



The Compassionate Friends

Greater New Orleans Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 5

May 2020

Chapter Leaders: William and Millie Hunton 504-265-0581 Email address: tcfnola@gmail.com

**OUR MAY MEETING WILL BE ONLINE
AND THE BUTTERFLY RELEASE HAS BEEN
CANCELLED FOR THIS YEAR
Due to the Safety Precautions of the Coronavirus**

NEXT MONTHLY MEETING:

MAY 11, 2020

Will be ONLINE

See attached flyer

2nd Monday of every month

East Jefferson Hospital
4200 Houma Blvd.
Metairie, LA 70006

Time: 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM

On the 1st floor, adjacent to the
Hudson St. Garage, Esplanade III
room

UPCOMING MEETINGS:

13 Jan 20	10 Feb 20	9 Mar 20
13 Apr 20	11 May 20	8 Jun20
13 Jul 20	10 Aug 20	14 Sep 20
12 Oct 20	9 Nov 20	14 Dec 20

REGIONAL COORDINATOR

Denise St. Pierre
504-460-2970
denisestp12@gmail.com

NATIONAL OFFICE

The Compassionate Friends
PO Box 3696
Oak Brook, IL 60522-3696

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What Are The Odds?

It was 2004, and our oldest daughter, Jessica, had decided she would travel to England and hitchhike across the countryside. As parents, we were objective to the idea. She was barely 18. We understood her intentions to go back to the country where she was born, but it just didn't sound safe. So, we suggested that we could make a family trip out of it. The four of us, mom, dad, Jessica, and Chelsea.

Our daughters were born in England as my husband, William, was stationed there with the U.S Air Force. Jessica was born at RAF Mildenhall in the base hospital, but Chelsea was born in Ipswich in the municipal hospital. The remainder of their childhood was spent in Canada and Germany before retiring in New Orleans. So, the thought of going back to the country where they were born seemed pretty exciting.

Continued on Page 3 – See Odds

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.

BIRTHDAY TABLE: We remembered birthdays in April: Memories were shared by Millie and William Hunton for their daughter **Chelsea Hunton**. Memories were shared by Monika Gerhart for her daughter **Amina**. 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.

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., 1st 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
www.tcfneworleans.com
1104 Colony Rd
Metairie, LA 70003

Chapter Leader	William Hunton
Chapter Co-Leader	Millie Hunton
Special Advisor	Denise St. Pierre
Treasurer	Linda Provance
Facilitator	Debi Giordano
Newsletter Editor	William Hunton
Webmaster	William Hunton

Denise St. Pierre, Regional Coordinator
 (504) 460-2970
 TCF National (877) 969-0010
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, 1104 Colony Rd., Metairie, LA 70003.** Or e-mail text and photos to: **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!

Note: Love Gifts/Dedications to be put in the June newsletter are due May 20th!!!



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 **William Hunton (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.

William Hunton is 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 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.**

ATTENTION

NOTICE: We had previously asked members who can, to receive our monthly newsletter by email instead of regular mail. This would be more cost effective for our chapter funds if your newsletter was delivered in this manner. It also would cut down the time it takes to fold, stuff, stamp and put the labels on each newsletter. If you do not have access to email you may still receive your newsletter by regular mail. Please help us to reduce the cost of mailing out Newsletters each month.

In order to do this, you can email me your email address so that your newsletter will be emailed to you. You can email me at tcfnola@gmail.com

Also, please let us know if you no longer wish to receive the newsletter or if there is a change of address.

Love Gifts/Dedications-Love gifts are tax deductible and help with chapter expenses. Thank you for caring!!!

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

A Love Gift: is a short one or two sentence message in your child's memory.

Make checks payable: to TCF - GNO. Mail to William Hunton, 1104 Colony Rd., Metairie, LA 70003 (265-0581)

Note: Love Gifts/Dedications to be put in the June newsletter are due May 20th!!!

Odds (continued)

William planned the trip. He arranged the flights, rental car, and places to visit. We wanted to visit all the places we had seen while living in England when the girls were too young to remember. And the first stop was Blenheim Palace. Blenheim Place is a great country house located in Woodstock, Oxfordshire, England, and is the birthplace of Sir Winston Churchill. We had taken hundreds of pictures throughout the trip, but one of the most memorable were the ones standing at the courtyard gate with this majestic palace in the background. The trip was ten days in England and ten days in Germany. Truly the best family vacation we had ever taken after retiring from the Air Force.

Years have passed. It has been four years since we lost Chelsea in 2016 to an accidental drug overdose. Words just could not describe the horror of that day...such a beautiful girl filled with love and zeal for life. She indeed had a passion for fine art, fashion, and fun. And then gone!

William and I manage, but it is not easy. Some days are difficult beyond description. We do what we can to carry on the way Chelsea would have wanted us to do. And we occasionally get some signs. The odd penny in a place where you would never expect it to be. The passing by of a butterfly when it truly touches your heart. Missing her is an everyday event of every minute of every hour. But then there was that one event where you have to ask yourself, "What are the odds?"

It was the beginning of Mardi Gras, 2020. William and I and my good friend Leslie decided to spend the day in the French Quarter in New Orleans just to tour the sights and then watch the parades that evening. We planned a late lunch in one of those quaint restaurants in the French Quarter known for its famous BBQ Shrimp dish. There was a line to get in with a 45-minute wait. But what else did we have to do? The café had less than a dozen tables, most seating only two or four people each. But there was that "one" table. A large table. It could comfortably seat eight, and it was the only one.

It was Coop's Place on Decatur Street. It has that rustic look with a bleached masonry and high archways above the windows. We entered the doorway, and the hostess asked, "How many in your party?" "Three," I

said. She sat us at the large table. We sat on one end with room to spare. The atmosphere was typically New Orleans, rough grouted slate floors, masonry walls, and the smell of a bar that never closes. It was not known for its quiet atmosphere. It was robust with life, music playing, people chatting, bartenders, and servers calling out orders. It was definitely the kind of place Chelsea would have loved.

We had only just sat and started to absorb the ambiance of the café. We were still taking in the sights and sounds when the hostess arrived with a party of four who settled in on the other end of the only big table in the room. There was plenty of room, and the addition of new patrons to the table made it more homely. They were two couples, friends, and casually dressed. I kicked off the conversation, "Are you locals?"

They commenced into their adventure, explaining they were here for the weekend. They were from Atlanta and decided to visit New Orleans when they had the opportunity of a 99 cent bus trip from Atlanta. We were all in astonishment and all laughing. One couple boasted, "Yeah, I offered to pay for the travel as long as he paid the lodging." Guess you just can't beat a deal like that. After the laughter calmed down, I stated, "Oh, what a coincidence, we are going to Atlanta in July."

I went on to explain that after the passing of our daughter, Chelsea, we had joined an organization called The Compassionate Friends (TCF). And that we were going to the National TCF Conference in Atlanta since my husband and I have become the Chapter Leaders of the Greater New Orleans Chapter. Maria responded with awe, "Oh, I know that group. I had been involved with them a few years after I lost my sister to suicide." We all sat back for a few seconds with a moment of silence. But it didn't take long before Maria said, "Just a sec, I have a picture to show you."

Maria pulled out her iPhone and started flipping through the photos. "Oh, here it is," she said as holding out her phone. My jaw dropped. I looked up and saw William's wide-open eyes with that look of astonishment. A picture we knew so well, an image we cherish still today. It was Chelsea in her winter coat with the fur hood up, standing at the courtyard gate with that majestic palace in the background, Blenheim Palace. But, how could this be? It was Maria's phone.

Maria, not knowing what we were experiencing at the time said, "This is my sister in England." "I know, isn't that Blenheim Palace?" She confirmed it was, while I was thumbing through the photos on my phone. Then I showed Maria. She looked, but there was no reaction. The bustling and noise continued in the room, but we heard nothing. There was only silence at our table; we were in a bubble, concealed from the rest of the world. Maria looked up, our eyes met, and tears started flowing down both our cheeks.

What are the odds? This couple had traveled all around the world. We had done the same. Yet, each of us held in front of us a picture of our loved one. Our loved one who had died too soon. The photos were the same. Each image showed our loved one in a winter coat, fur-trimmed hood snugly wrapped around her head, each standing in front of the same gate of the same palace in the same country at the same time of the year. The similarity in the photos was astounding, breath-taking, and almost frightening.

We shared other photos and talked about our travels, but the conversation always came back to these two photos. What are the odds that we had such similar photos, lived so many miles apart, but was destined to sit at the same table in the same restaurant at the same time? Then someone mentioned "Devine Intervention."

Could it be so? Could these two girls have conspired to bring us together? Was our meeting a mere chance? It truly makes you wonder. We attribute this event as Chelsea's most potent sign to us so far. This could not have happened just by mere chance. So, we look back and say, "Thank you, Chelsea."

By Millie Hunton, Co-Leader, TCF Greater New Orleans Chapter 1615

NEWSLETTER DEDICATION IN LOVING MEMORY OF

Lauren Ann Brocato

May 30, 1985 – Feb 27, 2016

Four Years Since Lauren Died

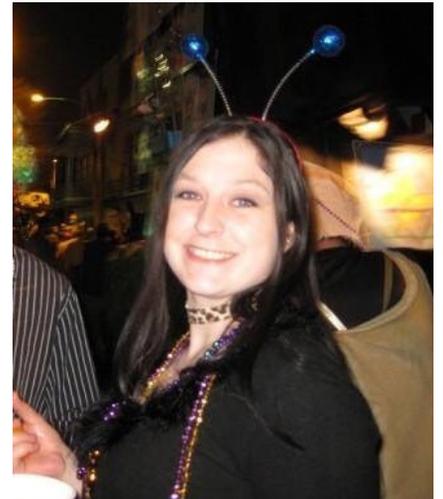
It has been four years since Lauren died
I miss her very much
I do not think she ever knew
How many lives she would touch

Lauren lived the life she really loved
She loved the life she lived
She worked hard every single day
And gave all that she could give

Lauren liked to have fun too
She played as hard as she worked
Volleyball was a favorite sport
But skydiving made me berserk

Lauren was definitely one of a kind
She was often very strong and bold
When she came into my life
I knew they threw away the mold

I would not change a single thing
You were perfect in every way
If I could wish for anything, Lauren
I wish I could have you for another day



Love Your Family



Beautiful Butterfly

Beautiful butterfly, stay awhile
Your social visits make me smile
I know your name,
And why you came
To get me through each daily trial

Black on brilliant orange hue
I cannot get enough of you
Can you stay
Throughout the day
Or will you leave as you always do?

Beautiful butterfly, please don't go
I need you more than you could know
I know it's you
From the things you do
You come and give me quite a show

From the moment you came to be
There are blessings for us to see
I fear the day
You go away
No longer will you visit me

Beautiful butterfly, I'll let you go
But in my heart of hearts I'll know
You're always there
You'll always care
I'll feel the love you've come to show

I miss you each and every day
And in your own very special way
You come to me
And let me see
That we will meet again one day

Donna Gerrior
TCF Pasco County, FL
In Memory of Rob



Angels Among Us

Our Angels are among us
We see them everyday
In all the forms that God created...
They are with us along life's way.

We see them in the sunrise,
That brightens and warms our soul.
We feel them in the summer breeze
That chases away our cold.

They are there among the flowers...
Their sweet scent a memory of love.
They soar with the eagles,
As they fly so high above.

The night will find them in the stars,
Lighting our path below.
And even in our dreams,
Their presence we'll still know.

As the snow melts with the sun,
And spring flowers peek through their beds,
They come on the wings of butterflies,
And flutter about our heads.

They are telling us they are with us,
And will be forever more...
Until it's time for us to meet again,
As we pass through heaven's door.

Jacquelyn M. Comeaux
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Our Children Remembered



May Birthdays

Shelley Posey	May 2	Daughter of Ann Posey
Timothy Moreau	May 3	Son of Penny and Mike Moreau
James "Jim" Nixon	May 4	Son of Linda Nixon
Brandon Sensebe	May 6	Son of Patricia Sensebe
Gerl Lynn W. Cheatham	May 8	Daughter of Linda Wilson
Jarrold Christopher	May 11	Son of Myra Santos
Ryan Patrick Sanders	May 12	Son of Roxie Sanders
Kameron	May 15	Grandson of Marlene Zabalaoui
Gina Romano Swafford	May 17	Daughter of Jim Romano
David Joseph Rome	May 19	Son of Tina Rome; Brother of Melissa and Paul
Beau Charles Tedesco	May 21	Son of Madelyn and Ted Tedesco
D. Conrad Dyer	May 22	Son of Linda Doussan
Ross Lee Ammann	May 24	Son of Tina Simoneaux; Brother of Marie, Jack and Scott
Richard "Ricky" Smith	May 24	Son of Carole A. Clark
Gabriela "Gabby" Hebert	May 28	Daughter of Rachel and Todd Hebert
Mario Anderson	May 29	Son of Trinetta and Herbert Anderson
Dennis George	May 30	Son of Lori Wedge; Grandson of Jeri McMullen; Nephew of Patti Goens
Lauren Ann	May 30	Daughter of Eileen Brocato

May Anniversaries

Mary Lee Bonura	May 1	Daughter of Judy and Dominick Bonura
David Allen Ashton, Jr.	May 10	Son of Patsy and David Allen Ashton, Sr.; Sister of Julie
Ana Maria	May 11	Daughter of Carmen Sanchez
David Andre Folks	May 11	Son of Vickie Tullier; Br of Jared; Grandson of Ellwyn and Joseph Abadie, Jr.
Jarrold Christopher	May 12	Son of Myra Santos
Tynia C. Alexander	May 14	Daughter of Charlene Alexander; Sister of Rickie, Jr. and Tiphane Alexander
Molly Hutchin	May 14	Daughter of Betty Hutchins
Randy Grisoli	May 15	Son of May Glo Monteleone
Angel B. Williams	May 16	Daughter of Linda J. Williams
Ron Guillory	May 17	Son of Jane Guillory
Paige Rogers Mann	May 17	Daughter of Stella Rogers; Sister of Deborah and Ken, Jr.
Kerry Arnold Degeyter	May 17	Daughter of Dee Arnold
Tyrone Louis Davenport	May 22	Son of Tyrone Davenport
Dennis George	May 25	Son of Lori Wedge; Grandson of Jeri McMullen; Nephew of Patti Goens
Chester Joseph Reeder, III	May 26	Son of Deborah and Chester Reeder
Joshua Michael LeJeune	May 28	Son of Naomie Carter Swanson
Kevin Michael Flock	May 31	Son of Janice and Jim Flock

Dear Compassionate Friends,

The Greater New Orleans Chapter had our first online Zoom meeting this month. It was conducted during the time our regular meeting would have been held. We did not have as many as we would have had at a regular meeting, but we did have several attend. We tried to stick to our regular agenda as much as an online meeting would allow. After the preliminary announcements, we read the Compassionate Friends Credo, light our Butterfly candle, introduced ourselves, and took turns sharing memories of our loved ones.

We will be holding our next meeting on May 11th at 7 p.m. Details of the meeting are attached to this newsletter. Please join us so we can spend time together talking about our children, grandchildren, and siblings.

Our Phone Friend List is active to include the TCF-GNO phone as well. If you wish to talk, we are available for you. While we are all in turmoil, you may not get an immediate response. Please leave a message and we will try to contact you as soon as possible.

Our Steering Committee is working to continue to serve our existing members and members to be during this time of uncertainty.

William & Millie Hunton
Parents of Chelsea M. Hunton
Chapter Leaders
The Compassionate Friends
Greater New Orleans, Chapter 1615

**PHONE
FRIEND
LIST**



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

504-559-2438 – Jaimie Kimball, sibling, 12, vehicle accident

**504-265-0581 – William and Millie Hunton, daughter, 30,
accidental overdose**

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS CREDO

We need not walk alone. We are The Compassionate Friends. We reach out to each other with love, with understanding, and with hope. The children we mourn have died at all ages and from many different causes, but our love for them 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 a unique family because we represent many races, creeds, and relationships. 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 they feel helpless and see no hope. Some of us have found our faith to be a source of strength, while some of us are struggling to find answers. Some of us are angry, filled with guilt or in deep depression, while others radiate an inner peace. But whatever pain we bring to this gathering of The Compassionate Friends, it is pain we will share, just as we share with each other our love for the children who have died. We are all seeking and struggling to build a future for ourselves, but we are committed to building a future together. We reach out to each other in love to 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.

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