



# THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

A self-help organization offering friendship and understanding to bereaved families

## SEPTEMBER 2016

### Inside Valley Forge

**Meetings are on the first Thursday** of every month at 7:45PM (ending at 9:30PM). We meet at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church Fellowship Hall, Valley Forge and Henderson RDs, King of Prussia, PA. **Phone on meeting evenings only** is 610-265-0733. All other times please call Rhonda at 484-919-0820.

#### Meeting Schedule and other TCF Events of interest

Sep 1 General Sharing

Oct 6 General Sharing

**We encourage newsletter writings from our members.** You may also submit articles written by others, please include the author of all articles submitted. **The cut-off date for newsletter entries is the 15th of the preceding month.**

**ARTICLES SHOULD BE SENT TO THE NEWSLETTER EDITORS.**

There are no dues or fees to belong to The Compassionate Friends, or to receive our newsletter. Your tax deductible donations (which we call love gifts) given in memory of your loved one enables us to defray the cost of chapter expenses, particularly the newsletter, meetings, and our outreach to the newly bereaved. **Please include any special tribute you wish printed in the newsletter along with your gift.**

If you donate to **United Way** at your place of work, and wish your contribution to go to the Valley Forge Chapter of The Compassionate Friends, you may do so by entering: **The Compassionate Friends - Valley Forge Chapter United Way ID# 04-104.** on your pledge form.

**PLEASE MAKE ALL CHECKS PAYABLE TO:  
TCF VALLEY FORGE CHAPTER  
SEND TO: CHAPTER LEADER  
RHONDA GOMEZ**

#### Chapter Leaders

Rhonda & Frank Gomez  
12 Brook Circle  
Glenmoore, PA 19343  
(484) 919-0820 Chapter cell phone  
email: [sugar@tcfvalleyforge.org](mailto:sugar@tcfvalleyforge.org)

#### Database Record Keeper

Frank Gomez

#### Webmaster

Frank Gomez  
Email: [frank@tcfvalleyforge.org](mailto:frank@tcfvalleyforge.org)

#### Newsletter Editors

Marie & Ken Hofmockel  
340 Allendale Road  
King of Prussia, PA 19406  
(610)337-1907  
email: [kendall.hofmockel@gmail.com](mailto:kendall.hofmockel@gmail.com)

#### Love Gift Acknowledgements

Connie Nolan

#### Treasurer

Emil Nunez

#### Librarian

Carole Bailey

#### Chapter Advisors

Marie & Ken Hofmockel

#### Regional Coordinators

Ann Walsh 717-515-3000  
Bobbi Milne 215-801-2840

#### National Headquarters

P.O. Box 3696  
Oak Brook, IL 60522-3696  
Toll Free: (877)969-0010  
[www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org)  
email: [national\\_office@compassionatefriends.org](mailto:national_office@compassionatefriends.org)

#### TCF Mission Statement

When a child dies, at any age, the family suffers intense pain and may feel hopeless and isolated. The Compassionate Friends provides highly personal comfort, hope, and support to every family experiencing the death of a son or a daughter, a brother or a sister, or a grandchild, and helps others better assist the grieving family.

**INSIDE VALLEY FORGE CHAPTER**

We send our love and Compassion to **Rusty Puglisi** and **family**. We recently learned of the passing of Rusty's husband, **Tony**, on May 23rd.

Rusty and Tony came to the Valley Forge Chapter of TCF shortly after the loss of their son **Michael** in 1994. They have always been very supportive of our Chapter with love gifts, serving as a facilitator, and on the Steering Committee.

**REFRESHMENTS**

**Mary Lou Harrison** in memory of my son, **♥Scott♥** on his birthday Aug 4.

**Lee & Robert Duffield** in memory of our son, **Michael Robin** (46).

**Refreshments** may be donated in memory of loved ones, please call **Rhonda (484) 919-0820**, or you may sign the refreshment chart located on the refreshment table.

-----  
**LOVE GIFTS**

**Lee & Robert Duffield** in loving memory of our son, **Michael Robin** (46).

**Joyce & Vern Kaiser** in loving memory of our son, **Michael** on his birthday August 4th.

**Rusty Puglisi**, in loving memory of my son, **Michael** on his anniversary on September 10th, and in memory of my husband, **Tony**, who passed away on May 23rd.

**Donald & Mary Rose** in loving memory of our daughter, **Marjorie Rose-Cotteta** on her birthday September 30th.

**Fred & Irene Sutton**, in loving memory of our son, **Jim Sutton** on his birthday August 7th.

**NEWSLETTER BY EMAIL**

**We are asking if possible , would you please receive your newsletter by email.**

We do not want to remove anyone from our newsletter mailing list who is benefiting from receiving it. We hope it is a help to you while going through your grief, giving you better understanding of your feelings, and letting you know **"We need not walk alone"**.

A newsletter helps to keep our TCF family informed of local and national events.

We consider this an important function of our program.

We are asking if you have email, would you consider receiving your newsletter in email format. You will receive your copy earlier if you opt to receive it by email. If you chose to use the email method of receiving your newsletter, you will have the option to switch back to the old method. If you wish to receive the newsletter by email please contact: **Frank Gomez: fgomez@hybridpoplars.com**

**OUR CHILDREN & SIBLINGS LOVED, SADLY MISSED AND REMEMBERED**

Each month some of us must face those special, but difficult days of birthdays and anniversaries. This month we ask your thoughts and prayers for the parents/siblings/relatives of the following children:

**We will no longer list the birth and death years of deceased persons in our newsletter.  
We have concerns this information could be misused, and result in an adversity for the families.**

**SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS**

**Jim & Michelle Angelini, son *Danny* 9/12**  
**David Bonga, daughter *Amanda* 9/15**  
**Robyn Buseman, daughter *Maya Buseman-Williams* 9/30**  
**Scott & Gail Campbell, daughter *Chelsea* 9/1**  
**Chris Carlton, brother *Eric* 9/5**  
**Judy & William Cosgrove, son *Michael Cosgrove* 9/4**  
**Reno & Bonnie Crescimone, son *Jonathan* 9/5**  
**Alex Crisanti, Jr., son *John Crisanti* 9/6**  
**Dorothy & G. Robert Daily, Sr., son *G Robert Daily, Jr.* 9/19**  
**Catherine Dardozi, grandson *Evan Schmidt* 9/29**  
**Michelle G. Doll, son *Justin* 9/1**  
**Bob & Connie Ercole, son *David* 9/26**  
**Julie & Joe Fabrizio, brother *John Russel Bryant* 9/24**  
**Sharon & Francis Gailey, son *Francis E. Gailey, III* 9/28**  
**Molly Gehring, son *Daniel* 9/12**  
**Rhonda and Frank Gomez, son *Frank Jr.* 9/30**  
**Jeanne R Helmers, sister *Mary Ann Helmers Kemme* 9/16**  
**Gail & Calvert G. Hess, Jr., son *Calvert G Hess, III* 9/4**  
**Walt & Adele Higgins, son/stepson *Brian* 9/22**  
**Michelle Hillstrom, daughter *Jen* 9/26**  
**Jacob & Rachel Himmelstein, son *Benjamin Himmelstein* 9/25**  
**Lesley Jones, son *Christopher* 9/14**  
**Gwen Kearns, son *Dennis J. Kearns, Jr.* 9/18**  
**Jacquie Kilroy, son *Shilen Kenneth* 9/4**  
**Suellen & Stephen King, daughter *Danelle Rossi* 9/18**  
**Elaine & James Madden, son *Andrew Madden* 9/26**  
**Frank & Bernadette McAllister, son *Christopher J. McAllister* 9/4**  
**Linda & Jim McGrath, son *Paul Drew McGrath* 9/26**  
**Joan Michini, son *Adam Jonah Michini* 9/28**  
**Jeffrey & Christine Miller, daughter *Teresa Leanne Miller* 9/12**  
**Betty (Elizabeth) Miller, son *Raymond "Jim"* 9/1**  
**Barbara & Jeff Norris, son *Greg* 9/21**  
**Mary O'Halloran, brother *Thomas M. O'Halloran* 9/1**  
**Winnie & James O'Halloran, son *Thomas M. O'Halloran* 9/1**  
**Elizabeth Orbann, daughter *Linda Elizabeth Johnson* 9/15**  
**Linda & Andrew Peoples, Jr., son *Brian A. Peoples* 9/7**

**SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS continued**

**Robert & Nancy Ricciardi**, daughter *Jessica Lee Ricciardi* 9/23  
**Ruth Richardson**, grandson *Nicholas Richardson* 9/1  
**Gina & Brian Richardson**, son *Nicholas Richardson* 9/1  
**Donald & Mary Rose**, daughter *Marjorie Rose-Cotteta* 9/30  
**Cathy Seehuetter**, daughter *Nina Seehuetter* 9/24  
**Cathy Siciliano**, son *Anthony* 9/15  
**Helen Smith**, son *Patrick Kenneth "Kenny" Smith* 9/5  
**Walter & Irene Stolarczyk**, daughter *Barbara Stolarczyk* 9/11  
**Emil & Joy Tkachick**, son *David L. Tkachick* 9/11  
**Sharon Venezia**, son *Justin Negron* 9/9  
**Shelly Wagner**, son *Andrew Wagner* 9/29  
**Kelly & Gary Walens**, son *Kevin McGinley* 9/22  
**Terry & Susan Weikel**, daughter *Jennifer* 9/26  
**Kathryn & Pat White**, son *Steven White* 9/16

**SEPTEMBER ANNIVERSARIES**

**Laura Bedrossian**, son *Teddy* - 9/24  
**Jeff & Donna Brown**, son *Kenneth Bernstiel* - 9/12  
**Ann Bruner**, sister *Katy Wade* - 9/27  
**Suzanne Carcarey**, son *Eddie* - 9/21  
**Phyllis & James Casey**, son *Jim "Jimmer" Casey* - 9/17  
**Theresa L Cole**, son *Christopher Michel* - 9/10  
**Laureen Cole**, brother *Chris* - 9/10  
**Tom & Irene Cornely**, son *Tom* - 9/1  
**Catherine Dardozzi**, son *James Dardozzi* - 9/7  
**Michelle G. Doll**, son *Justin* - 9/4  
**Sarah Fishel**, daughter *Allyson* - 9/15  
**Suze Goldberg**, uncle *Neal* - 9/3  
**Judi Griffith**, son *Steve* - 9/4  
**Brittany Hackman**, brother *Brian* - 9/1  
**Brooke Hackman**, son *Brian* - 9/1  
**Virginia Hagen**, son *Matthew D. Hagen* - 9/28  
**Jeanne R Helmers**, daughter *Betsy Helmers* - 9/7  
**Nancy Lee & Jerry Hess**, son *Jerry R.L. Hess* - 9/28  
**John Horulko**, son *Daniel* - 9/30  
**Monica Horulko**, son *Daniel* - 9/30  
**Barbara Jacobs**, daughter *Pamela Faye* - 9/1  
**Margaret C. Jones**, son *Christopher* - 9/15  
**Gwen Kearns**, son *Dennis J. Kearns, Jr.* - 9/28

## SEPTEMBER ANNIVERSARIES CONTINUED

Deborah Keevill, son *Brandon* - 9/1  
Donna Kendall, daughter *Jennifer* - 9/24  
Shirley & Philip C. Kennedy, son *Philip V. Kennedy* - 9/23  
Gloria & Jerry Koval, son *Steven* - 9/3  
Karen & Francis Legieko, son *John Francis Legieko* - 9/25  
Joanne & Thomas Lennen, son *Scott C. Lennen* - 9/2  
Maureen Lok, daughter *Jessica* - 9/25  
Joan Michini, son *Adam Jonah Michini* - 9/7  
Betsy Oakes, son *Bruce Schaeffer* - 9/2  
Marie O'Connon, son *Curran J.* - 9/8  
Elsie Oreski, son *Gregory T. Oreski* - 9/3  
Teresa and Ron Perkins, daughter *Allison* - 9/22  
Kathy & Jim Petrokubi, son *Andrew* - 9/26  
Mary Jane Pollart, son *Mark Andrew Steffler* - 9/7  
Rusty & Anthony Puglisi, son *Michael Puglisi* - 9/10  
Steve & Joann Reynolds, son *Chris* - 9/15  
Donald & Freda Rhinier, son *Glenn D. Rhinier* - 9/16  
Bonnie Rosen, son *Troy* - 9/29  
Marie Schmeltzer, son *Sam "Sonny" Schmeltzer* - 9/11  
Janet & Jonathan Schultz, brother *Marc Ernest Stein* - 9/9  
Abigail Schwartz, brother *Jake* - 9/13  
Charles & Tish Shaw, son *Charles "Corky" Shaw* - 9/29  
Ann Sherwood, daughter *Martha Sherwood Fransway* - 9/6  
Helen Smith, son *Patrick Kenneth "Kenny" Smith* - 9/17  
Anne & Charles Swann, daughter *Katherine Anne Swann* - 9/7  
Jean Sykora, son *Mark* - 9/27  
Renee Teufel, son *Gregory* - 9/24  
Emil & Joy Tkachick, son *David L. Tkachick* - 9/5  
Barbara Tuller, son *Charles* - 9/24  
Weldon & Marie Tyson, son *Ronald C. Stewart* - 9/21  
Sharon Venezia, son *Justin Negron* - 9/17  
Lauretta Wagner, daughter *Traci Wagner* - 9/10  
Kelly & Gary Walens, son *Kevin McGinley* - 9/28  
Lucia Watters, daughter *Luanne Zambino* - 9/15  
Mary Willinger, sister *Annette* - 9/27  
Muriel Wilson, son *John F. Shaffer* - 9/25  
Gisela Witte, son *Bruce G. Edlund* - 9/22

**ARE YOU "HEARING"  
WHAT THEY ARE REALLY "SAYING"?**

Because we welcomed (and needed) all the support systems available when our son, Ted, died in July 1985, my wife and I attended our first TCF meeting that September. There we found caring/loving people, with whom we could share our hurt and our pain.

We didn't need to justify our runaway emotions, or our crazy, totally illogical thinking. We found a safe haven among a group of other human beings who really understood how we felt - who really knew "where we were" (because they were or had been in the same place!) -and who could say (without our taking offense) "I know how you feel"!

But since joining TCF and from listening to similar stories from so many people over the past couple of years, it appears that we are...you are...I am...sometimes far too quick in turning away the helping hands offered to us by old friends the old friends we now too quickly label as "unfeeling", "insensitive", or maybe even "thoughtless"!

Could it be that when they are most needed, we turn away the "helping hands" of old friends because our grief has affected our hearing? We hear "words", not meanings... This at a time when for most of us the only truly consoling words are not to be heard. "Wake up, you are having a bad dream!" Which of us has not been on the receiving end of a phone call, where (by our current standards) a much too cheery voice asks, "How are you doing?". Or maybe the caller asks. "Want to go out to lunch?" (Or to a

movie?). Or maybe this "insensitive" old friend wants to know, "when you are going to come back to (whatever -the women's club, the bowling team, the poker game. ... fill in the. blank yourself \_\_\_\_\_? Did we - any of us - consider for even a fleeting moment, that those words (spoken in a much too happy tone!) were not really intended to be a question we were supposed to answer. The "how about lunch", the "when are you coming back to..," words are the best most of us come up with when a dear friend is hurting badly.

Could it be they are just reaching out to us - the best way they know how! Could it be they are trying to get us to the place we were before our child died (not knowing of course that's a place we can never/ever get to again!). They call to let us know we're not alone - that they are there for us-and sometimes we hear them - but not always!

So maybe, "How are you doing"? (Cheerfully spoken by a friend) really means, should be "'heard" to mean, "I care for you" "I hurt for you" "I'm here for you", and "I only wish I could do - or say- something to relieve your pain."

If that's what we meant when we said those words to someone in the past, why can't we hear that same meaning when our friends now say the very same words to us?

Ed Gormley, TCF Bergen-Passaic, NJ

**Maybe, . . .  
We need to read  
"between the lines"**

## SHARED THOUGHTS ON HEALING, BUT LEAVING A RESIDUE

Sometimes we have to do a lot of reflecting to know where we are in our grief. It is good to look back where we have been. I can well remember no matter how bright the sun would shine, the darkness always remained. It was difficult to envision that one day, we would speak of Douglas and the fond memories would overshadow the pain. It takes time to accept that our life will never be the same again. It will be different, and we have to learn to live with the change. It takes a lot of courage to want a full life again. In the beginning it is easier to just take one day at a time, and not even think of the future. Losing our child or sibling can take the spark out of any plans we may have had. We are numb, and can not feel the joy we once knew.

It takes a long time to just get through a day. After much talking about our loss, and dealing with our grief, we begin to think of a tomorrow. Sometimes we become very impatient with our progress. Perhaps one of the best ways of measuring it is to take a look as to how we view others. We can feel progress when we forgive others for painful comments, made out of ignorance. We know we are going in the right direction, when we accept how others grieve, and know it is the best way for them.

We will always have sensitive areas that bring back old memories. Birthdays and anniversaries are particularly difficult, for the birthday iterates that they can not grow any older, and enjoy the next stages of their life. The anniversary puts more time between our loved one and us. Family events and holidays pull at our heart strings, for they are no longer there to make the gathering complete. It magnifies the missing link. I find it very difficult to see Doug's friends with their families, for I know he did not get to experience this happy and mature segment of life. We will always have a residue of events that remind us of things our children, or siblings, can no longer be a part of. But after many years the pain is no longer gut-wrenching, but it does sometimes cause us to stop and miss what we no longer have. I don't think we would want this missing to go away completely. It is much more brief and not nearly so intense. We can concentrate on other things in life, and still remember our child or sibling. Eventually we can learn to laugh again, and even appreciate a sunrise or sunset, and know it was put there for us.

One of the most positive things we do is to reach out to others, to help to ease another's pain. Giving of ourselves brings much healing. It helps us to realize how far we have come, when we can touch the lives of the newly bereaved. We encourage you to phone one another, and know the gift of love brought about through sharing your pain.

God Bless, *Marie Hofmockel*, TCF Valley Forge, PA

---

### WHY BUTTERFLIES?

Since the early centuries of the Christian Church, the butterfly has symbolized the resurrection and life after death. The caterpillar signifies life here on earth; the cocoon, death; and the butterfly, the emergence of the dead into a new, beautiful and more free existence.

Elizabeth Kubler-Ross movingly tells of seeing butterflies drawn all over the walls of children's dormitories in the World War II concentration camps. Since children are intuitive, she concludes that these children knew their fate and were leaving us a message.

TCF has adopted the butterfly as one of their symbols, a sign of hope to us that our children are living in another dimension with greater beauty and freedom.

- *author unknown*

God on His throne in heaven,  
 looked around at his flowers so fair,  
 And then He sought a blossom on earth,  
 from those he had there.

To be a part of such heavenly company,  
 the bloom must be pure and sweet,  
 And the little bud that was chosen,  
 was the child who played at our feet.

Sorrow is great at the loss of our child,  
 at the parting of one we love,  
 But parting was made that our child might go,  
 to brighten the heaven above.

**Author unknown**

Luanne's prayer card  
 Submitted by **Lucia Watters**  
 To my daughter, *Luanne*  
 on her third anniversary in heaven.

**To those I love and to those who have loved me.**

When I am gone, release me, and let me go,  
 I have so many things to see and do.  
 You must not tie yourselves to me with tears,  
 Be happy that we had so many years.  
 I gave to you my love, but you can only guess,  
 How much you gave to me in happiness.  
 I thank you for the love you have shown,  
 But now it's time I traveled on alone.  
 So grieve awhile for me, if you must.  
 Then let grief be comforted by trust.  
 It's only for a short time that we must part,  
 So bless the memories with your heart.  
 I won't be far away, but life goes on,  
 So if you need me, call and I will come.  
 Though you can't see me or touch me I'll be near,  
 With all of my love around you soft and clear  
 And when this way you must come,  
 I'll greet you with a smile and a 'Welcome Home.'

Author **Kendra Tyler**, Portland Oregon

Submitted by *Lucia Watters*

**My Dear Son,**

We would like you to know that we miss you and that so much has changed because of you. We always thought this sort of thing happened to other people, not us. Maybe in your heart, you thought you were doing us a favor by taking your own life. What hurts most is that you never really said good-bye or gave us a chance to say good-bye to you. Our eyes have been filled with tears as we've tried to change what has been, tried to understand your despair, your mystery. At times, we have been angry with you for what you did to yourself, for what you did to us. At times we've felt responsible for your death. We've searched for what we did or failed to do -- for the clues we missed. Yet we also know that, no matter what, we couldn't choose for you. We are learning to stop feeling responsible for your death. If we were responsible for you, you'd still be alive! We all think of you so often, even when it hurts to remember. We are lonely for your presence and whenever we hear your songs, we still cry for you. We feel sad that you're not here to share so many events with us. That's when our mornings have no beginnings and our nights seem long as winter. Slowly, though, it's getting less hard. We try to remember the good times. Maybe, we are seen smiling a little more. Yes, we are learning to live again, realizing that we cannot die because you chose to die. We pray that you are at peace. At the end of our days, we look forward to being with you again.

*Rusty Puglisi*, TCF Valley Forge Chapter, PA  
 To my son, *Michael Puglisi* -9/10



## A LOVE LETTER TO MY CHILDREN

You are great kids. You have always been great kids, although I haven't always been a great mom. After your brother died, I was hardly any kind of mom at all. I was so lost in my own grief, I wasn't there for you. You were bewildered, scared, and hurt, but I couldn't seem to reach out to you beyond my own pain. I was like a day-old helium balloon drifting along, not sure whether my place was with you or with your brother.

I didn't drift for long. You grabbed my string and yanked me back! The yowls and shrieks still ring in my ears. "Mom all my underwear is dirty!" or "Mom, I'm starved!" or "Mom, he punched me!" Your brother was being cared for by his heavenly Father, but you needed your earthly mother. It was your need for me that saved my life.

I'm sorry that your brother's death robbed you of your childhood. While other kids fretted about what to wear or which movie to see, you wondered when the tears and sadness would ever end and if we would be a family again. If I could have shielded you from such great sorrow.

Your lives were changed forever, and the future was uncertain, but you kept going. You supported and inspired me as we traveled that rocky road of grief together. You talked about your brother when no one else would say his name. You kept his picture in your rooms and proudly pointed out to friends, "This was my brother." You used his things, but gently. You reminded me of the cute, funny things he said and did. You included him in your bedtime prayers. You still do. Someday I believe you will tell your own children about your brother. Thank you for keeping his memory alive. Because of the tragedy you experienced, you are more mature than other kids your age. You possess strength and courage beyond your years. You are resilient; little things don't get you down. Best of all, you are kind, sensitive, and compassionate to others. I adore you. You are my life.

Love , Mom

*Patricia Dyson* - TCF, Beaumont, TX

## ONE SWEET DAY

I can't wait till that ONE SWEET DAY,  
When I see her again.  
In the streets of gold and the heavens so, so bright,  
I just can't wait till that ONE SWEET DAY.  
When I was young, she would take me everywhere,  
She would always be there.  
Till one day she was there no more,  
I just can't wait till that ONE SWEET DAY,  
When I see her again.

by *Lynn M. Fischer*, age 10  
for her sister: Lisa M. Fischer, age 23  
Valley Forge, PA

## DEALING WITH RAGE

One of the most important ways of dealing with rage is trying to **forgive** yourself and others. Note: **forgive** contains the word **give**.

You **give** yourself the opportunity to place behind you those past agonies that diminish your strength and vigor.

You **give** yourself new energies to move on and meet new challenges.

You **give** yourself permission to live in an unfair, disappointing world.

Forgiveness offers a very powerful way to pull yourself out of the negative spiral of bitterness and hard feelings.

*Earl A. Grollman*

From "Straight Talk for Teenagers"

### A Moment of Help

After I lost my son Nino to a drowning accident, a young scientist walked into my office at Denver University. He was always extremely detached in his interactions with people, so I was not surprised that he asked almost casually whether I was feeling better.

I could not answer his question, because I had already started to cry. "Would you rather not have had a son at all?" he wanted to know. I shook my head and cried harder.

He handed me his handkerchief and said firmly, "I suppose you need to cry yourself well." And without even a hint of emotion, he sat down facing me.

In the presence of so much detachment, I managed to recover my "composure." But the visitor took my hand and held it silently, until I began to cry again. Then he said, "Keep crying. You are not well yet."

I will not forget this encounter. It told me two things when I very much needed to hear them. First; the expression of grief is necessary. And second; after a great sorrow, we can expect - in time - to be "well" again *Sascha Wagner*

### AND THE OSCAR GOES TO . . .

The Oscars ... Oh! The Oscars ... This award goes to the best actors and actresses of their time. These awards are broken down into different categories, such as; drama, comedy, action, horror and so on, and so forth.

As these awards are given out, there are large screens, so everyone can watch the actors play their parts, to the best of their abilities. They also have tributes to the best actors, who walks on stage and screen. While these actors go to collect their lifetime achievement awards, and thank everyone for their fame and success, they usually get a standing ovation in honor of their great acting abilities.

But I would like to take this one step further; I know of a group of actors that would put the hall of famer's back to square one, with lessons to learn. These people come in all kinds of races, sizes and ages. They act with the best of the best! But, not only when the cameras are rolling. They have learned to do this award-winning act in all categories, seven days a week, twenty-four hours a day, until the final curtain falls. No matter what the role is calling for, from drama to comedy, they are the tops. But to my surprise, there are no Oscars, no recognition, and they ask for none. They are the only ones that know how good they are, and in most part keep it a secret.

In the last part of the year 1994, I became a part of this group. They have taught me, along with my family, how to act to the best of our abilities. We work on these roles, from the time we awake, until the time we go to bed. And each day we learn a whole new different role, and we perfect the act before we fall asleep.

So, I tip my hat to these people, who are silent. Who taught me well, and I hope to do the same for the newcomers. So here's to you; My Compassionate Friends, that we may stay together till we meet our children again. And who gave new meaning to the old phrase, "The world is a stage, and life goes on".

Our daughter **Tiffany**, at the age of 13, was run over by a train. She and her best friend **Tammy** were both killed. Till we meet again,

**Tiffany** (6/20/80 - 6/10/94)  
*Marlene Boylan* and family  
 TCF-Valley Forge Chapter

I looked up from my sorrow,  
wiped the tears aside and found  
the day was new, the sun shone on,  
the world would still go 'round.

“How can this be?” I screamed and cried,  
“I’m sure to fly apart!  
The center of my world is gone,  
A stove goes through my heart!”

“I’ve got to learn survival,” I  
reasoned through the pain.  
“My loved ones need me to go on  
to share their lives again.”

“To laugh once more and plan ahead  
for living, future times.”  
I had to think of some way I  
could WANT to start that climb.

And, too, among the things HE loved  
in me, lest I forget,  
My humor, spark, my drive and strength  
when troubling times beset.

I looked up ‘cross that table there  
and into eyes that cried.  
So pained (like mine), so deep in grief –  
your loved ones, too, had died.

And in the midst of so much hurt,  
my heart felt such concern  
For each and every heartache there,  
we’ve all so much to learn.

And as I listened, shared and wept  
together with you all,  
A tiny light was lighted and  
some weight began to fall.

None of us is healed or whole,  
we’ve not emerged brand new.  
But we’re surely somewhat stronger now  
in what we seek to do.

My friends, I’ve gathered strength from  
the tears I saw there in your eyes.  
In quiet ways we’ve learned to help  
each other realize.

That looking up through veils of tears  
we still can vaguely see  
And help some other friend “look up.”  
THANK YOU for helping me.

*Kay Redcoff*  
TCF – Bradenton, FL

---

There is a sacredness in tears.  
They are not the mark of weakness,  
but of power.  
They speak more eloquently than  
ten thousand tongues.

They are messengers of  
overwhelming grief,  
of deep contrition  
and unspeakable love.

*Washington Irving*



# THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS, INC.

Valley Forge, PA Chapter  
Rhonda & Frank Gomez  
Chapter Leaders  
12 Brook Circle  
Glenmoore, PA 19343

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
SOUTHEASTERN  
PA  
PERMIT # 635

## RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



### **...A bereavement organization**

**For parents, siblings & families**

**We offer friendship, love and understanding**

**We talk, we listen, we share, we care**

#### **The Compassionate Friends 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. ©2007