



Newsletter of the San Diego Chapter of "TCF"
The Compassionate Friends
 A non profit self-help organization for families who are grieving the death of a child.



May / June
2021

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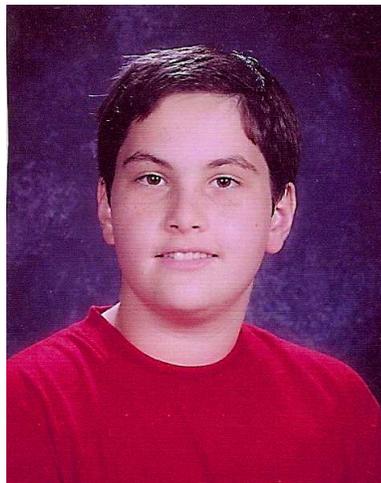
Next Meetings

Good News!
Virtual and In person Meetings
 See page 3

Wednesday
May 5th

Wednesday
June 2nd

These pages Dedicated with Love to:



Jason Wilshe



Rosa Griffith

♥ Always In Our Hearts ♥



Brian Marc Allen



Ramiro Zuñiga-Cedillo

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Donations and Love Gifts

Dedications and Love Gifts go towards the cost of: printing and mailing of this Newsletter; outreach activities to the newly bereaved; and other expenses necessary to continue our chapter in San Diego. These donations are tax deductible. Our sincerest thanks to all who honor their children in this way.

- ♥ **Karen & Ken Wilshe — In Loving Memory of their son Jason. “Happy 30th Birthday Jason! We wish we could reach out & Hug You.”**
 - ♥ **Marc & Barbara Allen — In Loving Memory of their Son, Brian Marc Allen.**
 - ♥ **Rosa Garrett — In Loving Memory of her daughter Rosa.**
 - ♥ **Gloria C. de Zuñiga — In Loving Memory of her son Ramiro. “To my son Ramiro. Your family is thinking of you on your birthday and we hope you will celebrate in heaven with your father, family and friends. We miss you so terribly everyday of our lives, but especially on your birthday.”**
-

**Second Sunday of May
 Many happy memories
 Linger in our hearts this day
 As we each remember our child
 Who has left this earthly plane.
 The day is bittersweet for us,
 The mothers who have lost so much,
 For to remove all pain could well
 Erase the precious life we touched.
 Tears will trace the memories of
 Other, happier Mother’s Days,
 As we dwell in a quiet reverie
 This Second Sunday of May**

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

The Compassionate Friends

Mission Statement

"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".



Telephone Friends

Ever feeling blue and need someone to talk to, who understands and cares. Just pick up the phone and call:

LONG TERM ILLNESS Lynn Lyon
(760) 639-4601

ONLY CHILD Wendy Jones
(619) 371-2335

ALCOHOL RELATED Elizabeth Richardson
(619) 280-1832

PARA HABLAR EN ESPAÑOL David Bolaños Keyser
(760) 310-3632

No meeting at Nobel, Good News See below

Meeting Place and Times

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS OF SAN DIEGO MEETS ON
The first Wednesday of the month at:

Nobel Recreation Center

8810 Judicial Drive
San Diego, CA 92122

Taking I 805 north exit Nobel Drive heading west, stay in right lane for right turn to Judicial Drive; move to left lane making left turn at first Traffic Signal. Follow parking lot down to the end (2nd Bldg.) There'll be a few stair steps a few paces more, entrance to right. Walkway near. Ample parking. Nobel Drive runs east – west about one mile north of hwy. 52.
Latest on Meeting Updates: www.sdctcf.org

Good News!! We've found a temporary place where we can meet in person.

For May & perhaps June too if Nobel is still closed (Virtual meetings still ongoing for May & June if someone prefers.)

It's at Legacy Church 8076 La Mesa Blvd. in La Mesa. The Church is within the La Mesa Springs Shopping Center.

No food. Must wear mask. (7-9 PM)

Easiest Directions:

From I-8 going east exit Fletcher Pkwy. Right turn on Baltimore Blvd. Right turn to University Ave. Pass traffic light at Allison Blvd. turning left into "Vons La Mesa Springs" shopping center. Pass Von's entrance continuing to the end of the parking lot, Legacy Church on left. Ample parking.

For another entrance to the "shopping center". Left turn on La Mesa Blvd (next intersection). Left turn next traffic light into the parking lot.



Our Children – Loved, Missed and Remembered May & June

We remember the families of:

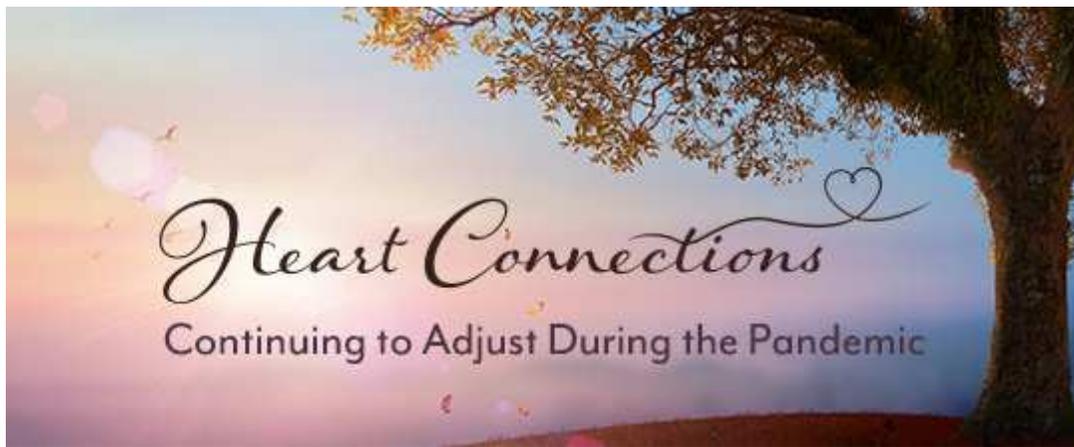


Birthdays

Michael Scott Ayers, born 5-2
Ramiro Zuñiga-Cedillo, born 5-3
Matthew Scott Lewis, born 5-5
Jason Wilshe, born 5-6
David Ward Ray, born 5-7
Paul Albert Alferos Jr., born 5-8
Julie Hamilton, born 5-9
Kristin Elizabeth Hawkinson, born 5-9
Brittany Dawn Williams, born 5-10
Jered Dillard, born 5-13
Andrew K. Scott, born 5-13
Anthony William Bane, born 5-18
Jamie Christopher Yates, born 5-18
Chad Eugene Clausen, born 5-20
Francisco "Frankie" Morales, born 5-20
Kai Wright, born 5-21
Brian Marc Allen, born 5-23
*Jamie Morgan Mychael Bratton-McNeeley,
Born 5-24*
Alexander Nicholas Model, born 5-25
Kate Brumfield, born 5-27
Aymee Sofia Garcia, born 5-30
Amanda Jo Stuart, born 6-2
Cooper Jancic, born 6-2
Todd Schulman, born 6-8
Marsha Cushing, born 6-15
Richard Wilson, born 6-16
Wallace Michaelson, born 6-16
Maxim Dudinov, born 6-20
Heather A. Avilez, born 6-23
Rosa Griffith, born 6-24
Kenneth W. McCormick III, born 6-24
Tara Michelle Hickman, born 6-27
Jason Robert Chambers, born 6-29
Ryan McDonough, born 6-30
Nicholas Ferrell, born 6-30

Anniversaries

Creta (CJ) Smith, died 5-1
Dominique Ynette Young, died 5-5
Frank Palmer, died 5-7
Maxim Dudinov, died 5-11
Joseph Roy Elkins, died 5-12
Jerome Allen, died 5-13
Todd Almeida Cutler, died 5-14
Nicholas James Reynolds, died 5-16
Douglas Lorente, died 5-18
David Michael Ellis, died 5-19
Larry Stauffer, died 5-21
Tara Michelle Hickman, , died 5-23
Nick Jellison, died 5-21
Kristy Shoemate, died 5-24
Tavion Jackson, died 5-29
Michael Shawn Kyle, died 5-29
Derek Reed Thomas, died 5-30
Allen J. Kha, died 5-31
Joseph Balan, died 6-4
Jason Robert Chambers, died 6-6
Ellie Kennison, died 6-9
Sammy Fishkin, died 6-9
Michael Lopez, died 6-10
Dan Gerald Bruce, died 6-11
Stephen Mathew Kraft III, died 6-13
Lauren Francis, died 6-16
Karandeep Singh, died 6-17
Klay Budz, died 6-20
Leticia Raimer, died 6-23
Nicole Kaitlynn, died 6-23
Kyle Joseph Carranza, died 6-26
Vinny Palermo, died 6-29



HEART CONNECTIONS – CONTINUING TO ADJUST DURING THE PANDEMIC

Posted on April 16th, 2021

Uncertainty and change continue this year as we adjust to this new stage of the pandemic. Vaccine availability has opened up new possibilities to gather in small groups. At the same time, some areas of our country are experiencing new surges in virus cases and hospitalizations. The majority of Americans are not yet vaccinated and the risks of COVID-19 continue and vary from state to state.

Chapters of The Compassionate Friends are determining when and how it may be safe to resume in-person support group meetings. Following their local, state, and CDC guidelines and the requirements of their host locations, recommended protocols will be in place to make gatherings as safe as possible when they resume. These include meeting outside when feasible, wearing masks, social distancing, washing hands, using hand sanitizer, and taking temperatures when entering a meeting.

Our bereaved members have different views on when they personally feel safe returning to in-person groups. To care for all of our bereaved families, TCF continues to offer a variety of ways that people can receive help and encouragement. In addition to attending an in-person meeting, you can access resources from wherever you are in the following ways:

- Attend a virtual support group offered by your local chapter ([find a chapter](#))
- Join one or more of our 39 closed Facebook Groups representing different aspects of loss ([find a group](#))
- Participate in TCF's online support chat groups ([find a chat group](#))
- Save the date for our 2021 national virtual conference on July 16-18, 2021 ([more information](#))
- Access our *Rising in Grief and Hope* virtual event ([watch event](#))

- Read TCF’s online magazine, *We Need Not Walk Alone* ([read magazine](#))
- Visit TCF’s resource page listing grief books ([find a book](#)), and read grief articles on TCF’s blog ([read the blog](#))
- Ask us to connect you with another chapter’s virtual meeting if yours is not offering them ([contact us](#))

How we provide bereavement assistance to grieving families will remain flexible and evolve according to the changing circumstances of the pandemic. We are all excited to be together again in person and await the time when we can easily do that. In the meantime, TCF will continue to offer bereaved parents, grandparents, and siblings needed help in as many creative and flexible ways as we can. We are here for you and will continue to ensure that our members “need not walk alone.”



SHARI O'LOUGHLIN

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.

COMMENTS FROM THE 2020 VIRTUAL CONFERENCE

“The Conference meant so much to me. It was beautifully presented. I will always be grateful that I was able to attend.” – 2020 Virtual Conference Attendee

“I am very grateful for all your hard work putting together such an amazing 3 day event. I am newly bereaved and this conference was that ray of sunshine that I needed. The Compassionate Friends conference has given me tools that I didn’t even know I needed to help me ease some of this pain in my heart.” – 2020 Virtual Conference Attendee



THE ROBIN'S SONG

Posted on April 15th, 2021

It's spring once again. Our part of the world is turning back towards the sun; trees are leafing out; wildflowers are blooming. Robins are again singing to one another. And, I believe, also singing to those who are grieving.

Before my daughter Lori died, I was under the misperception that only the English robin had a glorious song. That smaller, red-breasted scalawag of a bird delights all who hear it, and I had felt that we in the United States had been short-changed when they'd misnamed its larger, boring American cousin the same sweet name. All I'd ever heard our robins do was *cheep*! Then one June day, almost a year after Lori died, during one of the darkest times of my grief, my ears and heart flew open with surprise at a song I heard outside my window. I distinctly heard, in the midst of my pain, a bird singing loudly and clearly, "Cheer up! Cheer up! Cheerio! . . . Cheer up! Cheer up! Cheerio!" I went outside to

see what marvelous bird might have been sent to sing to me. I could barely see the bird at the top of the neighbor's poplar tree, so, while hoping this exotic, magical bird wouldn't fly away while I was gone, I went to find our binoculars.

Rushing back, I could hear the bird from each room in the house. After adjusting the binoculars, I was truly amazed to see one of our "boring" American robins come clearly into view! As he continued singing clear as day, "Cheer up! Cheer up! Cheerio!" I marveled at this special message and wondered if my robin was the only one who sang these words. So I looked it up in my *Audubon Society Field Guide to North American Birds* and found that my robin was not an anomaly, but that robins are considered "the true harbinger of spring, singing "Cheer-up, cheer-up, cheerily."

I stood there that day filled with wonder. I wasn't hearing things; there it was in the bird book: "Cheer-up, cheer-up, cheerily." I thought to myself, "Cheerily . . . No, that isn't what I hear." We had lived in England for a year and our family, especially Lori, who loved to put on an English accent, often said "Cheerio!" to one another when we meant, "Goodbye" or "See you later!" There was no doubt in my mind as I stood there listening. It WAS cheerio. Lori could have found no more perfect way to try to cheer me up AND say "hello!"

Nine springs have passed since then, and although I will always deeply miss Lori's physical presence in my life, those darkest of times are thankfully now mostly in the past. It is spring once again and as I hear the robin singing so hopefully in the highest branches, it takes me back to that summer day, and I smile, remembering. And I think of all those who are now in the darkest depths of their own grief and pray they too will hear this lovely song.

GENESSE GENTRY

Genesse Gentry is the author of two books of poetry, *Stars in the Deepest Night - After the Death of a Child* and *Catching the Light - Coming Back to Life after the Death of a Child*. She lives in northern California with her husband Bill. They are the parents of daughters Megan and Lori, who died in a car accident in 1991 at the age of 21. Following Lori's death, Genesse and Bill joined the Marin County, California Chapter of The Compassionate Friends (TCF). Genesse has continued being involved in that organization ever since. She has been meeting group facilitator for both the Marin County and San Francisco meetings as well as chapter leader. She is currently on the steering committee of TCF Marin, as well as Regional Coordinator for Northern California. She presents writing workshops at national conferences of The Compassionate Friends as well as for northern California chapters.

A Grieving Dad's Father's Day Thoughts

-By Andre Parhamovich

It has been five Father's Days since my wife and I lost our beautiful daughter Andrea (Andi) to the war in Iraq. We didn't make a big deal of Father's Day when Andi was alive, but now this holiday is very special to me—a time when I reflect upon my obligation and blessings as a husband and a father.

For almost a year after Andi died, when my family needed me the most, I was emotionally paralyzed. I was so tangled in the "web of grief" that I blamed myself for Andi's death. *Why hadn't I done everything in my power to keep her from going to Iraq?*

I could not come with Andi's death until I began realizing how her brave commitment to peace inspired her mother, me, and people around the world. We created a foundation in Andi's name that provides scholarships to young women who want to use their talent and skills like Andi did—to make this a better world.

I like to think that I have an emotional heart. Like my physical heart, it has four chambers. Each chamber represents one of my four children, with the whole heart embodying me and my wife and the unity of our family. Andi's spirit will live on in the Andi chamber of my heart.

Losing a child is terrible. The pain is always there. Some days are better than others. But I think I've learned a few lessons that may be helpful to others in their grief:

- In order to live with your grief, you must learn to forgive yourself. You must release yourself from the remorse you feel for not having said "I love you" more, for not giving your loved one more hugs.
- Each person grieves differently—you must respect that, in yourself and others.
- Do not be afraid to cry. Crying helps to "rinse" the sadness from your soul.
- Saturate your mind with positive thoughts. Try to remember that your loved one would want you to live a happy and productive life.

I get solace from reading the accounts of other people who have suffered losses. It helps me to know that I am not alone in my grief. And that also helps me to remember that it is possible to lead a productive life that is full of love even when you are sad.

Andre and his wife, Vicki, live in Painesville, Ohio, where he has been a teacher of physical education and a coach for over 30 years with the Painesville City local schools.

From "We Not Walk Alone" Summer 2012



HELPING OTHERS HELP YOU: TEN RULES FOR SELF-HEALING

Posted on April 16th, 2021

1. Tell friends to call you often. Explain that after the first couple of months you'll need their calls.
2. Tell your friends to make a specific date with you; none of this "we must get together for lunch". Remind them that you're bound to have "down" times and their patience would be appreciated.
3. Tell them to please feel free to talk about the person that has died — and don't avoid that person's name.
4. It's important for friends to understand that you may appear to be "doing so well" but on the inside you still hurt. Grief is painful, it's tricky and it's exhausting.
5. Ask your friends to care but not to pity you.
6. Make plain that friends and relatives can still treat you as a person who is still in command and can think for yourself.
7. Tell your friends that it's all right to express their caring. It's OK for them to cry; crying together is better than avoiding the pain.
8. Let your friends know too, that it's all right to say nothing. A squeeze or a hug are often more important than words.
9. Let people know that they can invite you to socialize, but that you might decline. Ask your friends to go for walks with you. You and your friends can "walk off" feelings. Walks promote conversation and help fight depression.

RUTH JEAN LOEWINSOHN



Mother's Day

Mother's Day.....a time set aside to honor each mother's role in her child's life.....is often dreaded by bereaved parents. This holiday, like Father's day, is dedicated strictly to us, as parents. Other holidays differ from this one. That difference, which once was so meaningful to us as parents, is now a poignant reminder of all that once was and will never be again.

Bereaved mothers often approach this holiday with much anxiety. Yet, the holiday itself is generally not as difficult as the ramp-up to it. There are television specials, movies, commercials, signs in stores and advertising everywhere we look.....all of which remind us that our children are no longer with us. This is a difficult time for many bereaved mothers-difficult but not insurmountable.

During the month before the second Mother's Day without my son, I realized that it was my perspective that was the problem. I understood that the world was going to continue to spin, the commercialism would build and the reminders would increase until the holiday arrived. I could either ignore the advertisements through my superb channel surfing skills or I could watch them and torture myself. Passing up print ads was simple....I scanned right past them in the newspaper, and I put the mailings in the trash without comment. Each time I actively said "no" to these reminders, I became a little stronger.

As the week before Mother's Day crawled to a close, I thought I had it

aced. Then came Mother's Day. My husband gave me a card and a gift. That was it. The gift and card were both lovely and sweet. My husband cried. I cried. Then we settled down and read the Sunday paper. We had both agreed that we would stop protracting the self-torture and live in the moment. Since I was keeping Mother's Day in my heart, the celebrations and thoughts and sales projections of others mattered not. I keep Mother's Day as I choose.

Each of us must work at developing coping skills. Logic is the choice for some. Setting boundaries works for others. Some parents choose to go with their emotions. The decision to celebrate a holiday and the level of the celebration is a choice unique to each parent. We cannot allow others to set our agenda. Mother's Day is the singular holiday which serves to reinforce that I am forever Todd's mom. My child lived, loved and laughed with us, and this holiday brings deep, beautiful memories of that time. I choose to keep those sweet memories of my son in my heart. Making that decision was one more emotional choice in my grief work. Letting go of what was, living in the moment and cherishing my child forever.....all of these have helped me to find an ever brightening light of hope.

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

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① OUR LOCAL WEB SITE

Visit the San Diego Chapter homepage:

www.sdtcf.org

Email: leaders@sdtcf.org

The San Diego chapter home page has information about our chapter and links to more grief resources.

TCF Regional Coordinator

① OTHER LOCAL RESOURCES

MADD 858-564-0780
Empty Cradle 619-595-3887

Survivors of Suicide
619-482-0297
info@SOSLsd.org

Bereaved Parents of the USA
www.bereavedparentsusa.org

Parents of Murdered Children
National 888-818-POMC
Local 619-281-3972

Alive Alone - for now childless parents
www.alivealone.org

① INFORMATION ON THE NET

Visit the TCF national homepage:
www.compassionatefriends.org

The national home page is filled with information and grief resources on-line. A “chat” room for on-line discussion with bereaved families is available.

Chat Room schedule:

Mon 9-10 pm EST: General Bereavement
Mon 10-11pm EST: Men’s Chat
Tue 9-10 pm EST: Pregnancy and Infant Death
Thur 8-9 pm EST: No surviving children
Thur 9-10 pm EST: Siblings (Minimum age is 13)
Thur 10-11 pm: Grieving Alone (Single parents)

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Tami Carter haley1@san.rr.com

TCF INFORMATION PACKAGE

If you would like to send an information package on TCF to someone you think could benefit, (either for themselves or others) phone 619-583-1555. Leave a message with your name and phone number and the name and full address of the person you would like to receive the package.

Be a compassionate friend

Our Lost Children’s Photos for Newsletter

The recommended donation for your child’s photo in our newsletter is \$30. Children’s pictures will be in color. Donations and love gifts are always greatly appreciated.

WE WELCOME YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS



Deadline for submission to the July / August 2021

Issue of The Compassionate Friends is

June 15, 2021

We warmly welcome your contributions, both original and inspirational writings. Please indicate sources of any non-original texts.



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

Supporting Family After a Child Dies
San Diego County Chapter

3555 Rosecrans St. #114-569, San Diego CA 92110

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

May / June 2021

Love Gifts

Donations and love gifts in memory of your loved one enable us to reach bereaved parents with telephone calls and information, and help defray newsletter and mailing expenses. Please indicate any special tribute you wish printed in our newsletter. When making a donation, please specify the San Diego chapter. Make your checks payable to:

TCF, San Diego Chapter, 3555 Rosecrans St. #114-569, San Diego CA 92110

From: _____ In Memory Of: _____

TCF The Compassionate Friends *newsletter application*

New Address

New subscription

Remove from list

Please send newsletter by regular mail.

By email, address _____

Your name: _____

Child's Full Name: _____

Address _____

Birth date: _____

City: _____

Date of death: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Cause: _____

Home phone: () _____

Your relationship to child: _____

Siblings/Ages: _____

Yes, I would like my child's name to be listed on the anniversary pages of the chapter newsletter

Yes, I would like my child's name to be listed on the anniversary pages of the chapter web site
If you have lost more than one child, please use a separate form for each child.