

# THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS OF BOCA RATON

November 2011

*The Compassionate Friends, Inc., is a self-help organization offering friendship and understanding to all bereaved parents. TCF is non-denominational and all bereaved parents are welcome.*



## Credo

**We need not walk alone. We are The Compassionate Friends. We reach out to each other with understanding and with hope. Our children have died at all ages and from many causes but our love for our children unites us. Your pain becomes my pain as your hope becomes my hope.**

**We come together from all walks of life and many different circumstances. We are a unique family because we represent many races and creeds. We are young and we are old. Some of us are far along in our grief but others still feel a grief so fresh and so intensely painful, that we feel hopeless and see no hope. Some of us have found our faith to be a source of strength; some of us are struggling to find answers. Some of us are angry, filled with guilt, or in deep depression; others radiate an inner peace. But whatever the pain we bring to this gathering of**

**The Compassionate Friends, it is a pain we will share just as we share with each other our love for our children.**

**We are all seeking and struggling to build a future for ourselves, but we are committed to building that future together, as we reach out to each other in love and share the anger as well as the peace; share the faith as well as the doubts and help each other to grieve as well as to grow.**

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## Meeting Schedule

**Meetings held at St. Paul Lutheran Church, 701 W. Palmetto Park Rd., Boca Raton  
First and Third Mondays of each month  
7:30 pm**

November 7  
November 21  
December 5  
December 19

What to Expect after the First Year  
Spiritual Signs  
Coping with the Holidays  
Strengthening Family or Friend's Bonds

Michael Hoffman  
Gail Schroeder  
Gail Schroeder  
Ronda Fryburg

*Special Days*

First Name	Last Name	Child's Name	Birthday	Passing
Connie & Frank	DEVINE	Karen Ann	11/1/69	
Barry & Joanne	EPSTEIN	Larry	11/28/64	11/1/10
David	ANDERSON	Michael		11/2/03
Harriet	GUTTER	Adam		11/2/01
Phyllis & Art	FEDERMAN	Jack		11/3/09
Yvette	FOURNIER	Jason Godfrey		11/3/98
Domenic	GROSSO	Mark	11/4/74	
Johnny & Carolann	LARK	Lori-Ann		11/4/08
Albert (Raymie)	MOVITZ	Mark	11/5/53	
John & Bea	PAPERA	Fred		11/6/04
Esta	WEISBROT	Martin	11/6/46	
Eric & Audrey	SCHMIEDE	Olivia Joy	11/21/08	11/8/08
Eric & Audrey	SCHMIEDE	Rocky Peace	11/8/07	
Lauretta Patton	MUNGROO	Gregory Onorato		11/9/05
Sally & Bill	SCHEINER	Beth		11/10/09
Shirley	BARMAN	Alan,	11/11/57	
Lois & Jim	MOHR	Leslie		11/11/07
Edie & Manny	GOODMAN	Ronald		11/12/10
Iris/Luciano deLeon	GONZALES	Ronald deLeon	11/13/95	
Jodette	MAXEY	Sean		11/15/09
Marlon & Michele	CHIN SHUE	Andrew		11/17/03
Barbara & Cecil	FRIEND	Erik		11/17/08
Beverly	ABATI	Bobby Ghelfi		11/18/07
Frances	RINI	Peter "PJ"	11/18/74	
Charlotte & Paul	BRIEFF	Jane Lesley	11/19/48	
Jackie	DREWN	Colette C. Bates		11/19/09
Ann	THIEL	Ricky	11/19/53	
Leda	KIRK	Jason		11/20/06
Rachel	BURNSTEIN	Joe	11/21/53	
Rich & Lynn	HARRIS	Amy		11/21/83
Maryls	HECTOR	David		11/22/07
Nate	KIMBLETON	Robin	11/22/97	
Susan	MYERS	Bill Heed	11/22/56	
Carole	WOODS	Bill Heed	11/22/56	
Ruth	NETZER	Pamela		11/23/98
Debi & Harold	SANDERS	Tyson	11/25/85	
June	TURCHIN	Jeffrey Felshman,		11/25/09
Bonnie & Don	PARRISH	Kelly Welsh		11/26/02

First Name	Last Name	Child's Name	Birthday	Passing
Philip	RUBIN	Stephen Jay	11/27/61	
Phyllis & Donald	KRAVIS	Michael		11/28/10
Debra & Paul	LOGIUDICE	Dane	11/28/83	
Phil & Pam	MILLER	Jason		11/28/08
Gita	ALKOBI	Zev		11/29/10
Kay	CALLORI	Joey	11/29/70	
Debra	JAMES	Serena	11/29/76	
Stacey	ZEITLIN	Francy		11/29/06
Lynn & James	NOBIL	Erik John Persoff	11/30/73	
Arlene	STEINBERG	Jack		11/30/06

*Note: If there is an error or we have missed a special day for your child, please let us know so it can be added.*



**When darkness seems  
overwhelming,  
light a candle in  
someone's life  
and see how it makes  
the darkness in your  
own  
and the other person's  
life flee.**

**Rabbi Harold S. Kujshner, "When  
Bad Things Happen to Good People"**

### ***New Members***

**Ed & Gail Biers, Son Bryan (12-16-73 / 12-20-10)**

**Regina Dibuglielmo, son Michael (8-6-84 / 5-5-2011)**

**Doris & Wayne Conklin/Waller, Son Kevin Conklin (1-22-73 / 3-1-11)**

**Barbra Feinstein, Son Daren (2-10-81 / 4-16-11)**

**Alice & Steven Kessler, Son Joey (7-21-88 / 1-1-11)**

**Julia Pruccoli, Son Marino (10-18-72 / 10-24-1993)**

### **To Our New Members**

We are glad you found us, but we are sorry for the circumstances that bring us together. We understand your pain and we hope our unconditional friendship and understanding will help you through your grief. Attending a meeting for the first, second or third time takes courage, but for many, it is the first step towards healing. The meetings may seem overwhelming, so we encourage you to come to several meetings to give yourself a chance to become more comfortable.

<b>TELEPHONE FRIENDS</b>	<b>Jerry Flax</b>	<b>954-224-1973</b>
	<b>Ronda Fryburg</b>	<b>954-753-0493</b>
	<b>Dottie Kidd</b>	<b>954-562-5919</b>
	<b>Scott Wynkoop</b>	<b>561-699-7869</b>

*Chapter Director.....Gail Schroeder*

*Chapter Assistant.....Dottie Kidd*

*Treasurer.....Ronda Fryburg*

*New Family Coordinator.....Walt Schroeder*

*Librarian.....Jerry Flax*

*Meeting Coordinator.....Christine Williams*

*Refreshment Coordinator.....Shelly Sigale*

*Newsletter Editor.....Gail Schroeder*

*Website Manager.....Scott Wynkoop*



## ***A FORGIVING THANKSGIVING***

By Jim Hobbs

Thanksgiving was always an easy holiday. Unlike Christmas, there was no pressure of giving just the right gift! Thanksgiving Day brought family gatherings and good food. Late on those afternoons, we would return home full from over-eating and satisfied that our family relationships were intact. It was also a day that reminded us of everything for which we were thankful.

We are supposed to be thankful for our health, our families, our comfortable life, etc. The death of a child changes our perceptions, however. When the family now gathers around the Thanksgiving table, I now see a missing plate that no one else sees. When our nieces and nephews are laughing or crying, I hear a voice that no one else hears. When a family member recounts a story about something his or her child did last week, I wish for a story to tell.

We still have much to be thankful and we should remember that. But now, Thanksgiving Day has an additional observance for us too, doesn't it? It is a day of forgiveness also. We must forgive others who cannot acknowledge our missing child, for what ever reasons. If family and friends cannot understand us, then we must try to understand them, especially on holidays.

If we can exhibit tolerance, forgiveness and understanding on a day on which we offer thanks, we can climb another step on our ladder to recovery. I hope you have a forgiving Thanksgiving.

## *A Message from the Chapter*

If this is your first year at surviving the holidays since your child died, it is important that you accept that there are no magic words to get you through November, December and January. I'm sure you already know these months will not be the fun days you have experienced in the past. Rather than fun days, let's try to at least make them no worse. Give yourself permission during these months to fall apart when you need to and you'll probably need to! Your child that is no longer here is very important and you have that right. Better still, you have that need.

Let's talk first about tears. When you need to cry, do it! Tears are healthy. They are a sign that you are doing well, for you are allowing your grief, rather than denying it. You can't move ahead through the grief process until you've become well acquainted with the normal signs of grief. The people who care about you may feel uncomfortable when you are obviously grieving. If they haven't experienced this loss themselves, they don't understand your needs now, any more than the old proverbial man on the street. Remember how unprepared you were for the deep pain of grief? It's important that you let those caring people know that you are profoundly changed by this tragedy.

It's the time of year when friends and neighbors plan parties. Some may invite you no matter if it's the last thing on your mind. If you do decide to attend, please leave the back door open in case you need to escape. Some may mistakenly think it's possible to keep you so busy that you'll forget that your child died. You know that's impossible. No matter how well intended these plans are, they are the wrong plans for your family. Don't worry about the impact on your friends.

Thanksgiving can cause problems if you aren't ready to sit around a turkey trying to act thankful! It probably is going to be awhile before you have that ability again. You may consider having pizza that day and just pretend it is just another day or join the TCF dinner. Grief can make you do strange things! You may find you need to change lots of things that have been the ways you have observed the holidays in the past. For instance, you may decide not to have a Christmas tree this year. Some will see this as strange, but those of us who have made that same decision think it makes perfect sense. Maybe you'll ignore the holidays and run away to places.

You will survive the holidays better if you take control of them. Some think they have no control of anything but, if you feel that way, you probably haven't explored the possibilities that are available to you. Your brain is very curious. If someone suggests things that are different, it rushes around madly trying to come up with a few. Here's a plan for you. First, get input from your family members for their suggestions.

Maybe your needs keep you at home. If so, plan to do it the easiest way. Can another member of your family have the meal? Can others bring favorite items of food to help with the meal? Any change seems to help. Go to a different place of worship. It's okay to cry. Sit in the back so you can either cry in peace or, if you feel a need to, you can leave.

If you feel Christmas cards are needed this year or a very few presents, could a relative or friend help with the addressing and shopping? If you must shop yourself, select a place where there is less atmosphere such as music and decorations. Take advantage of the discount stores. Things don't have to be perfect. Give up perfections this year. Everyone will understand. Don't overdo. You're already tired. Grieving is exhausting. Next year or the one after that or whenever, you'll be ready to resume some of the old traditions. Maybe not! Some traditions may never be done again. It's up to you and your family. Take care of yourself physically. If you are in a depressed state, don't make it worse by overdrinking or overeating or too much caffeine. Take time for you. Read in a quiet place. Exercise by running, walking or swimming. Rest. Eat nourishing food. Establish priorities and make a list of them. Check them off as you accomplish them. This helps to maintain control. Seek help if you need it. Call one of the telephone friends listed in your newsletter or call one of your friends. Seek professional help if you feel you need it. Whatever you do, don't isolate yourself! Withdrawal is not the answer. It's important to know that you are not alone. Others out here care and understand. I am one of them. We do not have to walk this lonely road alone. Your attitude is important. You can/will survive. You have greater strength than you know. ***You have already survived the worse thing that can happen.***

Stay flexible. If the plans you made don't seem right now, dump them! Do something on the spur of the moment that does seem right. Care not if other people don't agree or that your brain isn't too excited about it.

The New Year is ahead. Let's hope for better days. The holidays will come again and one of these days you and your family will have figured out how to survive the holidays. Know that there will be more peaceful days ahead for you and your family. Take it as a promise!

*Gail*

*The ultimate goal of the grief work is to be able to remember without emotional pain and to be able to reinvest emotional surpluses. While the experience of grief work is difficult and slow, it is also enriching and fulfilling. The most beautiful people we know are those who have known defeat, suffering, struggle and loss and have found their way out of the depths. These persons have an appreciation, sensitivity and understanding of life that fills them with compassion, gentleness and a deep loving concern.*

Elizabeth Kubler-Ross

### ***Did you know they were bereaved parents?***

The happy, delightful songs Irving Berlin gave to the American people belied the personal tragedies that he carried in his heart. At five years old he witnessed the Cossacks, on orders from the Czar, burn down his entire village. His family fled Russia and landed in New York's Bowery. His father died three years later and Irving grew up on the streets in abject poverty.

Just when it seemed his life was really beginning - when he started to become known as a song writer (Alexander's Ragtime Band) - the love of his life, Dorothy, died suddenly just six months after their wedding. After Dorothy's death Berlin buried himself in his work producing such hits as Blue Skies, Always, Puttin' on the Ritz, I've Got My Love To Keep Me Warm and God Bless America.

Eventually he married again. In 1928 his wife, Ellin, delivered a baby boy they named Irving, Jr. Three weeks later the baby died on Christmas day. Somehow they managed to put their grief aside. Three more children, all girls, followed.

Fourteen years after his son's death, Berlin wrote what is arguably the most popular Christmas song ever written, White Christmas. The holiday was always a bittersweet time for the Berlin family. Every year, on Christmas Day, the Berlins would lay a wreath on the grave, a tradition their heirs carry on today. It is truly amazing that a man who had experienced so much personal sadness was able to wish for everyone else: "May your days be merry and bright, and may all your Christmases be white."

***Wyndham Garden Hotel, 1950 Glades Road Boca Raton, Florida***

We are in the process of planning our event. This is the current information that is being given to you for your review.

**18 tables** – each table being sponsored by a **\$100 centerpiece** which includes a 8x10 photo of your child with inscription done in memory. Reserve your table now. Securing a table allows you the **10 seats reserved** at the table in advance for the candle lighting.

Please call Gail at 561-901-0483 for a reserved table. A check payable to *The Compassionate Friends* as well as an 8x10 picture needs to be provided.

A memorial picture presentation of our children is a big part of the event. If you already have submitted a picture from previous years, this picture will be included. If you wish to have a picture of your child included, please call Gail at 561-901-0483. A \$5 charge is incurred for this process. An original, clear picture should be selected.

If you would like to make ahead reservations for any available seats left after sponsored tables are taken, please call Dottie at 954-562-5919.

***Please note there is no guarantee that we will be able to accommodate large parties if a reserved table is not in place. We will take every effort to try to do so. Each table holds only 10.***

Family and friends may be invited.

A light buffet dinner will be served after the candle lighting  
Seating begins at 4:30 pm. Parties with only reservations, not a sponsored table, need to arrive no later than 5:00 pm to keep

## Worldwide Candle Lighting

Excitement is building as the 15th Worldwide Candle Lighting December 11, 2011 approaches. The Compassionate Friends Worldwide Candle Lighting unites family and friends around the globe in lighting candles for one hour to honor and remember children who have died at any age from any cause. As candles are lit at 7 p.m. local time, creating a virtual wave of light, hundreds of thousands of persons commemorate and honor the memory of children in a way that transcends all ethnic, cultural, religious, and political boundaries.

Now believed to be the largest mass candle lighting on the globe, the 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. 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 Worldwide Candle Lighting 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.

In 2010, information was submitted to TCF's national website on services in 15 countries outside the United States including more than 530 services, as this special day continues to grow. TCF has been joined in recent years by chapters of several organizations including MISS, MADD, Parents of Murdered Children, SIDS Network, Gilda's Club, and BPUSA and for several years services have been held in all 50 states plus Washington D.C. and Puerto Rico. There is no way to know how many hundreds of additional services open to the public are held in the U.S. and around the world each year without the information being sent to us.

The Compassionate Friends and allied organizations were joined in 2010 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. Last year in that short one day span, nearly five thousand messages of love were received and posted from every U.S. state and Washington D.C., every territory, as well as dozens of other countries, with some posts in foreign languages.

## Thanksgiving

The holidays create even more pain to those who are suffering grief from the loss of a child. It is a painful reminder of those who are no longer in our lives. What should be a festive and happy time does not feel like it for the bereaved parent. Thanksgiving is one of those holidays. I know it was very difficult for us to decide what we were going to do with holidays after Engel's death. Were we going to do the family traditional event? Did we have the strength to go through that day or did we want to crawl into bed and pull the covers over our head?

Last year, 40 TCF members were together in order for fellowship and understanding as well a remembrance of their child. An invitation is extended to those who need this comfort and support on this day from Gail and Walt Schroeder

Dinner served at 4 pm on Thursday, November 24

350 Paulus Court, Boca Raton

RSVP is required *no later than* October 30

561-901-0483



## Get Started Writing

Writing can be one of the best tools for getting you past the tough places on this journey.

Here are a few suggestions to get you started:

Write out what out what happened. Make this as detailed as you can. Take your time. Tears may flow. It's OK.

What emotions are you experiencing today?

When you look back at what you wrote you'll be surprised how far you've come.

What have you found to be most helpful for your healing?

By writing it down you'll learn what worked and what didn't and why.

Can you find the words to make the world understand?

What has been most difficult for you? Putting it on paper can soften the hurt.

Don't worry about style or form, grammar or spelling. Those can be fixed later if you ever decide to go back and formalize your writings. For now, get your raw emotions written down. The writing will help you heal.

## *Practical Advice*

This column is dedicated to providing ideas to help you find your way through the grief.

**From: Tabitha Jayne,  
Transformational Loss Coach**

Dance is a great way of tapping into deep emotions and connecting with yourself after loss. When I talk about dance I don't mean the kind of dancing you do on a Saturday night but rather solo dancing to allow self expression. It's very hard to let yourself get caught up in music and dance with abandon when there are others around. This type of dancing is a throwback to using dance as part of rituals and ceremonies. The key is the intent behind the dance. Find some music you are attracted to. Create an intention for your dance. Maybe you want to express your love, let go of pain or just tap into something you can't express. Moving to the music in an authentic way allows you to tap into deep emotions and express them. It's not important that you don't know what they are only that you have expressed them. Dancing also boosts your immune system which is lowered after loss. This means that you are working on a physical and emotional level creating powerful internal change. It can be intimidating, at first, to do this in a group. Pick a song you like. Make sure you are alone and put it on loudly. Stand up and close your eyes. Listen to the music and feel it with your body. Then slowly let your body move in its own rhythm. As you're alone you don't have to worry about looking silly. Experience how this feels. *You have nothing to lose.*

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**From: COPE**

Plant a tree, bush or garden in honor of your child. A perennial that grows year after year will continue to remind you of the light your child brought into your life. If your child had a favorite flower, consider adding that to your garden. Wear something special. A picture of your child in a locket, a pin she made for you. A color that was his favorite. These things will help you feel connected to your child. Create a reminder of your child around the house. A collage or other art project, a memory box, an afghan or pillow with your child's picture on it. Something made especially in honor of your child will help to honor and work through your grief.

**From: Laurie Pawlik-Kienien**

Consider volunteering regularly at a hospital, senior's home, school, prison, animal shelter – anywhere, really. You'll never heal completely from your losses, but you can distract yourself from the pain. And, you'll help others in the process, which is so good for both them and you.