human relationship. Yes, we miss them terribly. We weep silently into our pillows at night. We light candles, take flowers to the cemetery, wear their favorite colors, treasure pictures of our children and keep them forever in our hearts. This is a big part of life for every bereaved parent.

Somehow, on the summer solstice, I felt my child's presence in the light of the day and the beautiful rose color of the solstice sunset. I could hear his voice, see his smile and feel his emotions. Peace slips into our hearts in extraordinary ways.

— Annette, In memory of my son, Todd , TCF, Tx



## THANK YOU



To Tammy, Brandon's Mom, for volunteering as our chapter treasurer over the past 2 yrs. Tammy and her husband Tad are moving in May to be closer to their other son. They have been valued friends with our chapter since the first few months after we started, 5 yrs ago. We will miss them, and send our love and best wishes for their future. This is one of their favorite pictures of Brandon.



Jan, Trevor's Mom, participated in the Peterborough Easter Drive – Thru Parade this April, 2021, in memory of her son Trevor, nicknamed: T-REV

Below, previously Trevor had enjoyed helping out at the Jaffrey Easter parties, as an Easter bunny.



## Helpful Resources (suggestions from our members)

- Insight Timer:** A free app from App Store on smart phones and tablet offering guided meditations on a variety of topics as well as music and an actual timer to time your own silent meditation.
- SOOTHE**  
[dr.stevensatkins.com](http://dr.stevensatkins.com) Dr. Atkins holds a Doctorate of Psychology from the Massachusetts School of Professional Psychology. He currently has a private practice and consults with various school districts. Dr. Atkins was appointed by Governor Hassan in 2013 to the NH Board of Psychologists. He served as Chair of the Board From 2015-2016. He has also served as the President of N.H. Psychological Association and as the Chair of the Ethics Committee. He currently serves as the APA Federal Advocacy Coordinator for the state of New Hampshire.
- Yoga with Adriene** website: <https://yogawithadriene.com> Free Yoga videos on YouTube. Gentle, yoga good for beginners, relaxation
- website**  
What's Your Grief? Information, poems, blog, etc. They asked 100 mothers what they wanted people to know about Mother's Day. They created a letter using the responses they received: <https://whatsyourgrief.com/grieving-a-child/>
- [www.calm.com](http://www.calm.com) Calm is a web-based program and multi-platform app for mindful meditation. The home page shows a relaxing nature scene which can be customized to the user's preference. Sections on the home page are: Music, Meditation and Sleep. The free trial version offers one meditation session per day, from 2 to 30 min. in length, and focused music tracks set to scenic photos.
- [libbyapp.com](http://libbyapp.com) Reading app for borrowing digital books and audio books from the state library's Overdrive Collection. Available on Smart phones and Windows 10 devices. This free app can be accessed through a local library and although libraries are closed you can call your local librarian.



Save the Date! TCF's 44th National Conference will be presented virtually July 16-18, 2021. Although we would love to be together in person, we can still connect, support, and gather as a community through our virtual event. More details about TCF's three-day conference are coming soon, including number of sessions, registration prices, and earlybird prices and dates.

In remembering our children, In sharing with each other, in supporting each other, we ease our pain, We share each step, we help smooth the road, And we serve as witnesses to the fact that we can make it Beyond Grief...

By Roy FP (TCF Lexington, Ky)



## The Bitter Sweetness of Birthdays

Every day is a hard day without our child, sibling, or grandchild. Some days are extra painful because they mark events or emphasize the passage of time without them. Holidays, the coming of spring, ceremonial days in our family, and the anniversary date of their passing tend to feel heavier and carry extra pain.



The birthday of our brother, sister, child or grandchild is a bittersweet day for many of us. I just passed another birthday this week for my son, Connor. He would have turned 23, and this is the 9th time I've marked this day without him physically here. Most of us experience the anniversary date of our loved one's passing as very painful and difficult. Birthdays, however, straddle both pain and joy as we celebrate the precious life we were given, yet one we weren't able to keep.

What are some of the ways to honor their birthdays that increase the beautiful moments we remember and decrease the deprivation we feel? Helping others in a way that reflects your loved one can help shift your focus to gratitude and the good memories. If your child liked to play sports, you can collect donations of athletic equipment for a local school in need. Planting a tree or starting a garden is a representation of new life that can continue your brother or sister's impact and legacy. If music, art, or reading was a passion of your grandchild, you can volunteer to do this type of volunteer service on their birthday in honor of what they loved.

We started a tradition on Connor's birthday of doing random acts of kindness. Whether small or large, many people have continued this tradition over the years in their different communities. These acts of kindness warm our hearts as we pass more years without him physically, yet know kindness is extended in his name in so many places.

I try to focus my energies during the day of his birth on celebrating the life I was blessed to receive. Although I never get through the day without the deep longing and sadness that accompany his absence, I'm able to experience more of the good memories and smiles when I do something positive in the world in his honor.

**Shari O'Loughlin**, CEO, The Compassionate Friends, *Connor's Mom and Patti's Sister*

: Makenzie  
granddaughter of Susan and Dan

Remembering  
the birthdays of  
our baby girls

Aurora  
daughter of Brianna

### Siblings Walking Together

**We are the surviving siblings of The Compassionate Friends.  
We are brought together by the deaths of our brothers and sisters. Open your hearts to us, but have  
patience with us. Sometimes we will need the support of our friends,  
at other times we need our families to be there.**

**Sometimes we must walk alone, taking our memories with us,  
continuing to become the individuals we want to be.**

**We cannot be our dead brother or sister; however, a special part of them lives on with us.**

**When our brothers and sisters died, our lives changed.**

**We are living a life very different from what we envisioned, and we feel the responsibility to be strong even when  
we feel weak.**

**Yet, we can go on because we understand better than many others the value of family  
and the precious gift of life**

**Our goal is not to be the forgotten mourners that we sometimes are, but to walk together to face our tomorrows as  
surviving siblings of The Compassionate Friends**

## Grandparents' Remembrance

*We are the grieving grandparents, the shepherds of our children and grandchildren's lives. Our grief is two-fold and at times we feel powerless to help. We seek to comfort our children in the depths of their grief and yet we need the time and space to face our own broken hearts. We have been robbed of the special tender touch a grandparent shares with a grandchild and we have lost a symbol of our immortality. As we walk by our child's side, we both give and draw strength. We reach into their hearts to comfort them, and when they reach out to us in their distress, we begin the journey to heal together. We continue to be their guardians. We allow traditions to change to accommodate their loss. We support the new ones which symbolize the small steps on their journey. It is in their healing that our hearts find comfort*

Susan Mackey, TCF, Rutland, Vt.



### ***The Compassionate Friends Credo***

We reach out to each other with love, with understanding and with hope. Our children have died at all ages and from many different causes, but our love for our children unites us. Your pain becomes my pain just as your hope becomes my hope.

We come together from all walks of life,  
from many different circumstances. We are young and we are old.  
Some of us are far along in our grief, but others still feel a grief so fresh  
and so intensely painful that we feel helpless and see no hope.

Some of us have found our faith to be a source of strength,  
some of us are struggling to find answers. Some of us are angry,  
filled with guilt or in deep depression. Others radiate inner peace.

But, whatever pain we bring to this gathering of the  
Compassionate Friends,

it is pain we share just as we share with each other our love  
for our children.

We are seeking and struggling to build a future for ourselves,  
but we are committed to building a future together,  
as we reach out to each other in love and share the pain as well as the joy,  
share the anger as well as the peace, share the faith as well as the doubts  
and help each other to grieve as well as to grow.

***WE NEED NOT WALK ALONE  
WE ARE THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS***

### **National Website Online Support**

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

Did you know that we have another way to connect to other bereaved parents, siblings, and/or grandparents through the Online Support Community AKA Live Chats? The live chats began approximately in 2002, long before Facebook was even in existence! The chats meet nightly and are facilitated by experienced moderators. Friendships are made, and they provide support, encouragement, hope, and understanding to the participants. Although the word "chat" is used, these live chats are accomplished by sharing and connecting with others while typing on your laptop, PCP, cellphones, or iPads and everyone is part of the conversation in that way.

To learn more about the online support community and what chats are offered each day or night, go to the National website or if you have any questions, please send them to [cathy@compassionatefriends.org](mailto:cathy@compassionatefriends.org). Cathy, Director of Online Services, is *Nina's mom and Chris' stepmom*



### **Closed Facebook Groups**

The Compassionate Friends offers a variety of closed Facebook Groups. These pages are moderated by bereaved parents, siblings, or grandparents, and may not be accessed unless a request to join is approved by a moderator.