

The Compassionate Friends of Northeast Arkansas

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

Healing Hearts Newsletter

2211 Jones Road, Paragould, AR.

Up on the hill at Southside Community Church, in the Conference Room.

Email: tcfofnortheastarkansas@yahoo.com Webpage: tcfofnortheastarkansas.weebly.com

Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/tcfofnea/>

Our next regular meeting is January 8th, 2015 at 7:00 P.M. — 9:00 P.M.

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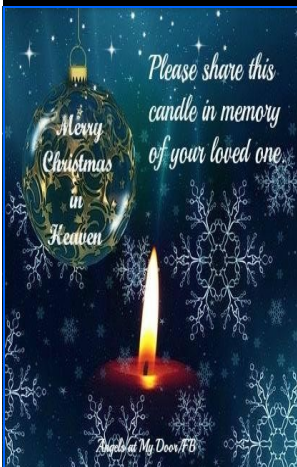
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The Compassionate Friends Worldwide Candle Lighting unites family and friends around the globe in lighting candles for one hour to honor the memories of the sons, daughters, brothers, sisters, and grandchildren who left too soon. As candles are lit at 7:00 p.m. local time, hundreds of thousands of persons commemorate and honor the memory of all children gone too soon.

Now believed to be the largest mass candle lighting on the globe, the 18th annual Worldwide Candle Lighting, a gift to the bereavement community from The Compassionate Friends, creates a virtual 24-hour wave of light as it moves from time zone to time zone. TCF's WWCL started in the United States in 1997 as a small internet observance, but has since swelled in numbers as word has spread throughout the world of the remembrance. Hundreds of formal candle lighting events are held and thousands of informal candle lightings are conducted in homes as families gather in quiet remembrance of children who have died, but will never be forgotten. The Compassionate Friends and allied organizations are joined by local bereavement groups, churches, funeral homes, hospitals, hospices, children's gardens, schools, cemeteries, and community centers. Services have ranged in size from just a few people to nearly a thousand. Every year you are invited to post a message in the Remembrance Book which will be available, during the event, at TCF's national website:

thecompassionatefriends.org



The Compassionate Friends
State of Arkansas
Regional Coordinators
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870-759-1299
www.djdp32@hotmail.com



Advisory Board Members
Associate Pastor Pat Graham, LMSW
Crystal Baldwin, MSNFP-BC
Mariah Bryson, General manager of Zaxby's
Rick Nunn, Owner of Swirlz

Thank you all for being on our board!

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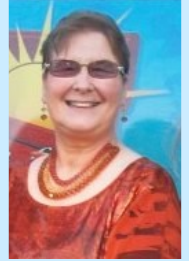
Web address: www.compassionatefriends.org. Facebook: Compassionate Friends/USA



Healing Hearts Newsletter of The Compassionate Friends of Northeast Arkansas

Note from our Chapter Leader, Toni Baker

I hope your Thanksgiving was filled with many new blessings. Our holidays are tough and for the newly bereaved it's even more difficult. TCF of NEA will participate in The World Wide Candle Lighting on Sunday, December 14th at Southside Community Church in Paragould. You are cordially invited to attend to honor your loved one. It will be held in the conference room which is up the hill from the church. Please park in the church parking lot and we will provide transportation up the hill to the conference room. Please plan to be there early so you can register your child's name to be read, register for a couple door prizes and pick up your candle. Service will start at 6:30pm with lighting of candles promptly at 7:00pm. After the service we will share in some refreshments and fellowship. The address is 2211 Jones Road, Paragould, AR. I hope to see you at this special gathering.



There will be a Christmas Gathering on Thursday, December 4th at Swirlz from 6-8pm for those who have lost a child, grandchild or sibling. Dutch treat on your drinks or yogurt and we will provide some treats. If you would like to participate in bringing a gift, one you have in your home--don't spend any money, we will do a Santa Exchange. It will be a night to relax and fellowship during this difficult time with other grievers. Hope you'll join us.
No regular meeting in December.

Take care of yourself and treat yourself with love!! For more information please call me at 852-476-6025. Love and Hugs to you all!! Toni



We'd love to have your feedback!

Join Us on Facebook!

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/tcfofnea/>

Join Us on the Web!

tcfofnortheastarkansas.weebly.com

The Compassionate Friends does not espouse any religious ideologies. Southside Community Church has graciously offered the use of it's conference room as a meeting place for our chapter.

**Thank You
Southside Community Church!**

If you would like to contribute to the newsletter with an original poem or story you wrote, or If you wish to stop receiving this newsletter, please contact me at:
linda@thelnoxfamily.com

Our next 3 Meetings!

December 4, 2014

World Wide Candle lighting
December 14, 2014

January 8, 2015



Mark Your Calendars!



Holiday Helps for Grieving Families

Between Thanksgiving and Christmas, the days become very difficult for those who have lost loved ones. It is harder still when the loved one has died close to the holidays. When it is the first Christmas without a loved one, it can become a dreaded and sometimes unbearable time for the family. At this time, a person's emotions are the most tender.

In just a moment's time, memories of past holidays can come flooding into the mind. Just hearing a Christmas carol in the shopping mall or putting special ornaments on the tree can bring floods of tears. It seems that tapes of happy Christmases from the past flash through a person's thoughts as he or she tries to rest or sleep. The tears that come are healing tears, but the survivor does not look at them that way. He or she only wants to escape the days of memories ahead. When a child has died, it seems the memories are the hardest. Parents may have experienced months and possibly years of dealing with terminal illness. Or it may have been the shocking reality that comes after an accident, murder or suicide. It seems that Christmas looms in front of a person as a day that will be impossible to face. Even after several years, the holidays will still bring times of sadness and tears. It seems that when the holiday itself is over, usually the survivor will breathe a sigh of relief and go on with the days ahead, but that one "day" and the emotions it brings are almost unbearable.

How friends can help

From the perspective of a survivor, I can only say that each individual finds his or her own way to get through this period of time. Friends and sometimes family cannot understand what the survivor feels or what he or she needs. The best kind of friends will remember to do little things, like sending notes, perhaps sending flowers and bringing gifts of food. One of the last things a woman wants to do after losing her loved one is to cook or bake. Christmas baking is very difficult, and the grieving person has a hard time thinking of food preparation. Gifts of baked goods, casseroles and sandwich "fixins" are always welcome. Christmas dinner can be held at a relative's home, or everyone may want to go out to eat together. Let the family decide, but remember the one who is grieving may have difficulty fixing that familiar Christmas dinner, so relatives can offer alternatives; however, if the family wants the traditional dinner at home, then honor their desires and support them. Short phone calls mean a lot. Usually a friend only needs to ask the person how he or she is doing. Remember, if you are the friend giving the phone call, it is very important that you mention the loved one by name. You may even be able to share a memory you have of that person. Don't be afraid to talk about the loved one. The survivor doesn't want to forget the loved one, and he or she doesn't want you to forget the person either. Try not to ask what you can do to help. The survivor will usually say that everything is fine. The best thing for you to do, as a friend or family member, is to go ahead on your own and do something thoughtful, such as bringing in food, sending a card, volunteering to watch the children, etc. Sometimes the person won't even know that there is washing or ironing to do until you come into the home and offer to take the ironing or run the vacuum.

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Upcoming Events:

December 4th
2014

We will be gathering on December 4th at 6:00 P.M.-8:00 P.M., at Swirlz of Paragould for a Christmas get-together. We will not have a regular meeting in December because of the Candle Lighting. If you have lost a child, grandchild or sibling, please join us at this time which is often most difficult time of the year for the bereaved. Your drinks or yogurt will be Dutch-treat, and we will provide some other treats.

If you would like to join us in bring a small gift, something from your home, no need to spend money on it, we will have a Santa Exchange. This is simply a time to join together with others who have suffered the same type of loss you have to talk and visit. Talking about your lost loved one is allowed. Crying is also allowed. We are The Compassionate Friends and we are here to help. Be kind to yourself this holiday season.

December 14th
2014

The World Wide Candle Lighting will be on December 14, at the conference room of the Southside Community Church, 2211 Jones Road. The conference room is up the hill from the church, but parking is limited for an event such as this one. Please park on the church parking lot. There is a concrete path up to the conference room, and for anyone who cannot walk up the path, we will provide transportation up to the conference room from the parking lot.

We will be starting at 6:30, because the candles must be lit promptly at 7:00 P.M. Please try to be there by 6:00 P.M. in order to sign in for door prizes and to add your loved one's name to our scroll to be read aloud from the stage and to receive a candle for you to hold during the service. We would be honored if you bring a picture, if possible, of your loved one to share on the table for "Our Children Remembered."

Candles will be provided by TCF. If you have a special candle you would prefer to bring, please feel welcome to do that.

At 7:P.M., we will have the "Lighting of the Five Candles," one each for grief, courage, memory, love and hope. Everyone will have a small candle lit to hold.

The program will include music, poetry readings, the reading of our children's names, and a slide show with pictures of our children that we received from loved ones.

After the program is over, we will have refreshments and draw for the door prizes.

Because of the nature of this event, it is not appropriate for children.

January 8,
2015

Our regular meeting in January will be on the 8th in our regular meeting place.

Telephone or email Friends

Toni Baker, 870-476-6025 or baker2205@msn.com

Toni's son Jayson died in a motorcycle accident.

Linda Lenox, 870-573-6920 orlinda@thelenoxfamily.com

Linda's daughter Melissa died in a flooded creek.

Jo Cook, 870-249-1290

Jo's daughter, Jennifer died in an accident with a train.



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How you can help your family

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It is a healthy thing for families to talk about what they want to do with their holidays. If there are small children, usually some attempt to put up a tree and decorations are important. But if the survivor does not want to do this, let someone else help put up the tree with the children involved. Some families will buy an ornament that brings a memory of the loved one and put it on the tree. Then each year they will add another. This is very healing especially for children. After my son died, we bought an ornament with Santa Claus fishing, which was our son's favorite pastime. The next year we got Santa lying in a hammock watching TV. Robert loved the hammock at our summer cabin and loved TV. After that year we bought an ornament that reminded us of him for several more years. Now at Christmas, we watch his sons hold the ornaments, and we talk about their dad.

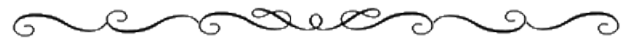
Facing the holidays may seem overwhelming and even impossible. Please take the time to find a Grief-Share grief recovery group near you, where you will have the chance to spend time with people who know the deep pain and intense emotions of loss, and where you will learn how to grieve in a way that is healthy, moment by moment, day by day.

by Judy Hawk

Christmas Memories

When snowflakes dance on winter winds
And colored lights shine Christmas cheer,
When children's laughter fills the air
And family gathers from far and near,
I try to celebrate with them
And not let my hurting show,
But the empty spaces within my heart,
At this season, seems to grow
'Till oftentimes it fills the days
And many nighttimes too,
With aching thoughts and memories
Of Christmases I spent with you.
Yes, memories do hurt, it's true
But I have this feeling too.
I'm so glad I hold these memories,
For with them I hold part of you.
So for now I'll wipe away the tears
And join with loved ones dear
To celebrate this Christmas time,
For I know that, in my heart, you're here.

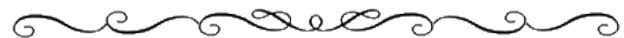
Arden Lansing, TCF Monmouth County, NJ



ONE LITTLE CANDLE

*I lit a candle tonight, in honor of you
Remembering your life, and all the times we'd
been through.
Such a small little light the candle made
until I realized how much in darkness it lit the
way.
All the tears I've cried in all my grief and pain
what a garden they grew, watered with human
rain
I sometimes can't see beyond the moment, in hope-
less despair
But then your memory sustains me, in heartaches
repair.
I can wait for the tomorrow, when my sorrows ease
Until then, I'll light this candle, and let my
memories run free*

*~written by Sheila Simmons, Dallas, GA
In Memory of Steven Simmons
3-24-70 - 10-19-99*



Our Children Remembered

Melissa Noel Wilkinson

Jayson Baker

Cooper Catharine Porter

Nathan Kidd

Haylee Kidd

Nicholas Zurosky

Jennifer Cook

Timothy Lee Fitzwater

Samantha Cook

Shane Mathew Fitzwater

Jennifer Lee Hancock

Aaron Scott Boyer

Ashlyn Dunn

Aidyn Isaiah Queen

Annaya Marie Edwards

Shane Palmer

Tabitha Marsh

Steven Charles Garland

Stephanie Sluder

Timothy House

Julie Ellen Amick

Carter Smith

Olivia Jurkin

Tyler James Tritch

Mattie Bryant

Terry Brown

Shayla Jo Miller

Jayden Wilkinson

Jasmine Sierra Miller

Caiden Billups

Blake Howerton

Andrew Wayne Myers

Jon David Penn

Joseph "Chase" Jackson

Tyler James Troutt

Matthew Russo

Brent Hawkins

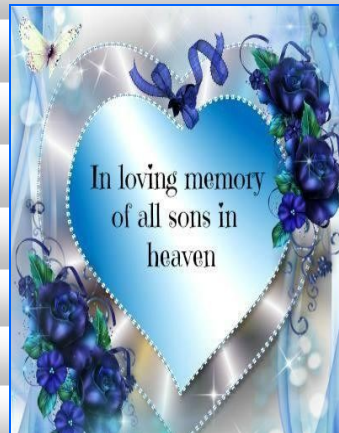
Nathan Swafford

Daryl McWilliams

Billy Ray

Noah Spencer Boyd

*If you would like your Childs name added
to this list, contact me:
linda@thelenoxfamily.com*



The Compassionate Friends of Northeast Arkansas
2703 Stonegate Drive
Paragould, AR 72450

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Expenses of our newsletter and meetings are covered by monetary donations given by those who want to help in our outreach. It may be given in memory of your child, a loved one or a friend. Contributions are tax-deductible.
Make checks payable to: The Compassionate Friends of NEA
Send to: TCF of NEA, 2703 Stonegate Drive, Paragould, AR 72450

\$ _____ For: _____ Newsletter Expense _____ Meeting Expense _____ Where Needed

IN MEMORY OF (state relationship) _____

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We truly appreciate your love gifs.

The Compassionate Friends of Northeast Arkansas is a support group for those who have experienced the death of a child, grandchild, brother or sister. Parents whose sorrow has softened and who have found fresh hope and strength for living offer friendship, understanding and hope to others through monthly meetings, "telephone friends," a library table, and a newsletter. Attending your first meeting does take courage, but our parents who do attend find a comforting network of support and friendship that only friends ho have "been there" can give. COME JOIN US!!