



# The Compassionate Friends

Greater New Orleans Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 4

SEPTEMBER 2019

Chapter Leaders: William and Millie Hunton 504-265-0581 Email address: [tcfnola@gmail.com](mailto:tcfnola@gmail.com)

**SAVE THE DATE: Saturday November 2, 2019**  
**Walk and Auction Our only fundraiser—we need your support to help us make this a success!!**  
**See flyer for details.**

\*\*\*\*\*

## Two Butterflies

The loss of one's child to death is the single most defining moment in our lives. Our lives are shattered, our minds are numbed by the totality of this pain. As members of Compassionate Friends, we discover a new way of viewing the world; we share the same emotional space, the same loss.

When one of our members lost another child to death, the agony became exponential to each of us. We know this parent, we know this child. We know this parent's journey and the strides she made after the death of her son. Now she will walk this painful road again with the death of her daughter. We find ourselves asking how this could possibly happen.

When I visited Robin on the day after the third anniversary of the death of her son, Chris, she was mourning the death of her daughter, Dawn, who had died just six days earlier. Robin was reserved and serenely quiet.

"Let's look at Chris's garden," Robin said. And so we set under the trellis in the shade of the vines looking at the lovely Irish garden that Robin had made for Chris. Not much was said. "The rest of the family is coming in later today and tomorrow," Robin told me. The memorial service was scheduled for Sunday afternoon. Robin didn't know how she was going to face yet another death. Dawn was a veteran. I didn't know that.

Quietly we sat and looked at the garden, sheltered under the beautiful flowering vines. The Celtic crosses that connect us both to our Irish heritage were there. A sweet angel was placed in the flowerbed. Robin mentioned that Dawn had picked out another angel statue for Chris's garden. She said she would be putting it in the garden in a few days. "This is Chris and Dawn's garden now," she commented. I agreed. "I'll need to rearrange some things, add some plants and put something in especially for Dawn," she remarked. "I can't believe this is happening again, my daughter is dead. My son is dead. Dawn's memorial service will be on the same date as we held Chris's memorial service." I didn't know that, I told her.

Robin's dogs joined us. They sensed the mood of quiet reflection and simply relaxed in the shade. I asked Robin if she was still in shock. She thought she probably was. "That's good," I told her.

Two butterflies joined us. They danced in front of us, playing above the trellis and over the garden. The butterflies perched next to Robin for a few seconds, then began their dance of freedom again. They lingered for quite some time as we watched them. Two perfect tears slowly rolled down Robin's cheek. "That's Chris and Dawn visiting us," Robin whispered. Yes, I believe it was Chris and Dawn.

Annette Mennen Baldwin  
In Memory of Chris Wilson and Dawn Wilson-Shafer  
Robin's Beautiful Children

\*\*\*\*\*

**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.**

\*\*\*\*\*

### MONTHLY MEETING:

September 9, 2019

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:

**Oct 14**

**Nov 11**

**Dec 9**

### REGIONAL COORDINATOR

Denise St. Pierre  
504-460-2970  
[denisestp12@gmail.com](mailto:denisestp12@gmail.com)

### NATIONAL OFFICE

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

[nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org](mailto:nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org)  
[www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org)

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)**  
**1104 Colony Rd**  
**Metairie, LA 70003**

Chapter Leader.....William Hunton  
Newsletter Editor.....William Hunton  
Chapter Co-Leader.....Millie Hunton  
Treasurer.....Debi Giordano  
Facilitator.....Debi Giordano  
Webmaster.....William Hunton

### **Steering Committee:**

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

Denise St. Pierre, Regional Coordinator  
(504) 460-2970

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.

**BIRTHDAY TABLE:** We remembered birthdays in **August** and several brought in the photos and albums to share. 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.

**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](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 **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](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**.

**\*Important Chapter Information\***

**BRICKS:** The chapter takes orders for engraved brick twice a year, for the Butterfly Release in April and then again for the Worldwide Candle Lighting Ceremony in December. The deadline to order bricks will be on **November 1, 2019** for the WWCL on **Dec. 8, 2019**.

\*\*\*\*\*

# **ATTENTION**

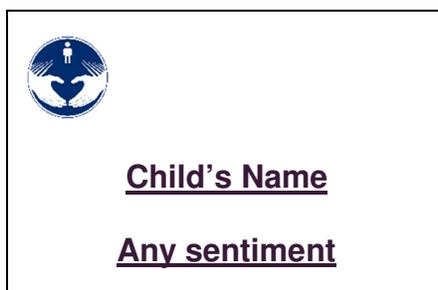
**NOTICE:** We had previously asked members who can, to receive our monthly newsletter by email instead of regular mail. This would be more cost effective for our chapter funds if your newsletter was delivered in this manner. It also would cut down the time it takes to fold, stuff, stamp and put the 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](mailto: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.**

\*\*\*\*\*

**MEMORIAL OPPORTUNITY:** Have your child’s name displayed on a sign at our functions. The signs will have “The Compassionate Friends” logo and the words “In Memory of”. You can add your child’s name and any sentiment providing it is 16 characters per line. The size of the sign will be 18 x 24, and the cost is \$40 per sign. Any questions? Call William 504-265-0581.



**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Child's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Sentiment:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Remember 16 characters per line!**

**Mail to: TCF, 1104 Colony Rd., Metairie, LA 70003.**



## THE REASON FOR TCF MEETINGS

One could ask, "Why go and listen to the woes of other people when it is easier to get wrapped up in our own?" It is not to compare tragedies, nor assess the right or wrong means of grieving, nor to pressure or complicate or confuse a bereaved parent with timetables of grief. This is not the reasoning behind TCF meetings.

When a child of a family dies, the emotional pain can be intense. It is tempting at times to try to run either into solitude or avoidance. A balance is needed to survive and live more than a resigned existence. Finding a way isn't easy when the "rest of the world" rushes by, taking little notice that our life has changed.

The monthly meetings of The Compassionate Friends is a special time we can set aside to gain and maintain our balance. We need a lot of encouragement to endure and experience our emotions and to express ourselves while grieving. Coming to a meeting can help alleviate the feeling of being alone in sorrow. The environment of other bereaved parents offers a means of keeping in touch with reality, in which there can be a sharing and mutual understanding. There is sustained support knowing that others are willing to acknowledge that though a child's song might be over, the melody of memories will remain woven throughout the remainder of our lives.

N. Hunt

\*\*\*\*\*



## THIRTY YEARS

Thirty years ago today  
On a cold snowy winter day  
You came into my life, my son  
And changed my life in many ways

You taught me unconditional love  
And what a mom should feel  
You taught me compassion in many ways  
The kind only the heart reveals

You taught me how to smile  
When heartprints ruled my days  
You taught me so much laughter  
My love was endless in so many ways

I taught you, as you taught me  
The years flew by too fast  
And then God's Angels called you home  
All I had left, was memories of the past.....

Today's your 30th birthday, Andy  
And I sit here all alone  
Wondering how you're spending yours  
While I spend my at home

Thinking of the ones we had,  
The double birthdays we once shared  
I close my eyes and remember  
It makes my eyes begin to tear

I remember when you were one  
And I was twenty-seven



If I'd known then, in four years  
God was calling you to heaven.....

I'd held you even more tightly,  
I'd have kissed you even more  
And probably went to school with you  
Each day you went out the door

I'd have tucked you in more tightly  
I'd have read more stories at night  
And had I known what life held  
I'd never let you out of my sight

But none of us knows what life holds  
Or what our future will be  
God gave us five great years  
I treasure those precious memories

Happy Birthday Andy  
I love you with all my heart  
One day again we will share this day  
But for now, I'll share you in my heart

I'll love you forever my son.....  
on air, land, and sea  
and through eternity

Sharon J. Bryant

\*\*\*\*\*

## *In This Place*

Brave hearts, you are here. You have traveled  
a dreadful distance. You have come,  
seeking solace, understanding, hope,  
threads to patch what death's so cruelly undone.  
In this place you can relax and breathe . . .  
the coats of others' expectations taken off.  
Walk into these few hours as into an oasis  
where draughts of love and memories can be quaffed.  
In this place all names can be spoken;  
in this place each one's story may be told.  
We will not be discouraged by your sorrow;  
in this place ALL feelings, we enfold.  
Here laughter does not mean we are forgetting;  
we do not count how many tears are shed.  
Both fuel us, fellow travelers, give us courage,  
for the long and winding road that is ahead.  
And those we love are pleased we are together.  
They smile down on us, and bless this day,  
glad for every tiny step we're taking  
and send their light to guide us on our way.  
Traveling with us as we journey onward,  
sending strength for what the miles may bring,  
they are a part of everything we do that matters -  
in every dance we dance, and every song we sing.



Genesse Bourdeau Gentry

***Dear Compassionate Friends,***

***After attending this year's national Compassionate Friends conference in Philadelphia as a first-time attendee, I have been able to reflect just how important a TCF meeting can mean to anyone. While this conference was certainly filled with passion, caring, and understanding, it has made me realize on how important our first TCF meeting was for my wife and I after losing our Chelsea.***

***We had spent several weeks seeking a counselor to help through the shock and despair of losing our daughter. But the sessions just did not help Millie. My wife just could not connect with this professional who was well trained but could not possibly relate to what we were going through.***

***Just over one month after Chelsea's loss we attended the Louisiana Renaissance Festival in Hammond, Louisiana. The event was painful, but filled with a joy of finding something we could memorialize our daughter. The three of us had spent the previous year going to the fest and loved it. All we talked about was we had to dress up next year. Well, Chelsea passed in October and the fest is all of November and part of December. We went carrying a butterfly balloon and a dozen roses, ironically the first dozen I had ever bought for Chelsea. We met up with the queen and she honored Chelsea with a "Royal proclamation of the Releasing of the Balloon for Chelsea Hunton."***

***Well, after this wonderful day of memorializing our daughter we decided to attend the Candlelight Ceremony of The Compassionate Friends. It was an organization we had never heard of. The connection we felt was instant and overwhelming. Then the regular meeting was the next night. We certainly were not healed by any means but we had definitely found a connection we had desperately been looking for.***

***So, that is why I selected the articles relating to TCF meetings so that we can all reflect on just how important these meetings can be. Please take the opportunity to share the information.***

**Millie and William Hunton,  
Parents to Chelsea Marie Hunton  
Chapter Leaders**

***LOVE GIFT DEDICATION IN LOVING MEMORY OF***  
**Cody Martin**

**February 27, 1989 ~ September 22, 2006**



I try to hide my tears when I say your name,  
But the pain in my heart is still the same,  
Although I smile and seem carefree,  
There's so many that miss you ...

Just like me.

Always missing you,  
"Mom, Dad, Kate, Meaux & Charlie"





# Our Children Remembered



## September Birthdays

Mark J. Sidney	September 2	Son of Shirley Lundy-Connor
Charles Kirklon III	September 2	Sone of Ida Warfield
Joshua William McNulty	September 4	Son of Pam McNulty
Arthur J. "Jay" LaVie, V	September 5	Son of Gail LaVie; Brother of Michelle and Louis
Kyle David Chryssoverges	September 5	Son of David and Shelley Chryssoverges
Margo Kiefer	September 5	Daughter of Linda Kiefer
Lily Elaine Shipley	September 7	Daughter of Colleen Poster
Carrie Ellen Gore	September 8	Daughter of Don and Ann Gore
Jennifer Lynn	September 14	Daughter of Mary Ann Piazza; Sister of Jonathan
Pearson Pratt	September 14	Son of Kelly and Andrew Pratt
Kevin Michael Flock	September 15	Son of Janice and Jim Flock
Ryan Plattsmier	September 15	Son of Randy Plattsmier
Ashley Code	September 15	Daughter of Cassi Code
Andrew Paul Martinez	September 16	Son of Larry and Lenore Martinez
Cara Davis	September 17	Daughter of Ray Davis
Jacob Lloyd Hoffmeister	September 22	Son of Michael Hoffmeister
Jeffrey Joseph Baudin	September 24	Son of Sandra Patterson
Gabrielle Paige Watkins	September 25	Daughter of Gary S. Watkins
C-Huey Harrison IV	September 25	Son of C-Huey Harrison
Randall "Randy" Greg	September 26	Son of Diane Ardon; Brother of Ryan
Jeffrey Michael Lambert	September 26	Son of Karen and Danny Lambert
Robert Weeks	September 29	Son of Ellen Dotter
Eugene Webber, III	September 30	Son of Kathy and Kennedy Cook

**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. You may use the form below for love gifts.

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

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Your Child \_\_\_\_\_ Birthday \_\_\_\_\_ Death \_\_\_\_\_

Message \_\_\_\_\_

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



# Our Children Remembered



## September Anniversaries

Ashley Code	September 1	Daughter of Cassi Code
Gerry Provance	September 3	Son of Gerry and Linda Provance; Sister of Deena
Paris Callais Sullivan	September 3	Daughter Gwen and Randy Sullivan
Terrance Peter Anderson	September 6	Son of Beulah S. Anderson
Joshua Watson	September 6	Son of Terry Peter
Brady Thomas	September 7	Son of Merideth Eldridge
Aaron Stephen Lopp	September 7	Son of Sonya Batten
Charlette Marie Simmons	September 7	Daughter of Betty LeBlanc; Niece of Cheryl Jones
Gabrielle Paige Watkins	September 8	Daughter of Gary S. Watkins
Kendall Gallman	September 11	Son of Michele Gallman
Laura Whittaker	September 11	Daughter of Karen Whittaker
Bessma Hendawi	September 13	Daughter of Diane Hendawi
Andrew Paul Martinez	September 16	Son of Larry and Lenore Martinez
William John Smeltz	September 18	Son of Janice and Victor Smeltz; Brother of Nicholas
Ashley Blackwood	September 19	Niece of Vicki Tosh
Cody Patrick Martin	September 22	Son of Jill & Rob; Brother of Kaitlyn; Grandson of Betty & Charles Boudreaux
Jacob Lloyd Hoffmeister	September 22	Son of Michael Hoffmeister
Matthew Boudreaux	September 23	Son of Julie and Ronnie Hemenway
Joseph P. Traina	September 24	Son of Cynthia Blache; Brother of Nicole Traina
Alina Ezzo	September 24	Granddaughter of Sahar Chifici
Jeffrey Michael Lambert	September 24	Son of Karen and Danny Lambert
C-Huey Harrison IV	September 25	Son of C-Huey Harrison
Lamonte Jordan Smith	September 26	Son of Marta Tuyet-Martin
Gabriela "Gabby" Hebert	September 26	Daughter of Rachel and Todd Hebert
Jeffrey Joseph Baudin	September 26	Son of Sandra Patterson
David Joseph Rome	September 29	Son of Tina Rome; Brother of Melissa and Paul

**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. You may use the form below for love gifts.

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

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Your Child \_\_\_\_\_ Birthday \_\_\_\_\_ Death \_\_\_\_\_

Message \_\_\_\_\_

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

**REGISTRATION – TCF Greater New Orleans Chapter Walk to Remember**  
**SATURDAY, November 2, 2018**

Registration begins at 8:30 AM Walk starts at 10:00 AM in the Children’s Memorial Garden at Lafreniere Park  
**Our chapter is NOT offering T-Shirts this year. We will have Walk style Bibs to write child’s name that you are remembering.**

All monies raised go to fund TCF chapter expenses

Make checks payable to: The Compassionate Friends. Mail to: 3521 California Ave., Kenner, LA 70065

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone No. \_\_\_\_\_

**REGISTRATION IS \$15 BEFORE OCTOBER 15<sup>TH</sup>, AFTER OCTOBER 15<sup>TH</sup>**  
**THE DAY OF THE WALK REGISTRATION IS \$20**

**LIABILITY WAIVER MUST BE SIGNED BEFORE MAILING: Please copy and complete this section for each person walking.**

In consideration of being accepted as a participant in the TCF Inc., Walk to Remember, I hereby affirm, acknowledge and agree to the following: 1. That I assume all responsibility for any and all damages to, or theft of, my personal property or any bodily injury (including death) that may occur to me, and further, I assume responsibility for property damage and bodily injury (including death) that I may cause to others, in each case arising or resulting from, incidental to, or as a consequence of, my participation in the TCF Inc., Walk to Remember; 2. That I, for myself, my heirs, my executors and administrators, release and hold harmless from and waive all claims, damages, and rights of action, present or future, whether the same be known or unknown, anticipated or unanticipated, foreseen or unforeseen, arising or resulting from, incident to or as a consequence of, my participation in the TCF Inc., Walk to Remember, which I may now or hereafter have against The Compassionate Friends, Inc., any business or companies along the route and any and all sponsors and volunteers for said event, and the respective directors, employees and agents of all of the foregoing; 3. That I grant the permission for use of my name and/or picture in any broadcast, photograph, video, or other account of The Compassionate Friends, Inc., Walk to Remember; and 4. That I am aware of the physical demands and hazards of participating in a two mile walking event such as The Compassionate Friends, Inc., Walk to Remember.

**Signature: (Parent or Guardian if under 18)** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

Children 12 and under are free!

---

**REGISTRATION – TCF Greater New Orleans Chapter Walk to Remember**  
**SATURDAY, November 2, 2018**

Registration begins at 8:30 AM Walk starts at 10:00 AM in the Children’s Memorial Garden at Lafreniere Park  
**Our chapter is NOT offering T-Shirts this year. We will have Walk style Bibs to write child’s name that you are remembering.**

All monies raised go to fund TCF chapter expenses

Make checks payable to: The Compassionate Friends. Mail to: 3521 California Ave., Kenner, LA 70065

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone No. \_\_\_\_\_

**REGISTRATION IS \$15 BEFORE OCTOBER 15<sup>TH</sup>, AFTER OCTOBER 15<sup>TH</sup>**  
**THE DAY OF THE WALK REGISTRATION IS \$20**

**LIABILITY WAIVER MUST BE SIGNED BEFORE MAILING: Please copy and complete this section for each person walking.**

In consideration of being accepted as a participant in the TCF Inc., Walk to Remember, I hereby affirm, acknowledge and agree to the following: 1. That I assume all responsibility for any and all damages to, or theft of, my personal property or any bodily injury (including death) that may occur to me, and further, I assume responsibility for property damage and bodily injury (including death) that I may cause to others, in each case arising or resulting from, incidental to, or as a consequence of, my participation in the TCF Inc., Walk to Remember; 2. That I, for myself, my heirs, my executors and administrators, release and hold harmless from and waive all claims, damages, and rights of action, present or future, whether the same be known or unknown, anticipated or unanticipated, foreseen or unforeseen, arising or resulting from, incident to or as a consequence of, my participation in the TCF Inc., Walk to Remember, which I may now or hereafter have against The Compassionate Friends, Inc., any business or companies along the route and any and all sponsors and volunteers for said event, and the respective directors, employees and agents of all of the foregoing; 3. That I grant the permission for use of my name and/or picture in any broadcast, photograph, video, or other account of The Compassionate Friends, Inc., Walk to Remember; and 4. That I am aware of the physical demands and hazards of participating in a two mile walking event such as The Compassionate Friends, Inc., Walk to Remember.

**Signature: (Parent or Guardian if under 18)** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

Children 12 and under are free!