



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

September 2007
Vol 16, No 9

Arlington, DC, Leesburg, Prince William, and Burke-Springfield-Fairfax Virginia Chapters
Trinity Presbyterian Church, 5533 North 15th Street, Arlington, Virginia 22205
TCF National Headquarters, PO Box 3606 Oak Brook, IL 60522-3696,
www.compassionatefriends.org, 877-969-0010 toll free

The mission of The Compassionate Friends is to assist families in the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child and to provide information to help others be supportive.

30th National TCF Conference Oklahoma City

Each year there is a group of volunteers who work tirelessly for two years to produce the National Conference for bereaved parents, grandparents, siblings, other relatives and friends.

The Oklahoma group can be very proud of the job they did. From the opening ceremony Friday morning to the closing on Sunday they provided us with many opportunities to share, to learn and to be together in a safe and nurturing environment.

Not to be overlooked, the staff of the National office that never stops for a moment doing what it takes to make sure all of our needs and those of the Conference committee and volunteers are met.

HATS OFF TO ALL who made this a memorable Conference!

The Keynote speakers were so inspiring that I purchased the CDs of their speeches so that I could share them with chapter members unable to attend the conference.

I have always admired Elizabeth Edwards for her grace and compassion as she shares her grief journey following the death of her 16-year-old son, Wade, and what TCF means to her. It was so inspiring to hear her talk about how she has made sure Wade will always be remembered. This lovely MOM sat and signed her book, *Saving Graces*, for hours afterward. Not only that, she touched each person, she listened to what they had to say and allowed pictures to be taken by the official conference photographer with each of them.

What a unique experience to hear The Reverend Canon Dr. Simon Stevens, OBE, Tens of thousands of people around the world know Simon Stevens as the founder of the Compassionate Friends. Serving as a chaplain at the Coventry and Warwickshire Hospital, his keen insight brought TCF's Founding Parents, the Lawleys and the Hendersons, together in 1968 following the deaths of their children at nearly the same time. He talked about the nearly forty years and many thousands of people around the world who have benefited by being part of TCF and the many volunteers who make it possible.

Bud Welch's 23-year-old daughter, Julie, was among the 167 who were killed April 19, 1995 in the bomb blast that devastated the Murrah building. While mourning Julie's death, Bud met with the father of Tim McVeigh and became an advocate against the death penalty, trying to save Tim's life. The Memorial consisting of 167 chairs, with clear bases and names carved into them and lit at night, is such a moving sight. As is the chain link fence surrounding the site with the many mementoes such as stuffed animals, license plates from many states, pictures and letters.

This year's "Walk to Remember" went by the Memorial. What a moving sight to see all of the walkers in their T-shirts with names of children pinned on their backs.

Bill Hancock's son, Will was following in his father's footsteps at Oklahoma State University as a media relations coordinator when he was killed in the 2001 crash of an airplane carrying members and staff of the men's basketball team. Bill has twice ridden a bicycle across the United States. The first time, which followed Will's death, was turned by him into the book "Riding with the Blue Moth".

As with each conference, music plays an important part and this year we were treated to a wonderful array. Alan Pedersen, who gave us a concert in Arlington, VA in March, opened the conference.

Naomi Elizabeth and Charles Ray delighted us with selections written by Charles. Naomi has the voice of an angel. Saturday night we were not only treated to the beautiful voice of Lana Henson, we had beautiful centerpieces of iridescent metallic butterflies handmade by Lana. Amanda Kay Richey closed the conference with songs that brought joy and tears.

All of the musicians are bereaved parents, grandparents or siblings.

Each year I come away from the conference with the knowledge that what we do is so vital to the health and well being of the bereaved and hope that as they begin to heal they will reach back to those coming behind them. This is a time for me to share my journey with the grandparents attending my workshop, "Double Blessing and Double Pain". The feedback I receive tells me we do make a difference.

Betty C Farrel, Sarah Louise's Nana
Arlington, VA Chapter TCF

Calendar of TCF Meetings In Your Area

SEPTEMBER

2007

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SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
						1
2	3	4	5 Leesburg	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13 Arlington	14	15
16	17	18	19 DC	20 PW	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29

Arlington Chapter For info contact Lois Copeland 301-530-1115 or locopeland@aol.com Please send "Love Gifts" to Kent Womack 1013 Riverside Dr. Woodstock, VA 22664	Trinity Presbyterian Church 5533 N. 16 th St Arlington, VA	Meets the Second Thursday This month's meeting will be September 13, at 7:30 PM
Burke/Springfield/ Fairfax Chapter For info contact: CarolMarino Camarino@cox.net or JaneTrimble@ janetrimble@juno.com 703-622- 3639 Please send "Love Gifts" to Kathy Collins 4505 Rachael Manor Dr. Fairfax, VA 22032	THE OLD ST. MARY'S KNIGHTS OF COULMBUS HALL (LOCATED NEXT TO THE ST MARY'S HISTORIC CHURCH AND CEMETERY) At Fairfax Station Road and Route 123, Fairfax, VA **Note—NEW LOCATION	Meets the Fourth Wednesday This month's meeting will be September 26, at 7:30 PM
Leesburg Chapter For info contact Bev or Bernie Elero 540-882-9707 Please send "Love Gifts" to Mrs. Anne Shattuck, 224 Walnut Ridge Lane, Palmyra, VA 22963	St. James Episcopal Church Janney Parlor 14 Cornwall St NW Leesburg, VA	Meets the First Wednesday This month's meeting will be September 5, at 7:30 PM
Prince William Chapter For info contact Ken Adams 703-361-6574 or adamsksbjk@comcast.net Please send "Love Gifts" to Peggy Beach, 10404 Schaeffer Lane, Nokesville, VA 20181	Grace United Methodist Church Library, 2nd Floor 9750 Wellington Rd Manassas, VA	Meets the Third Thursday This month's meeting will be September 20, at 7:30 PM
Washington, DC Chapter For info contact Olivia Gunter, 301-552-2798 Please send "Love Gifts" to Coralease Ruff, 3314 Applegrove Ct., Oak Hill, VA 20171	The Howard University The Blackburn Center 2397 Sixth Street, NW Washington, DC20059	Meets the Third Wednesday This month's meeting will be September 19, 7-9 PM
TCF National Headquarters P O Box 3606 Oak Brook IL 60522-3696	www.compassionatefriends.org	877-969-0010 (Toll-Free)
Arlington Website	www.tcfarlington.org	Webmaster: Mary M. Bell m.m.bell@verizon.net
Burke/Springfield/Fairfax Web	www.tcfbsf.org	

Kathy Collins of Burke/Springfield/Fairfax VA Named "Chapter Leader of the Year" at the 30th TCF National Conference

CHAPTER LEADERSHIP AWARD

The recipient of this award shall have made significant contributions that have fostered and furthered the philosophy of TCF by practicing or promoting its mission and goals. This year's recipient is:

Kathy Collins

On May 6, 1996, Kathy and husband, Chuck, suffered the loss of their 19-year-old daughter, Tiffanie Amber, from bacterial meningitis. One month later Kathy attended her first TCF meeting, finding comfort in the compassion of other parents. In 2001 Kathy and Chuck, along with another member, took over a local chapter on the verge of closure and expanded it to Burke/Springfield/Fairfax (Virginia). The meetings have grown from one attendee at the first meeting to an average of 30-40 persons each month. Kathy has served as chapter co-leader, facilitator, secretary, librarian, webmaster, and newsletter editor. She arranged partial funding through the Combined Federal Campaign, educating hundreds of government employees last November about TCF. In 2002 Kathy created an annual "Holiday Hug", a social event held in December enabling grieving families to share their feelings during this difficult time. About 60 people attended last December with each participant receiving a butterfly ornament in memory of their child. Over the years Kathy has spent countless hours offering hope to grieving parents over the phone and during one-on-one visits. She has addressed several local groups and college classes about the realities of losing a child. It has been Kathy's compassion for others that has helped to rebuild the chapter into the success it has become. She has accomplished these things while working a demanding full-time job and raising two teenage boys. While Kathy will soon be stepping down as chapter leader, she along with her husband, Chuck, were recently selected as TCF Regional Coordinators for the District of Columbia and Virginia.



Cathy Seehuetter on the collapse of the 35W Bridge

To all who so kindly have called or written to ask about the unspeakable tragedy in Minneapolis of the collapse of the 35W bridge, as well as those who may be wondering...the following is not always grammatically correct, but my raw emotion after watching it on TV right after it occurred yesterday. Someone asked me to put my thoughts on paper:

Though nowhere near the magnitude of 9/11, the bridge collapse was reminiscent of the shock and horror of seeing something that was there one minute, and in a split second gone. Taking with it someone's child, sibling, grandchild, mother, father, aunt, uncle, loved one in the blink of an eye. That feeling in the pit of my stomach, remembering with disbelief that my daughter had just smiled at me and a second later turned around to see her lifeless on that Florida freeway far from home. Those of us who have had loved ones die suddenly know that feeling. When my husband called me about 6:30 p.m. last night and said, "Turn on Channel 9", my immediate response was "Tell me first." I thought of the phone call I got from my daughter Amy on the morning of 9/11. The terror in her voice as she woke me from sleep to tell me the World Trade Center and Pentagon had been hit by planes. Not wanting to hear of another catastrophic tragedy like that again, I needed to know what I was about to see. Then I looked at the crumpled steel and concrete, cars on top of one another, fires burning...knowing that it was during rush hour and that there were cars and people that were submerged in the Mississippi River, impossible to rescue, was heart sickening. Then seeing the school bus perched precariously on the edge of the bridge, mere seconds from the rushing waters of the river. I prayed that the 60 children had escaped. "No more bereaved parents, please!" was my unspoken plea and my relief for them (especially for the parents seeing the same thing on the TV, knowing that their child was a passenger on that bus) that they had indeed escaped from the bus to safety.

And the interview by a witness who watched a frantic father dive continually into the water looking for his daughter. A man who will wonder why he survived and not his child. The empathy and sorrow I felt for that man at that very moment is something I cannot describe.

Because I, as others with similar tragedies, lost my innocence when my daughter Nina died suddenly, my first reaction was to find out if my surviving children and grandchildren were out of harms way. Knowing that my grandson Ethan was in a summer day program that day, could that have been his bus? Was my son Dan going to a Twins game like he has so many other times before and used that bridge? Did my daughter Amy use that route instead of the other to get to my daughter Lisa's house in Maple Grove because of traffic delays elsewhere? Where were my loved ones at that moment??? I could not breathe until I know of their whereabouts. I knew that the unthinkable can happen and does happen; that lightning can and does indeed strike twice.

My prayers and constant thoughts are with the secondary victims of this horrific calamity; the ones left behind to try desperately to understand and to look for answers where there are none, to obsess over the "if onlys" and "what ifs" that consume the mind for weeks on end. We will all hug our loved ones a little tighter and again remember to appreciate each minute we have with them - to remember where our priorities are and love a little harder than the day before. With a very heavy heart, I will continue to keep those affected by this tragedy in my prayers, as will we all.

Cathy Seehuetter Cottage Grove, MN peachy3536@comcast.net <peachy3536@comcast.net>
Lovingly lifted from Atlanta Online August 3, 2007

Arlington Chapter

TCF Meeting: September 13
Place: Trinity Presbyterian Church
Enter 2nd Level
Time: 7:30pm
Topic: Current Issues

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## NOSTALGIA

The school bell rings, young voices sing  
And small ones shout with glee.  
The autumn air beacons school to start,  
Left alone is me.

What makes me feel so down and blue,  
And bogged down with thoughts of you?  
I see the school bus passing by,  
And find myself with a tear in my eye.

Is it the clothes we can't buy?  
While others grab the jeans to try?  
Or is it autumn in the air?  
That pulls at heartstrings already bare?

Maybe its falling leaves and dying grass.  
Bringing reflections like a looking glass.  
Whatever the reason that stirs my heart,  
Every year when school must start,  
Reminds me how much I miss you.

*Author Unknown*



## School Starts Again

*School starts again! I look out the window and try to envision her as a senior in high school! Her friends have turned into such beauties...Kari would be tall and slender, (almost skinny!) with her dad's dancing blue eyes and my dimples. She'd have a date for homecoming...maybe even the man she'd marry like I had! Could be she be so lucky? Then the tears start to roll and that big lump comes back to my throat...just when I thought I could handle it. School starts again...*

*Debi Meylor, ~TCF, Sioux City, IA*



*A prayer recited during the memorial service on Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement). This year on September 22.*

In the rising of the sun and in its going down, we remember them.

*In the blowing of the wind and in the chill of winter, we remember them.*

In the opening buds and in the rebirth of spring, we remember them.

*In the blueness of the sky and in the warmth of summer, we remember them.*

In the rustling of leaves and in the beauty of autumn, we remember them.

*In the beginning of the year and when it ends, we remember them.*

When we are weary and in need of strength, we remember them.

*When we are lost and sick at heart, we remember them.*

When we have joys we yearn to share, we remember them.

*So long as we live, they too shall live, for they are now a part of us, as we remember them.*

Added



May the beauty of their lives shine for evermore, and may my life always bring honor to their memory.

*~The Talmud~*

## Love Gift

Madelyn and Don Campbell, in loving memory of their son **Sean Campbell**



Attending a meeting for the first time: Katherine Cespedes whose daughter **Ava Cespedes** died December 30, 2006 and Grace Rosamond whose son **Charlie Hays** died July 14, 2004.

**"Welcome"** is a difficult word in these circumstances. We are sorry for the reason that brought you, but glad you found us. We can't take your pain away, but can offer friendship and support

\*\*\*\*\*

# Arlington Chapter

Several days ago, while I was going through old papers, a letter fell out. I looked at the postmark and was shocked when I read the date; **February 6, 2000**, one week after our son David died.

My cousin David wrote the letter expressing his shock and sympathy on David's loss. Sometimes our friends and family members say the right words and give us room to grieve. I don't remember reading his letter or speaking to him on the phone.



Dear Lois and Jay,

I stared at the phone for days before I called—to call, wait to call, put it off for a week or two, trying to think of what to say if you were even able to take the calls that came in. What can one say to ease the pain of a blow the size that's hit you?

I dwell on our confusion because we cannot fathom the depth of yours. It breaks the hearts of even those like us who have no children of their own. Losing David is not as it should be! Children bury parents; it should not be the other way around. And yet it happened.

We are so, so sorry. I wish we could offer some solace, wish we could walk a little of this blackest of roads you are being forced to travel with you. But nobody can do that. I mentioned on the phone that I spent some time with another friend who had lost a child, in her case a daughter who was thirty-three at the time. In her case it wasn't so sudden or shocking as it tragically was with David. But it was her daughter and she loved her as you two loved DAVID. And, like you, did everything she possibly could to save her. And the grief was hideous, of course. But a year has gone by and the pain has lessened. And the memories of the child have changed from the dark ones, that any parent would feel, to the sweeter, more beautiful ones that celebrate her life. She and her family have been diminished for sure, but life for them has resumed. The pain of losing DAVID will never be gone. How could it? But some day it will lessen. Time has a way of helping that to happen.

Our thoughts and our love are with you.

David and Claude



## Grandparents

### **Jason – A Special Boy**

There once was a beautiful baby boy.

Who captured our hearts and filled our lives with joy.

All too soon his life here on earth came to an end.

Our hearts and our lives will never be the same again.

~Grandma & Grandpa,  
Toni & Grace Pastora, TCF McMinnville, OR



### **DREAM**

I am drawn quietly to his grave to check on him  
Just as I'd have been drawn quietly to his crib,

I trim the grass around his marker  
And dream of trimming his soft brown hair.

I place some flowers by his name  
And dream of him smelling them in my yard

I hold his memory in my heart  
As I dream of holding him in my arms

I go quietly to visit Elijah's grave,  
As I used to go quietly

To check on him napping.  
I tenderly wipe the dirt and grass of his marker,

As I tenderly would wipe his face,  
After he'd eaten.

I linger there at the cemetery to be near him,  
As I would linger rocking him,

Long after he'd fallen asleep.  
I hunt things to take him where he now rests,

As I bought things to give to him,  
His smile was my reward,

I drive away slowly with tears in my eyes,



As I cry for him in silence, as each day  
passes by.

I hold him so warmly in my broken heart,  
Till the day comes that he can run  
Into my open arms.

~by 'Lijah's Gram, seen in TCF, Murfreesboro, TN newsletter,  
July 2004

# Burke/Springfield/Fairfax Chapter

We welcome with open arms and lots of hugs,  
our new members:

 Carol & Ron Binsted 

 Susan Davis 

## The Luckiest Woman in the World

So often I am tempted to concentrate on all that I will miss--

Your getting a driver's license & your first car

Your first girlfriend & that first kiss

Where would you go to college?

Who would you marry?

What would you be when you grow up?

But then I stop and remind myself

I am the luckiest woman in the world

I was the very first person to ever hold you in their arms

The very first one to caress your downy red head with  
my cheek

I was the one you called for when you skinned a knee--or  
broke a leg!!

I nursed your ear infections, those horrible chicken pox

And even your hurt feelings

I listed to your Barney songs, your choir songs and  
those special country music songs

I was the one who taught you to ride a bike, to bake a  
cake & helped you memorize your Bible verses, your  
spelling words and the Gettysburg address!

When I really stop to think about it,

I am the luckiest woman in the world

You see, for 14 years I got to be your mother and

Forever, and for always, I will be

Tyler's Mom!!!

Matthew Tyler Smith

September 20, 1992 ~ August 1, 2006

The BSF chapter is grateful for the generosity of our  
members and friends for their love gifts. Our sincere  
appreciation to:

AMBER, DEBORAH & FRANK ROWLAND

*In Loving Memory of*

*Elizabeth Rowland*

*February 16, 1984 ~ September 28, 2003*

## A Special Thank You

On behalf of the entire Burke/Springfield/Fairfax  
Chapter of The Compassionate Friends, we  
sincerely extend our heartfelt gratitude to  
Kathy and Chuck Collins for their Co-  
Leadership of the Chapter over the past  
several years. Through their effort, devotion  
and commitment, they have made the BSF  
Chapter one of the strongest and most well  
attended chapters in the Northern Virginia  
area. Their care and compassion has given so  
many bereaved parents hope and comfort. We  
wish them well in their new positions as  
Regional Coordinators and are appreciative  
that their work and dedication to The  
Compassionate Friends continues on.

Thanks Chuck and Kathy, job well done!

 Please Note Our New Phone Number 

*for the Burke/Springfield/Fairfax Chapter*

**(703) 622-3639**

# Washington DC Chapter

## Steering Committee D. C. Chapter

### Chapter Leader

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(Darnell's mom)  
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### Co-Leader & Acting Secretary:

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### Hostess/ Refreshment:

Cecil Robertson  
(Elizabeth's dad)

### Member at Large

Reginald Woodard  
(Reggie Jr's dad)

### Newsletter Reporter:

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### Webmaster:

Tanya Smith  
(Darnell Jr.'s Mom)



*Summer is coming to an end and children are returning to school/college. The trees will soon begin to change its coat for the fall. Cold, snow, drab days (cabin fever) and holidays will soon follow. What will you do this year that you didn't do last year? How will you get through some of these hard days? How will you get through the loss of your Angel during this time of the year?*

*Remember that you are not alone and that you don't have to go through your grief alone. If you've attended a TCF meeting call and talk to one of the members. Ask a neighbor, co-worker or friend to go for a walk with you or walk up and down the steps in your building/home. Any exercise will do. Take a class; learn a new craft/hobby. Volunteer to help others in a different age group than your child (ren)\sibling. Purchase a new book or treat yourself to a spa day. There is no right or wrong way to get through a day of grief. Your loved one will always be a part of you regardless of whether they died recently or several years ago. There are ways to miss them, honor their memory and heal at the same time. It depends on what you feel up to doing. The important thing to remember is that days will come and go and even though we still have to live, you don't have to rush, but take it one step and one day at a time,, and just know that you can ask for help along the way.*

*We can honor our loved ones in the most important way which is to allow ourselves to heal and carry on their memories. As we do so we will be able to reach out and share and help others along the way. Then we can say "I understand what you are going through and it's ok to feel the way you feel, I'm here for you and know that you don't have to walk alone." My journey has been four years now and I've learned that those who don't understand may not want to hear about Joshua and hope that I get over the loss, but my TCF family understands and will always listen. Finding some type of support is the best way to get through those painful days, especially during the time of year when you're home alone most often. You are not ALONE! We are here for you!*

## TCF Conference Opportunities



*From Despair ...  
A Glimmer of Hope!*

**Eastern Pennsylvania  
2007 Regional Conference  
September 28, 29, 30, 2007**

The Eastern PA regional will be held at the Radisson Valley Forge Hotel, 1160 First Ave., King of Prussia, PA. For a conference schedule, list of workshops, and further information contact chapter leader or TCF website:

<http://www.compassionatefriends.org>

**Chapter Leadership Training Program!  
September 14-16, 2007  
Holiday Inn Omaha Convention Centre  
Omaha, NE**

A weekend of workshops and networking to help you...understand TCF's heritage and future, share ideas with leaders of other chapters, find funding in your community, conduct chapter meetings that provide comfort and hope to your members and create minimum stress for leaders as well as learn community awareness techniques to make sure your community understands and supports The Compassionate Friends. You can also learn to organize your chapter to share the workload and ensure leadership transition.

Program will begin at 6:30 PM Friday,  
September 14 and end by 11:00 AM  
Sunday, September 16, 2007



**The Compassionate Friends Online Support  
Community Sessions Schedule**

**Register for Online Support Community /  
Update Password**

<http://www.compassionatefriends.org>



Please submit your poems, stories, or special notes for the October, 2007 issue by the 3rd of September, 2007. Thank you for your continued support.

Michelle Lake,  
571-227-3016, [malake@hotmail.com](mailto:malake@hotmail.com)

## *September Song*

I wonder how many people think about what it's like for a parent not to have to pack a Snoopy lunch pail for their child ever again? September marks the reentry of kids into the world of academia. . .but for some parents it's the reminder, that the excitement of the children that electrifies the air won't be the same in their homes this year. So many hopes and dreams. . .and memories are wrapped up in what occupies a major part of a child's life. . .school time. Summer cushions us from having to be painfully aware that our child won't be walking to school with the other kids, or won't be trying out for the lead part in the school play, or won't need new school clothes, or won't fall in love with the girl he sits behind in Math class.

Parents who never had the pleasure of letting them go to school for the first time know what they missed. They remember their own first time and would like to have relived it with their child. They would have liked to have made it really special and asked all the questions that their own parents asked them when they arrived home from school. Hopes and dreams for this child "future will never be realized". I wonder if my neighbor remembers that if my baby had lived, this is the year he would have started kindergarten? I wanted him to have a Snoopy lunch box just like the other kids.

TCF, Portland, OR



**A special thank you** for your June love gifts:

Jackie and Paul Clark in memory of their daughter,

**Gigi Clark** (2/11/99 - 6/26/04)

Gretchen and Donald Young in memory of their daughter,

**Julia Young** (9/10/91 - 3/13/05)

**A Warm Welcome To:**

Susan and Roy Cleveland

Margaret Armstrong

Rosemarie Powalski

We understand how difficult it is to reach out for help, especially in your early grief. We hope to be an ongoing source of support.

## *If You'll Be My Friend*

If you'll be my friend, there's something you must know.  
I'm not the friend I used to be, I wish it were not so.

I may look like your old friend,  
but I am definitely someone new.

I used to remember your birthday, now I can barely  
remember what day it is.

I used to bake you bread, now I anxiously wander  
through the grocery store.

I used to answer the telephone,  
now I'm not up for talking.

I gaze at each sunset while thinking about Heaven.

I used to worry about everyday hassles,

Now, I long for moments filled with peace.

If you'll be my friend, please know I'm forever changed.  
Since that day in September, the day I buried my son,  
all events are measured in comparison to the tragedy  
we have suffered.

I often wonder, "who would want to be my friend?"  
My burden is heavy, my pain too much for many to see.  
I just have to let you know, my friend, I've changed.

I have read that "friends become strangers and  
strangers become friends".

I know you'll be my friend the minute that we meet.

You know my thoughts and fears.

You understand my ups and downs.

I ask nothing of you, you ask nothing of me.

While sharing the most unfathomable pain,  
we became friends. You are another bereaved mom.

You may have known me "before",  
or you may have met me "after". . .

To you, my friend, one thing I ask,

Please allow me to grieve.

If you'll be my friend . . .

By Theresa Heitz, October 2004

Note: While reading this today, almost four years since  
Adam's death, I can see that I am, indeed, healing.

# PRINCE WILLIAM CHAPTER

## Does grief ever end?

*Ken Adams*

*Father of Kimberly*

When we lose someone we love, it seems that our grief will never end. The pain is with us all of the time, no matter what we are doing or who we are with. All of the feelings we are experiencing - the anger, the guilt, the sadness. How will we deal with them? How will we “get over” them? Will our lives ever return to normal, to what they were before the loss? Will my body ever feel normal again? Will I be able to sleep and eat like I used to do? If we get through our grief, will we forget our loved one? Will their memory fade away? These are questions that we all deal with in our grief. They are difficult to answer because we all handle our grief differently, we all have different losses. Here are some thoughts that may help you, ideas that I have had from my own experience.

I hate to say this, but I believe that we never “get over” our grief. I believe that our grief will be with us for the rest of our life. But, let’s examine what grief is and how it affects us. My definition of grief is “Reaction to Loss”. Simply that. We lose someone or something that has meaning to us and our minds and bodies react to the change. The reactions can be emotional, physical, spiritual, or cognitive. They are how we deal with the absence, the change in our lives and daily routines, our future. These reactions will continue throughout our lives because we will always have the loss. The loss never goes away, so our grief doesn’t either.

However, grief does change. Our reactions to the loss are different as we continue to think about them, talk about them, and learn to go on with our lives. We incorporate the grief, the loss, the change, into our lives, into ourselves. The grief becomes a part of us, a part of who we are. It changes us. Oh how it changes us. We will never be the same person. We can never go back to the way we were before. We all need to find out who this new person is, who we will become in the future. We need to find our new desires, our new callings, our new dreams for the future. And the best part is that we will not be alone. *We will always carry with us our loved one.* They will never leave us. They become incorporated into our beings also. They become a part of who we are and who we will become.

So, the answer the question “Does grief ever end?” is no. And believe it or not, that is a good thing.

## Death of a Child

The loss of a child is one of the cruelest blows that a parent can suffer. It is an out-of-order process that brings consuming pain and grief. It should be noted that bereaved parents do not ever “get over” the death of their child. Nor should they be expected to “snap back” to the person they once were. The death of a child is not an illness from which one can recover. It is a life altering change that parents must learn to live with. Bereaved parents are forced to do what they see as impossible. They must learn to rebuild their life without their beloved child.

Bereaved parents experience a wide array of frightening and intense emotions. All of these emotions are normal and natural. It is important for bereaved parents to understand that while they will always feel the pain and loss, the intensity does decrease with time.

Grieving the death of a child is a long, arduous journey. There are no guidebooks or directions through the process. If you find yourself stuck in your grief, you may benefit from the support of a counselor or a bereaved parent’s support group. Many parents also benefit by finding an outlet for their grief such as journaling, painting, gardening or other creative endeavors. Remember, you are not alone. Be patient with yourself.

# Our September Children Remembered

**Lunna Cotto Alomar**  
**Sep 11, 2000** Mar 08, 2002  
Sam and Marcelly Alomar  
Burke\Springfield\Fairfax

**Andy Bailey**  
Jun 15, 1977 **Sep 01, 1995**  
Roy and Sherry Bailey  
Burke\Springfield\Fairfax

**Kenneth Barnes Jr.**  
Jan 19, 1964 **Sep 24, 2001**  
Kenneth Barnes  
DC

**Aric Beane**  
Jan 15, 1973 **Sep 15, 2006**  
Irene Beane  
Allison Benner  
Burke\Springfield\Fairfax

**Jakob Bellamy**  
Apr 19, 1981 **Sep 12, 2002**  
Wayne and Linda Bellamy  
Burke\Springfield\Fairfax

**Brittany Binsted**  
**Sep 28, 1986** May 12, 2007  
Carol and Ron Binsted  
Burke\Springfield\Fairfax

**Adrian Gregory Buchanan**  
**Sep 25, 1984** Apr 01, 2002  
Pamolyn Buchanan  
DC

**Rik Budd**  
**Sep 30, 1969** Feb 11, 2005  
Marge and Mark Budd  
Burke\Springfield\Fairfax

**Kevin Whitfield Card**  
Dec 29, 1967 **Sep 28, 1994**  
Elva Card  
Arlington

**David Arthur Chu**  
**Sep 11, 1985** Sep 03, 2002  
Irwin and Jane Chu  
Burke\Springfield\Fairfax

**Kimberly Darlene Clark**  
**Sep 21, 1994** Jun 22, 2004  
Mark and Jennifer Clark  
Prince William

**Jason Clover**  
Jul 30, 1984 **Sep 28, 2003**  
Cheryl Clover  
Burke\Springfield\Fairfax

**Matthew Coffelt**  
**Sep 11, 1996** Jul 07, 2005  
Debbie Coffelt  
Leesburg

**Elizabeth Rose Coggins**  
Nov 30, 1978 **Sep 21, 1996**  
Ernie and Diane Coggins  
Arlington

**Jay Aaron Corbitt**  
Aug 31, 1970 **Sep 02, 1984**  
Veronica Stubbs  
DC

**XB Cox, IV**  
Nov 24, 1986 **Sep 22, 2006**  
Kelly and XB Cox  
Burke\Springfield\Fairfax

**Megan Criste**  
**Sep 14, 1983** Sep 18, 2005  
Kathy and Frank Criste  
Burke\Springfield\Fairfax

**Richard Davis**  
**Sep 26, 1981** Mar 05, 2007  
Susan Davis  
Burke\Springfield\Fairfax

**Buffy Durand**  
Nov 08, 1971 **Sep 10, 2003**  
Dottie Lambert  
Prince William

**Robert Thomas Everson**  
**Sep 22, 1984** May 25, 2004  
Robert and Deborah Everson  
Burke\Springfield\Fairfax

**Sarah Louise Farrel**  
**Sep 27, 1998** Nov 23, 1998  
Betty Farrel  
Arlington

**Cara Jan-Elle Gordon**  
**Sep 03, 1980** Oct 10, 2001  
William and Cynthia Gordon  
Burke\Springfield\Fairfax

**Ryan Hanover**  
Jun 16, 2003 **Sep 03, 2005**  
Paul and Anne Hanover  
Peggy and Joe Sorbera  
Arlington

**Keyra Denise Harden**  
**Sep 06, 2006** Sep 06, 2006  
Laura and Terry Harden  
Burke\Springfield\Fairfax

**Kayla Harris**  
Aug 30, 1990 **Sep 08, 2003**  
David and Candy Harris  
Prince William

**Adam Lewis Heitz**  
Jun 24, 1982 **Sep 25, 2003**  
Glenn and Theresa Heitz  
Lewis and Paulette Heitz  
Ronald and Pat Miller  
Leesburg

**Karl B "Kip" Hoch III**  
**Sep 10, 1969** May 18, 1999  
John and Lisa Bruch  
Arlington

**Matthew Joseph Hofman**  
**Sep 19, 1979** Jan 21, 2003  
Mary Jane Hofman  
Prince William

**James Fontaine Horton**  
Aug 02, 1979 **Sep 10, 1999**  
Beverly and Wright Horton  
Leesburg

**Michelle (Kaplan) Hume**  
Jun 09, 1964 **Sep 27, 2003**  
Harriet Kaplan  
Burke\Springfield\Fairfax

**Alexander Britton "Sandy" Hume**  
**Sep 02, 1969** Feb 23, 1998  
Clare Stoner Hume  
Arlington

**Tracey Victoria Inabinet**  
**Sep 26, 1970** Oct 06, 1997  
Thrumond Inabinet  
DC

**Angela Fay (Wojtowicz) Jewell**  
**Sep 18, 1973** Nov 22, 1998  
Ed and Fay Wojtowicz  
John Wojtowicz  
Arlington

**Vanessa Jewell**  
Jun 19, 1988 **Sep 21, 2004**  
Elena and Stuart Jewell  
Burke\Springfield\Fairfax

**Andrew G. Joe**  
**Sep 04, 1967** Dec 19, 1994  
Barbara Joe  
DC

**Kathleen Johnson**  
**Sep 10, 1962** Nov 10, 2004  
Jean Driscoll  
Arlington

**Eric Johnson**  
Feb 27, 1988 **Sep 16, 2004**  
Janet Celly  
Burke\Springfield\Fairfax

**Jordan Jones**  
**Sep 23, 1998** Aug 26, 2006  
Patricia Small  
Medena Jones  
Arlington

**Jessica Fabian Krammes**  
Dec 16, 1977 **Sep 14, 1994**  
Richard and Mary Ann Krammes  
Burke\Springfield\Fairfax

**Buffy Lambert**  
Nov 08, 1971 **Sep 10, 2003**  
Dottie Lambert  
Burke\Springfield\Fairfax

**David Lebowitz**  
May 05, 1966 **Sep 17, 1988**  
Steve and Karen Lebowitz  
Arlington

**Symme Lockley**  
Aug 16, 1998 **Sep 20, 2005**  
Michelle Lockley  
DC

**Timothy Lee Long**  
**Sep 21, 1967** May 07, 2004  
Lee and Sandra Long  
Leesburg

**Kevin Joseph Mackey**  
Dec 23, 1983 **Sep 08, 1998**  
Linea Mackey  
Arlington

**Kevin Mannion**  
Aug 09, 1977 **Sep 17, 1995**  
Bob and Sally Mannion  
Burke\Springfield\Fairfax

**David Alvin Maxfield**  
**Sep 01, 1973** Feb 26, 1992  
Al and Joyce Maxfield  
Prince William

**Pamela Maxfield**  
**Sep 10, 1967** Sep 16, 1993  
Al and Joyce Maxfield  
Prince William

**Marjorie Gail "Maggie" McKeon**  
Mar 02, 1969 **Sep 25, 1988**  
Paige Rossillo  
Arlington

**Bryan Kevin McLaughlin**  
Mar 18, 1981 **Sep 16, 2005**  
Gail and Steven McLaughlin  
Burke\Springfield\Fairfax

**Waldo Morales**  
**Sep 29, 1977** Nov 02, 2005  
Virginia and Teo Morales  
Burke\Springfield\Fairfax

**Laura Lynam**  
**Sep 24, 1987** Oct 17, 2004  
Terry and Melinda Lynam  
Arlington

**Carolyn Nelson**  
Jan 09, 1968 **Sep 18, 1995**  
Alicia P. Nelson  
DC

**Sean Stephen Noble**  
Apr 24, 1970 **Sep 30, 1993**  
Mary Anne Noble  
Burke\Springfield\Fairfax

**Kevin Sweet**  
Jul 05, 1988 **Sep 07, 2003**  
Dianne Nodland  
Burke\Springfield\Fairfax

**Roderick Norris Jr.**  
**Sep 10, 1996** Aug 15, 2001  
Sheila and Roderick Norris  
Burke\Springfield\Fairfax

**Benjamin Robert "Ben" Parker**  
**Sep 23, 1979** Jan 25, 2000  
Maurice and Constance Parker  
Arlington

**Matthew Pearce**  
May 19, 1977 **Sep 26, 2003**  
David Pearce  
Burke\Springfield\Fairfax

**DeVaughn Johnson**  
**Sep 10, 1987** Apr 03, 1993  
Barbara Phillips  
DC

**Chris Porter**  
May 02, 1973 **Sep 16, 1989**  
Russ and Nancy Porter  
Prince William

**Richard Joseph Postorino**  
Feb 15, 1978 **Sep 07, 1998**  
Kristie Postorino  
Arlington

**Andrea Dawn Reece**  
**Sep 14, 1979** Nov 24, 2000  
Stephen and Diane Reece  
Arlington

**Richard Salvatore Roberto**  
Dec 30, 1989 **Sep 25, 2006**  
Bonnie and Rich Roberto  
Leesburg

**Elizabeth Rowland**  
Feb 16, 1984 **Sep 28, 2003**  
Deborah Rowland  
Burke\Springfield\Fairfax

**Ewan Kennard Verschoor Saunier**  
Nov 06, 1995 **Sep 19, 1999**  
Jon-Paul and Caroline Saunier  
Arlington

**Theresa Schulten**  
Dec 28, 1944 **Sep 11, 2000**  
Grace Schulten  
Arlington

**Craig Michael Scott**  
**Sep 20, 1960** Oct 11, 1999  
Frederick and Anita Scott  
Arlington

**Darnell Smith Jr.**  
**Sep 14, 1980** Jul 26, 2001  
Tanya Smith  
DC

**Tyler Smith**  
**Sep 20, 1992** Aug 01, 2006  
Jennifer and John Smith  
Burke\Springfield\Fairfax

**Paul Carmelo Spirio**  
**Sep 02, 1964** Mar 22, 1981  
Carmelo Spirio  
Leesburg

**Kelly Marie Stanfield**  
Aug 10, 1982 **Sep 07, 2003**  
Jack and Susan Stanfield  
Burke\Springfield\Fairfax

**William Furey Sullivan**  
Mar 07, 1951 **Sep 03, 1992**  
Paul and Flora Sullivan  
Arlington

**Jessica Blair Szymanski**  
**Sep 05, 1984** Oct 15, 2002  
Dennis and Kathleen Szymanski  
Arlington

**Nash O. Thompson III**  
**Sep 02, 1968** Mar 03, 2001  
Nash and Manuela Thompson  
Arlington

**Anwar R. Trask**  
**Sep 01, 1999** Jan 29, 2004  
Alvin and Sonia Trask  
DC

**Molly Reid Trick Foley**  
**Sep 11, 1993** Aug 27, 1999  
Darcy Trick and Roger Foley  
Arlington

**Jeffrey Virostek**  
Jan 06, 1999 **Sep 25, 2003**  
Tasha and Stephen Virostek  
Burke\Springfield\Fairfax

**Alyssa Jane Weishoff**  
**Sep 30, 1992** Jul 12, 2005  
Lisa and Fred Weissoff  
Prince William

**Dana Denise Wood**  
**Sep 04, 1984** Oct 15, 2002  
Franklin and Marchelle Wood  
Arlington

**Julia Young**  
**Sep 10, 1991** Mar 13, 2005  
Gretchen and Donald Young  
Leesburg

# The Compassionate Friends



Trinity Presbyterian Church  
Arlington, DC, Leesburg, Prince William  
and Burke-Springfield-Fairfax Chapters  
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Arlington, VA 22205

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## ***GRANDPARENTS DAY SEPTEMBER 9<sup>TH</sup>***

*When my four children were growing up it seemed important to me to remind them when "Grandparents Day" rolled around each year. With one set of Grandparents it happened to co-inside with their Anniversary so they would often do a combination card or handmade gift for them. With my Mother and my Grandmothers living in different states they would make cards for them and we would telephone them.*

*While at the 30<sup>th</sup> TCF National Conference in Oklahoma City this July I had an opportunity to speak with many Grandparents grieving the death of a grandchild and they all said that the memories of times spent with their grandchild, no matter how brief, are what sustains them each day.*

*No matter what age the grandchild is they may need a gentle reminder to take a few moments and write a note, make a card or a phone call. It means so much.*

*If your children do not have living Grandparents take a look at the older people in your lives and send them a note or card. They may not have living grandchildren and it will make such a difference in their day.*



*HUGS, Betty Farrel, Sarah Louise's Nana, Arlington, VA Chapter TCF*

# **SEPTEMBER 2007**