

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/>

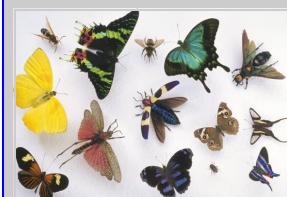
Our next meeting is The Mother's Day Banquet, May 14th at 7:00 P.M. — 9:00 P.M.

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



She is the same, and yet she different.
She is here, but at the same time, a
part of her is elsewhere for eternity.
She stands in the sunlight, yet she
walks within the shadows of what
was and what now can never be. ©kfp

She is a grieving mother.

Out of the Ashes/FB

★  ★

With all my heart
With every inch of my soul
With every breath I take
I promise to love you forever.

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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Note from our Chapter Leader, Toni Baker



We truly have been blessed to have a Mother's Day Banquet sponsored by TCF of NEA and Sisters of Strength. Sisters of Strength have volunteered to prepare our meal, serve, do our decorations and help with our program. This would not have been possible without their love and generosity. This event is Thursday, May 14th at 6pm at Southside Community Church CONFERENCE Room (up the hill from the church) 2211 Jones Road, Paragould, AR. Be sure and RSVP 870-476-6025 (leave message if no answer).

There will be a meeting in June--second Thursday at 7pm. Bring pictures, mementos of your loved one so we can get to know each other's loved ones. It's really hard to attend the first few meetings--not knowing others. I can tell you after a few meetings you connect pretty fast and have friends you can freely talk and cry with. Our meetings are held in a safe environment and are confidential. The journey is long and hard but together we can travel it easier.

WE NEED NOT WALK ALONE.

Love and Hugs,
Toni Baker, Chapter Leader



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

Our next 3 Meetings!

May 14th, 2015

June 11th, 2015

July 9th, 2015

Mark Your Calendars!



The Compassionate Friends does not espouse any religious ideologies. Southside Community Church has graciously offered the use of its 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've written, or if you wish to stop receiving this newsletter, please contact me at:

linda@thelenoxfamily.com



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Upcoming Events:

May

May 16th--Balloon Release at Arts Festival has been cancelled this year. We will do our balloon release at another time. Lawrence County Chapter does there's at the Beatle On the Ridge Festival every year in September in Walnut Ridge--we are always Welcome there. There will be no regular meeting in May.



MOTHER'S DAY BANQUET-- MAY 14th at 6pm for ALL mothers, grandmothers and lady siblings who have lost a child, grandchild or sibling of any age (miscarriage thru adult) of any cause. The Compassionate Friends of NEA and Sisters of Strength cordially invite and encourage you to attend this special event. There is no cost to you, just need you to RSVP so we know how much food to prepare. Call 870-476-6025 or message Toni Baker. A relaxing dinner with a wonderful program and fellowship may be very beneficial for each of us. There are LOTS of beautiful door prizes we will be drawing for. Be sure to sign up as we do need a count for the meal, and for door prizes. Looking forward to seeing you all at Southside Community Church conference room (up the hill from the church) 2211 Jones Road, Paragould, Arkansas. Because of this event, there will be no regular meeting in May.

June

We will have our regular meeting on June 11th at 7pm. Bring pictures and mementos of your loved one so we can get to know and understand about each others loss. We will take turns, with each attendee given an allotted amount of time, which will depend on how many are here, to tell us about their lost loved one. Afterword, we will have a general discussion, if time allows.

July

To be announced at a later date

Announcements: *Love gifts and donations*

A big thank you goes out to the person who donated the 3" button badge machine to our chapter. This is something we have really wanted a long time and it is much appreciated!

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Teleflora Roll Giving given by Toni Baker in Memory of her son, Jayson Baker. Thank you, Toni.

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Thank you, CR Doc, PLLC for your generous donation.

After your child, grandchild or sibling died, did you find yourself reading the obituary column checking the age of those that have died? You have such pain in your heart when you hear of others who have joined this journey. You know the hard road that lies ahead, the endless questions that circulate in your mind, the waves of grief attack, you are too familiar with how every happy occasion thereafter is tinged with sadness. Your heart literally hurts for others as you see that "look" in their eyes. The look that says, "how do we go on". ~Karen Cantrell, Frankfort, KY-TCF

Memories

will bring you
love from the past,
courage in the present,
hope for the future.



The Compassionate Friends
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

- Sascha Wagner





**I wasn't Prepared
written by Harriet Hodgson**



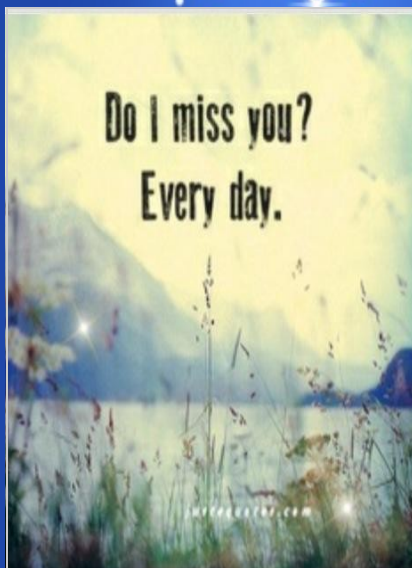
I wasn't prepared. Nope. I wasn't prepared for grief to grab me by the throat at my granddaughter's wedding. Before the service my surviving daughter, a family therapist, handed me some tissues. "Brace yourself, Mom," she advised. "They are going to show photos of Helen." Minutes later the photo montage began, photos of my deceased daughter holding her newborn twins, photos of the twins as toddlers, when they were older, and similar photos of the groom.

As the photos changed, I reviewed seven years in my mind. In 2007 my grandchildren's parents died from the injuries they received in separate car crashes. My daughter, the twin's mother, died on a Friday night in February. Two days later my father-in-law succumbed to pneumonia. Eight weeks after that my brother, and only sibling, died of a heart attack. The twin's father died in the fall. His death made the twins orphans and my husband and me GRGs, grandparents raising grandchildren.

When the twins moved in with they were 15 years old. Now my granddaughter was getting married, her brother was an usher, and my paralyzed husband was going to escort the bride down the aisle. Tears trickled down my cheeks. The bridal party processed down the aisle, with my husband and the bride last. My smiling granddaughter held onto her grandfather's arm, a picture to remember for life, and I cried harder. People who knew our story were crying too.

Just when I least expected it, grief had caught me off-guard, yet I was determined to get my feelings under control. Grief feelings come from love, and that was something to celebrate. I knew I had the mental power to fight grief and I had to jump-start that power and act quickly. My enemy, grief, was not going to claim this day.

Continued on page 5



TCF of NEA 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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Continued from page 4

I thought about joy. In photo after photo, joy radiated from my daughter's face. She adored her children and, though she was a composite engineer with a full-time job, her children always came first. Equally important, she was a good role model, taught the twins right from wrong, and gave them guidelines to follow in life.

I thought about the twins. They had worked hard, set goals, and achieved them. Both of my grandchildren graduated from college with high honors and Phi Beta Kappa. These days, many college graduates can't find jobs. Thankfully, both of the twins found satisfying, promising jobs.

I thought about my husband's courage. My husband's aorta dissected a year ago. Surgeons operated on him three times in a desperate attempt to save his life. His life was saved, but he suffered a spinal stroke during the third operation, and his legs are now paralyzed. Yet, he escorted the bride down the aisle with poise and confidence.

I thought about what I learned from grief. Because I am a non-fiction writer, I am always doing research. Grief changed the focus of my writing from health/wellness to grief healing. In the process, I learned about traumatic loss, multiple losses, secondary losses, anniversary reactions, and more. Knowledge is power and I knew I had the power to combat grief.

Describing this process took longer than living it. All of this thinking happened in seconds. I brought my thoughts back to the moment – my smiling granddaughter in her strapless wedding dress, my grandson standing with the groomsmen, my distinguished husband, who was glad to be alive, and all the family members and friends who were at the wedding.

Grief can be quiet for months or even years, then rise up and grab us by the throat when we least expect it. You may be caught off-guard like me. Still, we have the power to fight grief. We may counter negative thoughts with positive ones. We may draw upon happy memories. We can tap the love we have for our deceased ones. We learn and re-learn a powerful truth: *Love is stronger than death.*

Harriet Hodgson has been an independent journalist for 35+ years. She is a member of the Association of Health Care Journalists, Association for Death Education and Counseling, Minnesota Coalition for Death Education and Support, and World Speakers Association. Hodgson is a Forum Moderator/Writer for www.opentohope.com and author of eight grief resources.

This article is from The Grief Toolbox





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The Compassionate Friends Nation Conference

More details and information is listed on
The Compassionate Friends website:

Compassionatefriends.org

The Compassionate Friends is pleased to announce that Dallas, Texas, will be the site of the 38th TCF National Conference on July 10-12, 2015. "Hope Shines Bright ... Deep in the Heart" is the theme of this year's event, which promises more of last year's great national Conference experience. The 2015 Conference will be held at the Hyatt Regency Downtown Dallas. We'll keep you updated with details here, on the national website as well as on our [TCF/USA Facebook Page](#) and elsewhere as they become available. Plan to come and be a part of this heartwarming experience.

If you are unable to register online or prefer to mail in your registration form. Please [click here](#) to view the registration booklet which includes a registration form that can be printed and mailed to the National Office.

Questions? Please call the National Office at 877.969.0010. Conference Pricing is as follows:

Adult registration - \$90
Child registration (ages 9-12) - \$40
Full-time college student (College ID required at check-in) - \$40

Meals:

Friday afternoon Texas BBQ Buffet - \$35
Saturday Evening Dinner - \$50

Sibling Meals:

Friday Dinner/Magician - \$30
Saturday Sibling Lunch - \$16

View the [Conference Schedule](#) to help plan your time in Dallas.

The Hyatt Regency Downtown Dallas, 300 Reunion Blvd., Dallas, TX 75207, is now accepting reservations for TCF's National Conference. To make your reservation, please access the following link, which will take you directly to TCF's reservation portal on the Hyatt's website. Conference attendees are receiving a discounted room rate of \$129. We anticipate a large attendance for the conference, so we encourage you to make your reservation as soon as it is convenient for you.

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

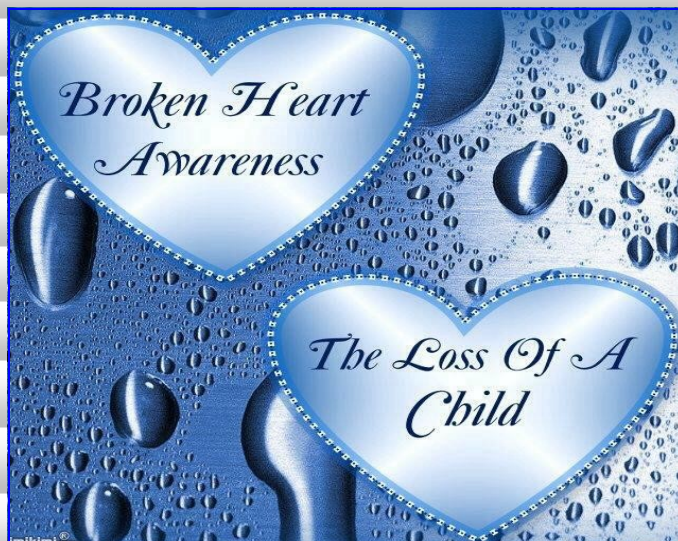
Brian Nelson

Richard Petty

Michael Dickerson

James Clapp

*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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no longer wish to receive this newsletter.
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Address Label

IF YOU ARE MOVING, Please send us your change of address.

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 gifts.

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 who have "been there" can give. **COME JOIN US!!**