



# The Compassionate Friends

Greater New Orleans Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

VOLUME 11, ISSUE 8

AUGUST 2018

Chapter Leader: Denise St. Pierre 504-265-0581 Email address: tcfnola@gmail.com www.tcfneworleans.com

## SUMMERTIME MEMORIES

Summertime is a happy time for most people in this country: vacations, holidays, family reunions, days relaxing 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 Mennen Baldwin TCF, Katy, TX

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**BIRTHDAY TABLE:** We remembered birthdays in **JULY** for: **Michelle Bohrer; Jacob Buuck; Jonathan Caluda; Brian Leonard; Jason Lynn; Kendall Springman;** **JUNE—Jenny Kimball.** We do encourage both you and your family to come when it is your child's birthday month, to share your child with all of us. You will receive a special birthday gift in memory of your child. Bring that treasured picture of your child that always makes you smile so we may smile with you.

The cake for July birthday is in memory of Jason Lynn and Kendall Springman.

## MONTHLY MEETINGS

**August 13, 2018**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of every month**

East Jefferson Hospital  
4200 Houma Blvd.  
Metairie, LA 70006

**Time: 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM**

On the 1<sup>st</sup> floor, adjacent to the  
Hudson St. Garage, Esplanade III  
room

## UPCOMING MEETINGS:

<b>Sept 10</b>	<b>Nov 12</b>
<b>Oct 8</b>	<b>Dec 10</b>

## REGIONAL COORDINATOR

Denise St. Pierre  
504-454-5078  
[denisestp12@gmail.com](mailto:denisestp12@gmail.com)

## NATIONAL OFFICE

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877-969-0010

To all those newly bereaved, who are receiving this newsletter for the first time and to all our Compassionate Friends, we wish you were not eligible to belong to this group, but we want you to know that you and your family have many friends. We, who received love and compassion from others in our time of deep sorrow, now wish to offer the same support and understanding to you. Please know we understand, we care, and we want to help. **You are not alone in your grief.**

**Meetings are held the 2nd Monday of each month at East Jefferson Hospital, 4200 Houma Blvd., 1<sup>st</sup> floor adjacent to the Hudson St. garage at 7:00 P.M.** We are a self-sustaining organization with no funds except what we receive through donations from members and newsletter recipients. Please join with us at a meeting.

### **Grief support after the death of a child**

The Compassionate Friends is a national non-profit, self-help support organization that offers friendship, understanding, and hope to bereaved parents, grandparents and siblings. There is no religious affiliation and there are no membership dues or fees.

The secret of TCF's success is simple: As seasoned grievers reach out to the newly bereaved, energy that has been directed inward begins to flow outward and both are helped to heal.

The vision of The Compassionate Friends is that everyone who needs us will find us and everyone who finds us will be helped.

### **Contact:**

**Phone: (504) 265-0581**  
**Email: [tcfnola@gmail.com](mailto:tcfnola@gmail.com)**  
**[www.tcfneworleans.com](http://www.tcfneworleans.com)**  
**4541 Loveland St.**  
**Metairie, LA 70006**

Chapter Leader.....Denise St. Pierre  
Newsletter Editor.....Denise St. Pierre  
Treasurer.....Debi Giordano  
Facilitator.....Debi Giordano  
Webmaster.....William Hunton

### **Steering Committee:**

**Patsy Ashton, Alice Buuck, Jan Dutilh,  
Debi Giordano, William Hunton, Cari Serpas,  
Denise St. Pierre**

Denise St. Pierre, Regional Coordinator  
(504) 265-0581

TCF National (877) 969-0010

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

### **The Meeting Agenda**

**7:00 p.m.** - The meeting will begin with a short introduction followed by lighting of candle and then reading of the Credo. Remembering our children's birthdays of the month. Then followed by smaller groups of sharing.

**9:00 p.m.** - Meeting will close by recognizing our children's names. Feel free to visit with each other and check out a book from our library.

**Newsletter Submissions:** TCF Greater New Orleans welcomes all submissions to our newsletter. Send articles, poetry, love messages and scanned photos to: TCF GNO, 4541 Loveland St., Metairie, LA 70006. Or e-mail text and photos to: [tcfnola@gmail.com](mailto:tcfnola@gmail.com) As our chapter is only funded by your donations, we ask for a donation of **\$15** or more for a dedication for our newsletter. This is tax-deductible. We reserve the right to edit for space and/or content. Deadline for submissions is on the Child Remembered page of the newsletter each month. TCF Chapters may copy articles from this publication provided credit is given to the author and the original source. Errors and Omissions: Please notify me if any of your information is incorrect. Thank you!



**BIRTHDAY CAKE:** Our child's birthday is still such an important day to us bereaved parents. In TCF this is where we can celebrate our child's birthday and remember the love we still have for them no matter how long it has been since they died. Our chapter is now offering you the chance to sponsor the birthday cake for the month of your child's birthday. You may do so by calling **Denise St. Pierre (504) 265-0581** to order the cake through East Jefferson Hospital. The cost for the cake is **\$40**. This way we can all celebrate your child's birthday.

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**William Hunton** is now our Chapter's webmaster. He would like to add some updated pictures to our website. If you have any pictures of our events that you would like added to the website please send to

**[whunton@cox.net](mailto:whunton@cox.net)**

Thank you for your continued support of our chapter. And a big thank you to **William** for being our webmaster in memory of his daughter **Chelsea Hunton**.

## Thoughts About Progress

One thing that is frequently discussed at our meeting is the despair of thinking you are on the road to "recovery," when all of a sudden you seem to be back at square one. But are you really?

Let's keep in mind most of us have had no experience in "recovering" from the loss of a child. Therefore, we have no point of reference—it's all new to us. Actually the "roller coaster" of emotions is perfectly normal. In the very beginning most of us seem to vacillate between dead numbness and excruciating pain. Constant crying, to not a tear left—just dried up and limp. We actually are living minute to minute.

After a couple of months, we might actually have a few hours that we have not cried or felt that deep overwhelming despair. Then—wham—back to where we started. We tend to panic and think something is wrong with us. Let's be realistic! There is something wrong—terribly wrong. We have each lost a child.

Let's be fair to ourselves. We started to play a role to the outside world. Like the old song says, "laughing on the outside—crying on the inside." We want to be acceptable to society. "You are doing so well," we hear. If only they knew! We may feel we have to fool others but let us really be honest about our feelings. To deny our feelings, particularly to ourselves, is to block the road to recovery. Remember that recovery in this case does not mean "getting over it;" it means to gain control of our lives again.

So, let's not worry about what other people think, say, or expect. Our friends (well-meaning as they are), sometimes members of our family, even someone who has lost a child, should not sit in judgment. Each person grieves differently, due to a person's general make-up and the relationship with the dead child. Unless someone has totally withdrawn from everything and everybody over a lengthy period of time, the chances are all is in the realm of normalcy. Only after we have walked down the long road of grief and can look back, remembering those early days and weeks, can we see we really are not on square one again. We have just slipped backwards for a time. This is all. Allow yourself that and then strive forward again. It takes time, a lot of time! We tend to expect too much from others, others expect too much from us and therefore, we tend to expect too much from ourselves. Mary E., TCFValley Forge, PA

## Jealous of the Angels

Lyrics By: Jenn Bostic

I didn't know today would be our last  
Or that I'd have to say goodbye to you so fast  
I'm so numb, I can't feel anymore  
Prayin' you'd just walk back through that door  
And tell me that I was only dreamin'  
You're not really gone as long as I believe  
There will be another angel  
Around the throne tonight  
Your love lives on inside of me,  
And I will hold on tight  
It's not my place to question,  
Only God knows why  
I'm just jealous of the angels  
Around the throne tonight  
You always made my troubles feel so small  
And you were always there to catch me when I'd fall  
In a world where heroes come and go  
Well God just took the only one I know

So I'll hold you as close as I can  
Longing for the day, when I see your face again  
But until then  
God must need another angel  
Around the throne tonight  
Your love lives on inside of me  
And I will hold on tight  
It's not my place to question  
Only God knows why  
I'm just jealous of the angels  
Around the throne tonight  
Singin' hallelujah  
Hallelujah  
Hallelujah  
I'm just jealous of the angels  
Around the throne  
Tonight

Submitted by: William Hunton in memory of his daughter Chelsea.

## Chapter Information

**BRICKS:** Next time to order bricks will be for the Worldwide Candle Lighting Ceremony in December.

Please order by November 1, 2018!



**ATTENTION BEREAVED MOMS:** A few moms have expressed a desire to meet with other moms in between our monthly meetings. I want to say that this will be an “extra” support but in no way do we want this to take the place of our monthly meetings. In the beginning, I felt that our chapter’s meetings held once a month were often not enough support as we are so distraught and felt no hope of surviving our child’s death. We do not know what to do next. Being with others in this small setting could be a huge help to each other. Nalani Lynn has offered to be the coordinator of this coffee group. We will meet on the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of the month, about 2 weeks after our monthly meeting. The next coffee will be on

**Monday, August 27th at Puccino’s at 5200 Veterans Blvd. in Metairie at 6:00 pm.**

If you are interested, please contact **Nalani Lynn** at **559-8300** and let her know if you would like to attend. This is only for our TCF members and of course no children should be there. If anyone has any concerns or questions you can call me (**Denise**) at **460-2970**. Thank you all for your continued support of our chapter in memory of all our loved and missed children.



**SAVE THE DATE: Saturday, October 27, 2018 Walk and Auction** This is our only fundraiser—we need your support to help us make this a success!! We will also have an Auction Committee! We need your help and support!

## TCF NATIONAL OFFICE SEEKS YOUR STORIES AND ARTICLES

For many years, The Compassionate Friends National Office has provided on its Leadership site stories and poems by TCF members that can be published in Chapter newsletters around the country.

Currently, the Newsletter Editor Database has over 500 stories and 200 poems. The National Office would like to include your personal grief related stories and poems. Please submit your articles and poems to [sara@compassionatefriends.org](mailto:sara@compassionatefriends.org). Please include your name and chapter affiliation.



# Our Children Remembered



“So long as we live, they too shall live, for they are a part of us as we remember them” ~ Gates of Prayer

## August Birthdays

Keilon J. Barnes, Sr.	August 7	Brenda D. Barnes
Ron Guillory	August 9	Son of Jane Guillory
Kim Mark Kimble	August 10	Son of Nancy Kimble; Brother of Baron
Mrs. Kerry A. Degeyter	August 12	Daughter of Dee Arnold
Joshua Louis Matranga	August 14	Son of Jodi Caronna; Brother of Jaclyn and Joseph
Angel B. Williams	August 15	Daughter of Linda J. Williams
Jeffrey Hergert	August 17	Son of Donald & Roxanne Hergert
Joshua LeJeune	August 17	Son of Naomie Swanson
April Blossum Duran	August 19	Daughter of Mark & Martha Duran; Sister of Autumn Moore; Mother of Gina Wills
Artemis June Westcott-Hite	August 20	Daughter of Kelsey and Cher Westcott-Hite; Sister of Freyja and Cedar
Bryan Anthony Eiserloh	August 20	Son of June DeJong
Angelica M. Matamoros	August 23	Daughter of Dafne Parent
Debra Barker Hamburger	August 24	Daughter of Antoinette and Edward Barker
Elizabeth Mary Forrest	August 28	Daughter of Steven & Nicole Forrest; Sister of Madison and Logan; Granddaughter of Elmer and Dianne Darwin
Beverly Ann Alexander	August 28	Daughter of Beverly and Melvin Siemssen
Eric Lanus	August 28	Son of Linda Lanus
Mathieu James Jenkins	August 29	Son of Cory Peter Jenkins
David Andre Folks	August 29	Son of Vickie Tullier; Brother of Jared; Grandson of Ellwyn and Joseph Abadie, Jr.; Nephew of Janel & Peter Quitzau
Paris Callais Sullivan	August 30	Daughter of Gwen and Randy Sullivan
Gerry Ray Marcoux, Jr.	August 31	Son of Gerry Marcoux

## August Anniversaries

Jonathan Reid Caluda	August 1	Son of Andrew Davis
Duane DeMatteo	August 7	Son of Brenda P. DeMatteo
Anne Woodfin	August 7	Daughter of Anna Belle and John Loeb
Joshua William McNulty	August 9	Son of Pam McNulty
Eileen LaPorte Mustacchia	August 9	Daughter of Catherine O. LaPorte
Frankie Matto III	August 9	Son of Beth O’Neal and Frank Matto, Jr.
Duane Ransome	August 15	Son of Elaine Ransome
Thomas “Tommy”	August 18	Son of Steven Cornman and Felicia Cornman
Artemis June Westcott-Hite	August 20	Daughter of Kelsey and Cher Westcott-Hite; Sister of Freyja and Cedar
Kaitlyn Denese Pitfield	August 21	Daughter of Mike and Cheryl Pitfield
Kim Mark Kimble	August 27	Son of Nancy Kimble; Brother of Baron
Beau Charles Tedesco, MD	August 28	Son of Madelyn and Ted Tedesco
Mathieu James Jenkins	August 29	Son of Cory Peter Jenkins
Gerry Ray Marcoux, Jr.	August 31	Son of Gerry Marcoux

A **Newsletter Dedication** is a special page dedicated in memory of your child with any favorite poem or writing you submit.

A **Love Gift** is a short one or two sentence message in your child’s memory. You may use the form below for love gifts.

**Make checks payable to: The Compassionate Friends. Mail to: Denise St. Pierre, 4541 Loveland St., Metairie, LA 70006 (265-0581)**

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
 Your Child \_\_\_\_\_ Birthday \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Death \_\_\_\_\_  
 Message \_\_\_\_\_

**NOTE: Love Gifts/Dedications to be put in the September newsletter are due August 21st!**



Our listeners are willing to listen, understand and share.  
504-454-3293 – Melva Duhon, son, 41, suicide  
504-456-8248 – Patsy Ashton, son, 24, drug overdose  
504-606-3275 – Janell Sisolak, son, 25, murdered  
504-875-8836 – Sonya Mazzella, daughter, 4, drowned



## *The Compassionate Friends*

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4541 Loveland St.  
Metairie, LA 70006

# AUGUST



*"When I grieve, when I stand by others as they grieve, even in the midst of seemingly unbearable sorrow, grief becomes a way to honor life—a way to cling to every fleeting, precious moment of joy." —Cortney Davis*