

The Compassionate Friends Of Northeast Arkansas

Healing Hearts Newsletter

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

2211 Jones Road, Paragould, AR.

tcfofnortheastarkansas@yahoo.com

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Angels Across the U.S.A. In Paragould!

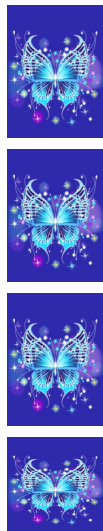
The Compassionate Friends of Northeast Arkansas was honored to host the "Angels Across the U.S.A. Tour, 2013 on Thursday, March 14th. The Compassionate Friends is an international support group for people who have lost a child or children, grandchild or siblings. The event was held at the Southside Community Church. Chapter Leader, Toni Baker and I, Linda Lenox, Newsletter Editor, had dinner before the event at The Brick Oven with Alan and Denise Pedersen, as well as TCF Regional Coordinators for the state of Arkansas, David and Dana Penn. Two of our Advisory Board members were also there, Associate Pastor of Southside Community Church, Pat Graham, LMSW, and Crystal Baldwin, MSNFNP-BC. Also joining us were a group of six women from another TCF Chapter from Zwolie, Louisiana.

Angel's Across the U.S.A. Tour is a group of grief and loss professionals who travel the country, appearing wherever they are needed to speak on the grief and loss of loved ones. Alan Pedersen is a singer and song writer who is also a bereaved father. He and his wife, Denise, who is also a bereaved mother, drove into Paragould in the Angel Van, which is covered with butterfly decals printed with the names and hometowns of children "gone too soon" from all over the country. Anyone who is touched by the events donates \$100.00 or more to support the work of this wonderful group. This is a full-time job for Alan and Denise Pedersen, and they earn their living by selling music CD's, grief and loss teaching CD's, tee shirts and other items to help Compassionate Friend chapters help hurting people. These events are performed without cost, wherever they are needed. Several weeks ago Alan and Denise were in Newtown, Connecticut to assist the local grief counselors, who were overwhelmed with need in the aftermath of the Sandy Hook school shootings

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Toni Baker, Chapter Leader, with son Jayson's butterfly



Advisory Board Members

- David Lange, Executive Director of The Paragould Housing Authority
- Associate Pastor Pat Graham, LMSW
- Melissa Phillips, Owner of Bren's Flowers
- Crystal Baldwin, MSNFNP-BC
- Mariah Bryson, General manager of Zaxby's

Thank you all for being on our board!



The Angel Van, Angels Across the U.S.A.

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There is a great need for The Compassionate Friends all over the world. The loss of a child must be the most difficult ordeal for anyone to go through. It may be a baby who miscarried or was stillborn, an infant, toddler, school child, teenager, or an adult of any age. Bereaved parents are often expected to "get over it," sooner than is possible. People who have not been through such a tragedy don't mean to be insensitive, they just don't get it. Our event had 44 people in attendance from Louisiana, Wynne, Jonesboro, Brookland and Cardwell, and Paragould. The Compassionate Friends has 634 chapters in the United States, and Alan and Denise Pedersen have appeared at 271 of the chapters.



We want to thank Southside Community Church for the use of their building, and church members who served refreshments. The Compassionate Friends of Northeast Arkansas meet at the conference room of Southside Community Church, 2211 Jones Road, Paragould, on the 2nd Thursday of every month at 7:00 P.M.

For more information about TCF, contact: Toni Baker, Chapter Leader at: 870-476-6025 or: tcfofnortheastarkansas@yahoo.com

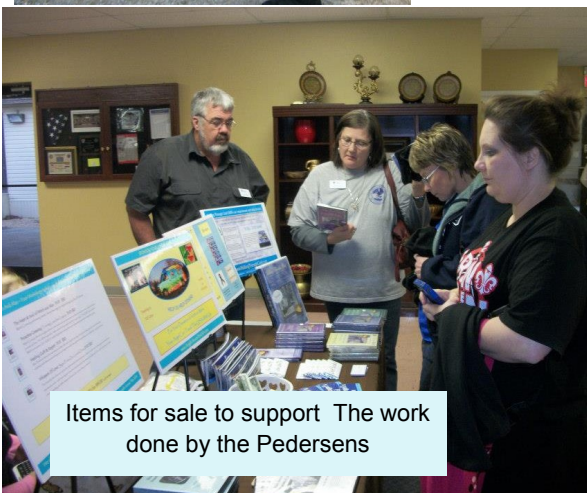
Contact Alan Pederson at: angelsacrosstheusa.com or see him on youtube.com.



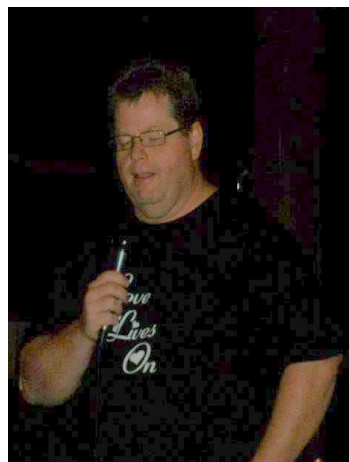
The Angel Van: Alan Pedersen, Toni Baker and Denise Pedersen



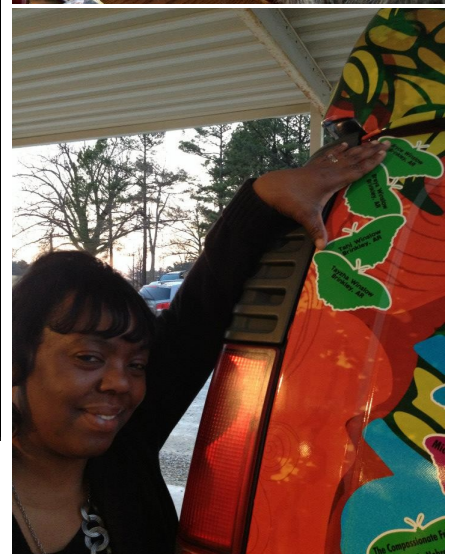
Dinner at Brick Oven in Paragould



Items for sale to support The work done by the Pedersens



Cassandra Winslow Maggitt with butterflies of her 4 angels





VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

TCF of Northeast Arkansas is in need of some volunteers to help with events, librarian, newsletter mailings, gathering info from referrals and obits, etc. If you are interested or know someone who may be interested in helping our Chapter, please contact me at 870-476-6025 or tcfofnortheastarkansas@yahoo.com. Thank you in advance.

Telephone or email Friends

If you need someone to talk to.....

Toni Baker, 870-476-6025 or baker2205@msncom

Toni's son Jayson died in a motorcycle accident.

Linda Lenox 870-573-6920 or linda@thelenoxfamily.com

Linda's daughter Melissa died in a flooded creek.

Silence is Better Than Empty or Hurtful Words

Words, Words, Words!

- "He's in a better place."
- "At least you have other children."
- "She's better off now/not in any pain."
- "Where's your faith? You should be happy for him."
- "God needed another flower in His garden."
- "Time heals all things."
- "You'll be better tomorrow."
- "You can't stay sad the rest of your life."
- "Your loved one wouldn't want you to be so sad."
- "You can have another baby."
- "You were so happy together. Be grateful for that."
- "At least he didn't suffer."
- "She was so young."
- "You didn't really get to know her that well."



Words; just words. Often spoken in an attempt to ease the pain of grieving the death of someone we love. But, instead of bringing relief, those words just seem to add to the hurt, the confusion, the anger, and the grief. There are no words that will make it all right that someone we loved has died. But there are words that can soothe the hurt, ease the loneliness and add to the healing.

I don't think people are trying to hurt grievers. They just seem to engage their mouths before their brains. Or maybe what they were planning on saying sounded pretty good in their heads, but by the time those words of hope made the journey from their minds to their mouths, something happened. And those words came out, sending hurt instead of hope across the space between us. What are you trying to say? Are you trying to fill the silence between us, show how much you care or how much you know? Do you think words will help when a heart is broken?

Why do we hide behind words, any words, when a hug or a simple touch on the arm would say so much more? Have we forgotten the power of presence? Do we fear silence because it might mean we have nothing to say?

Why must a moment between friends be filled with noise or empty platitudes or meaningless sounds of hollow comfort? Why can't two people simply be in the presence of each other, allowing that great strength to flow between them without any words to interrupt the message?

- "You can have another baby."
- "You were so happy together. Be grateful for that."
- "At least he didn't suffer."
- "She was so young. You didn't really get to know her that well."

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ARRRRGGG! Words! Words! Words meant to help that only add to the hurt. Give me silence, please! Not emptiness ... silences. Not loneliness ... Silence. Don't not come, but come silently. Sit on my couch, hold my hand, share a cookie, hand me a tissue. Come, but leave your words of hollow hope behind. No words can speak more eloquently than the shared silence of presence. Come sit beside me. Hold me. Touch me. Be with me, but leave the noise behind. Are we afraid that silence will kill us? Are we afraid that we will say "the wrong thing"? (What is the right thing?) Are we afraid that we will "remind" the bereaved of their loss? (Do you think we will ever forget it?)

"Time heals all things."

"You'll be better tomorrow."

"You can't stay sad the rest of your life."

"Your loved one wouldn't want you to be so sad."

If only I could think of something to say in return! But my mind as well as my body and soul have gone numb. I am frozen and I can't think of anything to say. Sometimes I am so shocked that I cannot believe I heard what you said, or maybe you don't even realize what you said.

"Be happy she's healed now."

" Why are you so sad?"

" We have gathered here to not to mourn the loss of...But rather to celebrate his life."

Words; Just words. You'd think they wouldn't hurt so much, but they do. Sometimes it really is better not to say anything. That doesn't mean don't do something ... it means don't use words to fill up the space that sadness occupies. By all means, do something! Bring flowers, a casserole (not tuna, please), chocolate cookies, napkins, paper towels. Come help with the laundry, the childcare, the mail, the dusting. Drop off a ham, a turkey, a hug. Send a note, a lemon meringue pie, and a donation to my loved one's favorite charity. Slip a note into my pocket, a card in my mailbox, a hand into my empty one.

Share a memory, a laugh, and a moment. Tell me stories of the past; bring me pictures from your scrapbook. Speak of love, not sorrow. Remember the life, not just the death. Give me hope, not meaningless words.

Hug me, hold me, love me, leave me, but don't shower me with words that are meant to soothe, but sear instead.

Your presence really is the healing touch. No words need be spoken between friends and family when love is the weaver of the threads.

"He's in a better place."

(I thought right next to me was a pretty good place)

"At least you have other children."

(Yes, but I really loved that one, too.)

"She's better off now... not in any pain."

(She may be out of pain, but I'm not!)

"Where's your faith? You should be happy for him."

(My faith may help my heart feel better, but it's my arms that are empty and aching.)

"God needed another flower in His garden."

(What about MY garden?!)

"You can have another baby."

(Maybe, but no one can replace someone)

"You were so happy together. Be grateful for that."

(I am grateful, but I want more!)

"At least he didn't suffer."

(Yes, that's true, but I am suffering now.)

"You can't stay sad the rest of your life."

(Oh yes I can)

"Your loved one wouldn't want you to be so sad."

(How do you know? I have told my loved ones that I expect at least three days of heavy grieving. After that, they can





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UPCOMING EVENTS:

We are planning a Balloon Release in May during the Loose Caboose Festival.

The one Year Anniversary of The Compassionate Friends of Northeast Arkansas will be in May!

In June we will have another fundraiser through Payne's Meats; we will sell Boston Butts and Ribs

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do whatever they wish. But I do want them to be sad... at least a little bit!

"Be happy she's healed now."

(That may be true, but it is still my heart that is broken ... my arms that are empty. What about me?)

" Why are you so sad?"

(Oh, I don't know ... maybe it's because someone I loved has died.)

"We have gathered here to not to mourn the loss of. ... But rather to celebrate his life."

(The thought here is nice, but the timing seems a bit "off." I am not quite ready to celebrate. I think I need some grieving time, too.)

Words. Just words. Let them fall to the wayside when you hear words that do not quite touch the pain or hit the mark. Realize that someone is trying to reach you, soothe you, and comfort you. So what if their choice of words falls short of the goal or even brings a moment or two of pain? At least someone cares enough to keep trying! And the sounds of silence are even worse than the words that come wrapped in good intentions and tied with a silly looking bow. I'll take your comfort any way you can share it with me. But maybe the best words to say are simply, "I'm here and I don't have a clue as to how to help, but I'm here, and together we'll figure this thing out."



The Compassionate Friends
Regional Coordinators for the state of Arkansas
David and Dana Penn
870-759-1299
www.djdp32@hotmail.com



The Compassionate Friends of Northeast Arkansas has a Facebook page!!

The Compassionate Friends does not espouse any religious ideologies.

Southside Community Church has graciously offered the use of it's conference room as a place to hold our meetings.

Thank You Southside Community Church !

Our next 3 Meetings

May 9, 2013

June 13, 2013

July 11, 2013

Mark Your Calendars!

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A Note From Toni, Chapter Leader:

I hope each of you had a very Blessed Easter!! Spring brings new life and our life's are new. We learn a new way in life--one we weren't expecting. I have learned through these past 19 years to live again, smile, love life and help others to travel in their journey. It wasn't easy but with Jayson's memories to hold on to and his love for life I come to know he wanted me to smile and live a full life as he did while here on earth. I hope for each of you to reach that point in your life -- we are here to encourage and to walk your grief journey with you. Tears are healing. Hugs to each of you!!

We had a wonderful experience with Alan Pedersen, Angels Across the USA on March 14th. Many events are coming up -- hoping to have a Balloon Release at the Loose Caboose in May in Remembrance of Our Children Gone to Soon and celebrate TCF of Northeast Arkansas One Year Anniversary. Hope to see you at our next meeting, April 11th at 7pm. HUGS!! Toni





Our Children Remembered

Melissa Wilkinson

Jayson Baker

Nicholas Zurosky

Cooper Catharine Porter

Nathan Kidd

Haylee Kidd

Timothy Lee Fitzwater

Shane Mathew Fitzwater

Aaron Scott Boyer

Jennifer Cook

Samantha Cook

Tyler James Tritch

Ashlyn Dunn

Carter Smith

Jayden Wilkinson

Shane Palmer

Terry Brown

Stephanie Sluder

Caiden Billups

Timothy House, born November

Contact me if you'd like your children added

Linda Lenox: linda@thelenoxfamily.com

In Loving Memory...

There are no dues or fees to belong to The Compassionate Friends. We have all paid the ultimate price; the loss of our loved ones. Through "Love Gifts," parents and others who wish to help, may provide financial to support our chapter.

We appreciate these gifts and use them in our chapter's work to be there to help other people who have lost a precious a child, or grandchild, or brother or sister.

The Compassionate Friends of Northeast Arkansas

We ask for donations in memory of our children who have died. Our activities support the grief work of many families. Our work also goes to educate the community about the grief process and how everyone can help and give emotional support to bereaved families.

Please help us help others by making a "love gift"

Tax deductible love gifts may be sent to:

TCF of Northeast Arkansas, c/o Toni Baker, chapter leader

2703 Stonegate Drive, Paragould, AR 72450

This page can be printed to form an envelope for your love gift. Fold as directed,
insert your check. and tape the ends closed

I would like to give a love gift of \$ _____ in memory of _____

If you choose to give a love gift, please add your return address to receive your tax deduction receipt

May we acknowledge your love gift in our newsletter: Please Circle YES NO

If you would like your loved one's name added to our memorial page,

"Our Children Remembered" in our newsletter, Please submit the following information:

Child's full name _____

Birth date month and year _____ Death date, month and year _____

The Compassionate Friends of Northeast Arkansas

Toni Baker

2703 Stonegate Drive

Paragould, Arkansas 72450