Chapter Contacts & Information
Frederick MD Chapter
Our website: www.tccfrederickmd.com
Webmaster ≈ Sue Murphy

TCF Frederick Chapter Leader:
Kim Edmands ≈ 301-305-6378
kimedmands@yahoo.com

The following members are available to listen and share when you are in need:

Sudden Death of a Child
Kathy Grapski = 301-253-5509

Long Term Illness
Bob Hahn = 301-788-0573

Death of an Only Child
Linda Moser = 301-371-9245
Carol Fox = 301-829-1335

Suicide
Kim Edmands = 301-305-6378
Sandy Prisak = 301-791-3763

STEERING COMMITTEE
Kim Edmands = Chapter Leader & Meeting Facilitator
Rich Edmands = Meeting Facilitator
Bob Hahn = Meeting Facilitator
Jackie Weakley = Treasurer
Therese Pelicano = Assistant

SOCIAL COMMITTEE
Need Volunteer = Chair
Kathy Grapski = Greeter/Name Tags
Need Volunteer = Special Events
Bill Spach = Set Up/Take Down
Kim and Rich Edmands = Set Up/Greeter

NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE
Barbara Riley = Co-Editor
Sandy Prisak = Co-Editor

Please submit your Newsletter entries to: sandy.prisak@gmail.com or briley72@hotmail.com & put “TCF Newsletter Submission” in the subject line.

The Frederick Chapter of TCF meets the first Wednesday of each month (except July) from 7:30 – 9:00 p.m. at the Trinity United Methodist Church
West Patrick Street & Kline Blvd., Frederick, MD

Upcoming Chapter Meetings:
April 5, 2017
May 3, 2017
June 7, 2017
August 2, 2017

NOTE: When Frederick County Public Schools are closed due to inclement weather the Support Group meeting will be cancelled.

The Compassionate Friends, Inc. is a mutual assistance self-help organization offering friendship, understanding, and hope to bereaved families. Anyone who has experienced the death of a child of any age, from any cause is welcome. Our meetings give parents an opportunity to talk about their child and about their feelings as they go through the grieving process. There is no religious affiliation. There are no membership dues. The purpose of this support group is not to focus on the cause of death, or the age of the child, as it is the focus on being a bereaved parent, along with the feelings and issues that evolve around the death experience of a child.

To Our New Members
Coming to the first meeting is the hardest, but you have nothing to lose and everything to gain! Try not to judge your first meeting as to whether or not The Compassionate Friends will work for you. We urge you to attend at least three meetings. At the next meeting, you may find just the right person or hear just the right words that will help you in your journey through grief.

To Our Members Who Are Further Along In Their “Grief Journey”
We need your encouragement and support. Each meeting we have newly bereaved parents. THINK BACK – what would it have been like for you at your first meeting if there had not been any TCF “veterans” to welcome you, share your grief, give you a hug, encourage you and tell you “your pain will not always be this bad, it really does get better!”

QUOTE OF THE QUARTER

Losing a child, no matter what age makes your heart break in places you never knew existed.

Author Unknown
TCF CREDO

We need not walk alone. We are The Compassionate Friends. We reach out to each other with love, with understanding, and with hope. The children we mourn have died at all ages and from many different causes, but our love for them unites us. Your pain becomes my pain, just as your hope becomes my hope. We come together from all walks of life, from many different circumstances. We are a unique family because we represent many races, creeds, and relationships. 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 they feel helpless and see no hope. Some of us have found our faith to be a source of strength, while some of us are struggling to find answers. Some of us are angry, filled with guilt or in deep depression, while others radiate an inner peace. But whatever pain we bring to this gathering of The Compassionate Friends, it is pain we will share, just as we share with each other our love for the children who have died. We are all seeking and struggling to build a future for ourselves, but we are committed to building a future together. We reach out to each other in love to share the pain as well as the joy, 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. We Need Not Walk Alone. We Are The Compassionate Friends. © The Compassionate Friends

SIBLINGS WALKING TOGETHER

We are the surviving siblings of The Compassionate Friends. We are brought together by the deaths of our brothers and sisters. Open your hearts to us, but have patience with us. Sometimes we will need the support of our friends. At other times we need our families to be there. Sometimes we must walk alone, taking our memories with us, continuing to become the individuals we want to be. We cannot be our dead brother or sister; however, a special part of them lives on with us. When our brothers and sisters died, our lives changed. We are living a life very different from what we envisioned, and we feel the responsibility to be strong even when we feel weak. Yet we can go on because we understand better than many others the value of family and the precious gift of life. Our goal is not to be the forgotten mourners that we sometimes are, but to walk together to face our tomorrows as surviving siblings of The Compassionate Friends. © The Compassionate Friends

In This Newsletter

TCF Credo.........................................................................................................................................................2
Siblings Walking Together......................................................................................................................................2
Announcements/Resources/Events/Sharing Corner..............................................................................................3-10
Love Gift Form......................................................................................................................................................11

You are Personally Invited to…

JOIN OUR PRIVATE FACEBOOK GROUP

Log into your Facebook account and search for “The Compassionate Friends of Frederick (MD)” or enter the following url in your web browser address bar or click https://www.facebook.com/groups/1712779369051078/.

You must have a Facebook account to access our page. Once you have reached our page, click the JOIN GROUP link in the upper right corner.

This is a closed group meaning that only our group administrator, TCF Frederick Chapter Leader Kim Edmands can approve members and only group members can see posts and comments. No one outside the group can see content on the page. We hope this will be a place where we can share thoughts, feelings, and ideas as well as events, weather cancellations, etc.
A Bear Hug for Father’s Day

As Father’s Day approaches, we are reminded of the significant contributions and unique love of fathers and stepfathers. Their defined role, after the death of their children, is to support their wives and surviving children. But their pain is deep.

Men, by their nature and in response to our society’s expectations, do not usually grieve as openly as women. They do not talk as candidly about their loss. They generally do not reach out to others for comfort. They are, after all, the rock, the solid center of the family. Their wife’s pain supersedes their pain because women are fragile. Or so we are told.

Yet, as I look into the eyes of so many bereaved fathers, I see a deep, gripping pain. The tears left unshed, the words that are never spoken, the anger, guilt and agony….all remain in the eyes of the bereaved father.

What can a father do? Talk with other bereaved fathers. Read books written by bereaved fathers. Talk with spouses, private counselors and close friends who are not as structured in their “male” societal roles. Try to attend three meeting of Compassionate Friends. You don’t have to talk. But you might decide to express a single thought or idea, logically presented, to the small group. You might find peace in this place, and then again, you might not. But, as my own dad often said, “Step up to the plate and see what happens.” He was a pretty wise man……a child of the depression, a football player, Greatest Generation, WW II Marine, a fighter, a provider, a protector…..a man’s man. He endured much in his 78 years, and I only saw him cry a few times.

But when his friend lost a child, my tough dad was the first one to reach out with a bear hug that wouldn’t let go until the tears began to flow. They both cried. They both knew that the agony of losing a child was far worse than the horrors of war. Together, they cried.

Happy Father’s Day….May your bear hugs be many and your memories become sweeter with each passing year. May your child live forever in your heart so that peace embraces you always.

Annette Mennen Baldwin
In memory of my son, Todd Mennen
And my father, James M. Mennen
TCF, Katy, TX
In Memory of Our Son Derek A. Riley
March 24, 1970 - May 26, 2009

Our son loved racing he raced at the local dirt track in our area. His car was #72. He was also an avid NASCAR fan.

Coming out of turn four with a head of steam
The engine of that number 72 screams
Competitors are behind him closing the gap
The driver knows he can lead his last lap
He puts the pedal to the medal driving it to the floor
Listen to the sound of that engine roar
He crosses that finish line in a blinding light
The mother of all trophies stood in his sight

Jesus with a checkered flag raised the winner's arm welcoming him home
He smiled as he was handed his final trophy, made of the finest chrome........

.......The heart rate monitor read flat, their son was gone
His final beat in his chest, his final breath drawn
Their only hope is that his last thought was of joy
For today they lost their little racer boy

Written by his cousin Shayne Lydard
Submitted by Barbara Riley
TCF Frederick, Md.

A Mother’s Love

A mother’s love for her child may begin
with the very dream of becoming a mother...
A mother’s love for her child may begin
with the thought of maybe expecting the news...
A mother’s love for her child may begin
with the verification of her expectations...
A mother’s love for her child may begin
with the affirmation that the child lives within her...

A mother’s love for her child may begin
with her first sight of the new life that
she has delivered into the world...
A mother’s love for her child may begin...
But it may never end...
Not even death can steal away a mother’s love for her child
A mother’s love for her child knows no end!

Diana M. Rohrbaugh
TCF Anne Arundel County, MD
The Luck of the Irish??

My name should have been O'Loder, for it seemed like I had the luck of the Irish. After all, I grew up in a great home with a wonderful family. I received an excellent education. I got a great job where I met a special person who became my life’s partner. I began my own business, which became very successful. And the greatest luck of all—my daughter was born. It wasn’t planned, but God knew what was best. Three years later we were blessed with a son. Stef and Steve lived and played together with a special love.

I still remember the St. Patrick’s Day assignment Stef brought home only days before the accident that took her life and that of her brother. Asked to tell why she was lucky, she wrote, “because I have a brother!”

A few days later my life lay in a shambles—the best part of my life gone. Stef was only eight and Stephen just five. They hadn’t had a chance to really experience what life was all about. It was painfully obvious my name did not start with an O’.

Three years have now passed since that day. The shock of the moment has worn off. My wife and I have somehow survived the deaths and now have a new wonderful son and daughter with which to share our lives—and our love.

But, perhaps, the luckiest thing of all that happened to us since the accident is that we have made new, very special friends—Compassionate Friends who have helped us with our survival. We have a new family of special people who have survived the unluckiest day of their lives and are able to share their loss with us. Isn’t this really what “luck” is all about?

Here are two name poems we just received from one very special Compassionate Friends, Sandy Roush, which she wrote specially for our Stephanie and Stephen.

\[
\begin{align*}
S &\text{ent by God, she} \\
T &\text{ouched our lives} \\
E &\text{ver in our hearts} \\
P &\text{recious child} \\
H &\text{ow we miss you} \\
A &\text{nd await our reunions} \\
N &\text{ever really far away} \\
I &\text{n God’s loving arms} \\
E &\text{ternity is ours}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
S &\text{ong of my heart} \\
T &\text{aken too soon} \\
E &\text{ver loving son} \\
P &\text{leasing to God} \\
H &\text{e holds you now} \\
E &\text{verlasting life} \\
N &\text{ow awaits in heaven}
\end{align*}
\]

Wayne Loder
TCF Lakes Area Chapter, MI
In Memory of my daughter and son, Stephanie and Stephen Loder
MY SON

You are my stars in the sky
You are my moon that shines at night
You are the Cardinals that stay around me
You are the butterflies that always find me
The feathers I find I know that you are near
Showing me you love me and that you are still here
The pennies I find and wow there’s a lot
I feel are tokens of your love and they give me a smile
Tho I can’t see you or hear your voice
I feel your love and hold you close in my heart
This time that you’ve been gone has been so hard
But each little sign gives me strength to get by
So please keep showing me that you are here
I love you and I miss you Kevin with all my love
Mom

Written by Leslie Scott in Memory of her son—Kevin.
TCF Frederick, MD Chapter

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 TREE IN OUR BACKYARD

My daughter Lesa was a free spirited child who always had something to say, who enjoyed school and loved life. One day, as part of a school project, she planted a tree in our back yard and announced that she had named the tree Angella. Lesa watered the tree daily, fertilized it, talked to it, and finally placed stakes in the ground to give it more support to help the tree grow straight. Lesa watched over this tree she named Angella with determination and a certain amount of pride that she was able to nurture a spindly, leafless tree into a blossoming life-giving part of nature.

One day our daughter Leslie was mowing the lawn and accidentally hit the tree. Lesa witnessed this event from an upstairs window and immediately flew down the steps to confront her sister. A confrontation followed between the two girls, with Lesa demanding an apology. Leslie told me later that she did, in fact, go over to Lesa’s tree, pat it on the trunk and apologize. Laughing, she told me it was not only the first time she had spoken to a tree but also the first time she had apologized to one.

Angella the tree continued to flourish and grow, watched over and nurtured by my daughter. Lesa, however, became ill with cancer. As her cancer worsened, she was unable to watch over Angella. Before our last trip to the hospital, Lesa visited the tree and discovered bumps on the leaves. We delayed our trip to spray the tree to reassure Lesa that her tree would be safe while she was in the hospital.

Lesa died on a hot summer day in August, two days before her eighth birthday. We moved away from that house, hoping to find some peace in a new environment and we transplanted Lesa’s tree Angella to the back yard of our new home. We watched it closely, wondering if the tree would survive the transplant. Our special friends who knew the story of Lesa’s tree shared its progress with us.

Several years later we sold our home, but this time Lesa’s tree was too big to transplant. I wrote the story of Lesa’s tree and how she named it Angella and how Lesa had died of cancer and I left it on the kitchen counter for the new owners, hoping they would take care of the tree.

Several months passed while I considered contacting the owners, and then one day I met the daughter of the family that now lives in our old home. She stopped to tell me that the story of Lesa’s tree had been passed on to them and that they would guard Lesa’s legacy for us. She described how her family had been touched by this story and they were planning to pass on the story should they move in the future.

So, the legacy of a child’s love of nature and determination to take care of a special tree goes on. My daughter did not survive her cancer but the story of Angella the tree has touched the lives of every family that has lived in our house.

Pat Langford
TCF North Platte, NE
In Memory of my daughter, Lesa
I’m sending this message to you
Because you hold my memory in your heart
And my presence, I know you can feel
Every single minute we’re apart

I know I left much too soon
But my memory will always be with you
And I’ll always be by your side
To cheer you up when you’re feeling blue

I know sometimes you bear such pain
And I know sometimes you weep
But for me, I have no reason to cry
Because my soul is in heaven to keep

Keep your mind open and your senses keen
For everything you do
And everything you touch, hear, or see
Will bring sweet memories of me

When you see a butterfly
A dragonfly, a bird, or maybe a bee
So busy and happy
You’ll know it’s me

When you feel a gentle breeze
Caressing your skin
And brushing your hair
You’ll feel my presence there

Look to the blue sky
When you see a puffy cloud floating by
With those soft and changing shapes
It’s me, telling you Hi

You’ll know it’s me
When you see the rain
So cool, clear, and clean
Go pitter patter on your window pane

You’ll think of me
When the morning sun rises
As dawn’s light turns into a bright array
You’ll remember my very first day

You’ll think of me
At the end of each day
As the sun sets in the West
And the golden sky fades away

You’ll remember me
As you prepare to go to bed
When on your knees to pray
You’ll know what needs to be said

Mom & Dad I love you
But now I’m in heaven with so much bliss
The happiness here is far beyond your realm
When you get here, you’ll learn all of this

As I close my message to you
Just remember, right here at heaven’s gate
We’ll re-unite some day soon
In this beautiful place, far beyond the moon

“With All My love”
Macy

PawPaw, Donald Moyers
TCF Galveston County, TX
In Memory of Macy and Loral
40TH TCF NATIONAL CONFERENCE  
JULY 28 - JULY 30, 2017

The Compassionate Friends is pleased to announce that Orlando, Florida, will be the site of the 40th TCF National Conference on July 28-30, 2017. “Rays of Sunshine, Oceans of Hope” is the theme of this year’s event, which promises more of last year’s great National Conference experience. The 2017 Conference will be held at the Hilton Orlando Bonnet Creek. 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.

WALK TO REMEMBER JULY 30, 2017

The Compassionate Friends Walk to Remember® is a highlight of every TCF National Conference. It was created as a symbolic way to show the love we carry for the children we mourn. Held at 9 a.m. Sunday on the final day of the national conference it starts at the host hotel of the conference. There is an air of anticipation and excitement as everyone gathers in preparation for the start of the Walk. Finally the Walk begins and, hand-in-hand everyone walks, meditating on a much different time in their lives. Since its inception in 2000, the Walk to Remember has taken on many distinctive facets. There is the main Walk to Remember where those attending the conference join with local bereaved families and others who fly in from across the country just for the Walk. As many as 1400 have participated. Some go the full distance while others only walk a short way knowing that in participating, they are remembering. Special Walk to Remember t-shirts are given to all who register, as well as walk bibs where the names of the children being remembered can be written.

The Walk to Remember is also used as a major fundraiser to help support the work of The Compassionate Friends. Many participants seek pledges from relatives, friends, neighbors, and business acquaintances, turning in the dollars they have raised prior to the start of the event.

Please note: Registration is required to participate in TCF national Walks to Remember. Those under 9 are not required to register but still must have a waiver of liability signed for them by a participating parent or guardian.
The Compassionate Friends, Frederick, MD Chapter

“Love Gift” Donation Slip

I understand that The Compassionate Friends is a non-profit organization, and as such relies totally on donated funds. I would like to make a contribution to help The Compassionate Friends continue to reach out to families who have experienced the death of a child.

This contribution is made in:

☐ Memory of ☐ Honor of ________________________________

(Name)

On the occasion of: ________________________________

(Name)

This contribution is made by:

Name ________________________________

Address ________________________________

City, State, Zip ________________________________

Please make checks payable to: The Compassionate Friends / Frederick Chapter, 205 9203 Gas House Pike, Frederick, MD 21701