

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

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

Inside Valley Forge

Meetings are on the first Thursday of every month, at 7:45 PM (ending at 9:30 PM). We meet at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Founders Hall, Valley Forge Road and Henderson Rds., King of Prussia, PA.

For info call Rhonda (484) 919-0820

Meeting Schedule and other TCF Events of Interest.

Meeting - 9/7/2023

Future Meeting - 10/5/2023

The next event scheduled Sept .
23, 2023 which is our Butterfly
Release at 3 p.m.



September 2023

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compassionatefriends.org

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 editor.

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 the 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.

Please make all checks Payable to:
TCF VALLEY FORGE CHAPTER
Send to Rhonda Gomez

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.

NEW FRIENDS

We welcome our newly bereaved friends, sorry for the cause that brings you. We all have been in the depths of despair, and offer unconditional love and understanding to all of you, it sometimes takes several meetings to feel the full benefit of group sharing. We offer confidentiality, unconditional love and understanding to all of you.

No new people

REFRESHMENTS

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.

The Chapter

LOVE GIFTS

No love gift this month

BUTTERFLY RELEASE AND PROGRAM

Saturday, September 23, 2023 at 3 PM

Upper Merion Township Park

175 West Valley Forge Road, King of Prussia, PA 19406

the cost of each butterfly is \$6.50

Everyone Welcome - Bring a Friend

Please see the July Newsletter for registration form!!

For any questions, please call TCF Valley Forge — 484-919-0820

"HOLD ON"

For those of you who are hurting too deeply, whose pain is too fresh, whose child's death is still too close to hear me, I'd like to give you the message "hold on, hold on tight." Right now for you, there seems to be little sunshine, little hope and no energy to choose life. So hang on tight. And if you know someone who is struggling just to hang on, reach out to them right now. Loan them some of your strength, knowing they will loan you some of theirs when you need it. That's what TCF is all about; helping each other through the anger, the pain, the emptiness, the silence, helping each other rediscover life. We have to learn to dream new dreams and hope new hopes, and it is here with the love and support of our new family of friends, that our journey begins.

Author Unknown

- The depth of your sorrow diminishes
- slowly and, at times, imperceptibly. Your
- recovery is not an act of disloyalty to the
- one who has died. Nor is it achieved by
- forgetting the past. Try to strike a
- delicate balance between a yesterday that
- should be remembered and a tomorrow
- that must be created.

Author Unknown

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.

Anniversaries

Courtney Aaron - Justin - brother - 9/17
 Jeff & Donna Brown - Kenneth Bernstiel - son - 9/12
 Suzanne Carcarey - Eddie - son - 9/21
 Phyllis & James Casey - Jim 'Jimmer' Casey - son - 9/17
 Laureen Cole - Chris - brother - 9/10
 Theresa L Cole - Christopher Michel - son - 9/10
 Nancy Dalton - Jay - son - 9/28
 Catherine Dardozzi - James Dardozzi - son - 9/7
 Michelle G Doll - Justin - son - 9/4
 Sarah Fishel - Allyson - daughter - 9/15
 Diana & Andrew Galliano - Andrew - son - 9/10
 Suze Goldberg - Neal - Uncle - 9/3
 Frank & Rhonda Gomez - Donnie Renninger - brother - 9/9
 Brooke Hackman - Brian - son - 9/1
 Brittany Hackman - Brian - brother - 9/1
 Virginia Hagen - Matthew D. Hagen - son - 9/28
 Jeanne R Helmers - Betsy Helmers - daughter - 9/7
 Nancy Lee & Jerry Hess - Jerry R.L. Hess - son - 9/28
 Rick & Susan Hilsberg - Amy - daughter - 9/16
 John Horulko - Daniel - son - 9/30
 Monica Horulko - Daniel - son - 9/30
 Gwen Kearns - Dennis J. Kearns, Jr. - son - 9/28
 Deborah Keevill - Brandon - son - 9/1
 Donna Kendall - Jennifer - daughter - 9/24
 Shirley Kennedy - Philip V. Kennedy - son - 9/23
 Gloria and Jerry Koval - Steven - son - 9/3
 Joanne & Thomas Lennen - Scott C. Lennen - son - 9/2
 Mary Leshem - Michael - son - 9/16
 Maureen Lok - Jessica - daughter - 9/25
 Eileen McCormick - Lauren - daughter - 9/18
 Eileen & Chris McKeown - Eric - son - 9/18
 Alfred J. & Joan Michini - Adam Jonah Michini * - son - 9/7
 Marie O'Connon - Curran J - son - 9/8
 Elsie Oreski - Gregory T. Oreski - son - 9/3
 Teresa and Ron Perkins - Allison - daughter - 9/22
 Kathy & Jim Petrokubi - Andrew - son - 9/26
 Mary Jane Pollart - Mark Andrew Steffler - son - 9/7
 Steve & Joann Reynolds - Chris - son - 9/15
 Donald & Freda Rhinier - Glenn D. Rhinier - son - 9/16
 Bonnie Rosen - Troy - son - 9/29; Eugene - Husband - 9/3

Anniversaries - Cont'd

Lynn Saxon - Michael - son - 9/17
 Marie Schmeltzer - Sam Sonny Schmeltzer - son - 9/11
 Charles & Tish Shaw - Charles Corky Shaw - son - 9/29
 Fietta Sherlock - Jeremy - son - 9/17
 Helen (Barb, daughter) Smith - Patrick Kenneth 'Kenny' Smith - son - 9/17
 Jean Sykora - Mark - son - 9/27
 Renee Teufel - Gregory - son - 9/24
 Weldon & Marie Tyson - Ronald C. Stewart - son - 9/21
 Nancy Venafrá - Justin Aaron - son - 9/9
 Sharon Venezia - Justin Negron - son - 9/17
 Kelly & Gary Walens - Kevin McGinley - son - 9/28
 Diana Warner - Will - son - 9/18
 Lucia Watters - Luanne Zambino - daughter - 9/15
 Gisela Witte - Bruce G. Edlund - son - 9/22

SHARED THOUGHTS ON SETTING YOUR OWN PACE FOR GRIEVING

When we are in our early stages of grief, it can be a relief to see the summer's flurry of activities end. Picnics, family vacations, gatherings with happy children that once were such special times, can bring additional agony after the loss of a child or sibling. Watching other families, who have not lost one of its members, can cause us to fantasize, what could have been for us.

When we feel so all encompassed with grief, it is hard to imagine that we can one day enjoy life again. Our life seems so irrevocably changed. When we first begin our journey of grief, and pain permeates every part of our being, the road appears so dark and endless. We so desperately need someone to appreciate what we are experiencing and to understand we have been immobilized by our loss. It is normal for those around us, who have not experienced such a loss to want us to "snap back" to our old self. What they cannot appreciate is that all of our reactions are normal. Our fast paced society does not allow us proper time for grieving. It is healthy to cry, and talk about the deceased. It isn't time alone that heals; it is primarily the grief work. And we can only have a healthy healing grief process when we move at our own pace. Some need to spend more time than others on particular aspects of grief. The age of the deceased, the relationship you had with them, the cause of death and a long list of circumstances can create varying intensity of pain in different areas of grief. Each person in grief has to make their own path. We all hurt to the depth of our capacity, but each path to recovery is unique. It is very helpful to have someone who is non-judgmental with whom we can express our concerns. Putting our thoughts into words can bring healing.

It takes all the strength we can muster up to get our lives back together again. In our early stages of grief we cannot fathom ever leading a full life, laughing, As we progress in our grief, and much healing being productive, or being a functional human being again. It is normal to feel our life is over. (cont'd on page 6)

BIRTHDAYS

Rita Adi - Shai Adi - son - 9/4
 Robyn Buseman - Maya Buseman-Williams - daughter - 9/30
 Scott & Gail Campbell - Chelsea - daughter - 9/1
 Chris Carlton - Eric - brother - 9/5
 Judy & William Cosgrove - Michael Cosgrove - son - 9/4
 Reno & Bonnie Crescimone - Jonathan - son - 9/5
 Alex Crisanti, Jr. - John Crisanti - son - 9/6
 Dorothy & G. Robert Daily, Sr. - G. Robert Daily, Jr. - son - 9/19
 Catherine Dardozzi - Evan Schmidt - grandson - 9/29
 Michelle G Doll - Justin - son - 9/1
 Bob & Connie Ercole - David - son - 9/26
 Sharon & Francis Gailey - Francis E. Gailey, III - son - 9/28
 Molly Gehring - Daniel - son - 9/12
 Frank & Rhonda Gomez - Frank Jr. - son - 9/30
 Paul Hagerty III - Paul - son - 9/2
 Jeanne R Helmers - Mary Ann Helmers Kemme - sister - 9/16
 Mike & Lorie Henry - Blair - Granddaughter - 9/29
 Gail & Calvert G. Hess, Jr. - Calvert G. Hess, III - son - 9/4
 Walt & Adele Higgins - Brian - son/stepson - 9/22
 Michelle Hillstrom - Jen - daughter - 9/26
 Jacob & Rachel Himmelstein - Benjamin Himmelstein - son - 9/25
 Lesley Jones - Christopher - son - 9/14
 Gwen Kearns - Dennis J. Kearns, Jr. - son - 9/18
 Jacquie Kilroy - Shilen Kenneth - son - 9/4
 Suellen & Stephen King - Danelle Rossi - daughter - 9/18
 Sara & Carl Kresge - Grant Kenneth Puskas - great grandson - 9/6
 Frank & Bernadette McAllister - Christopher J. McAllister - son - 9/4
 Linda & Jim McGrath - Paul Drew McGrath - son - 9/26
 Alfred J. & Joan Michini - Adam Jonah Michini - son - 9/28
 Jeffrey & Christine Miller - Teresa Leanne Miller - daughter - 9/12
 Betty (Elizabeth) Miller - Raymond Jim - son - 9/1
 Barbara & Jeff Norris - Greg - son - 9/21
 Mary O'Halloran - Thomas M. O'Halloran - brother - 9/1
 Winnie & James O'Halloran - Thomas M. O'Halloran - son - 9/1
 Elizabeth Orbann - Linda Elizabeth Johnson - daughter - 9/15
 Linda & Andrew Peoples, Jr. - Brian A. Peoples - son - 9/7
 Matthew and Erica Puskas - Grant Kenneth - son - 9/6
 Joanne Quirion - Marissa - daughter - 9/26
 Robert & Nancy Ricciardi - Jessica Lee Ricciardi - daughter - 9/23
 Marcella Rice - Eloise - sister - 9/19
 Gina & Brian Richardson - Nicholas Richardson - son - 9/1
 Ruth Richardson - Nicholas Richardson - grandson - 9/1
 Mary Rose - Marjorie Rose-Cotteta - daughter - 9/30
 Cathy Seehuetter - Nina Seehuetter - daughter - 9/24
 Cathy Siciliano - Anthony - son - 9/15
 Helen (Barb, daughter) Smith - Patrick Kenneth 'Kenny' Smith - son - 9/5
 Anna Maria Tamaro-Bintliff - John - son - 9/27



BIRTHDAYS - Continued

Sharon Venezia - Justin Negron - son - 9/9
 Shelly Wagner - Andrew Wagner - son - 9/29
 Kelly & Gary Walens - Kevin McGinley - son - 9/22
 Terry & Susan Weikel - Jennifer - daughter - 9/26
 Kathryn & Pat White - Steven White - son - 9/16

SHARED THOUGHTS ON SETTING YOUR OWN PACE FOR GRIEVING

Continued from page 4

As we progress in our grief, and much healing, it is also normal for the intensity of our emotions to lessen, even though our grief may be lifelong process. We learn to live without our loved one being physically among us. That does not mean our loved one is not with us in our memory. The memories will always be a part of our being. We will always be the same to each other. Our love does not diminish as our grieving progresses, we remember the good times and put away the thoughts of "I wish I had", or "I should have". The pain softens and our memories are our most prized possession.

It takes a lot of mountain climbing to reach the valley in grief. It cannot be rushed; no one can do it for us.

I hope all the brilliant colors of fall can form a rainbow for you, and give you hope.

Marie Hofmockel - TCF Valley Forge, PA

A death by suicide triggers great amounts of anger and guilt. However, some of those feelings can be balanced by struggling to see that the suicide was not so much a deliberate, hostile act, but a gesture of utter hopelessness and despair. Reminders that the person was so driven by emotional whirlwinds that it was impossible to sense any ray of hope can temper, considerably, the emotional impact of a death by suicide.

One of the best responses to a suicide that I have ever heard came through a sermon delivered by the pastor of a young man who shot himself. With great eloquence, his pastor was able to convey tremendous hope through these words: "Our friend died on his own battlefield. He was killed in action fighting a civil war. He fought against adversaries that were as real to him as his casket is real to us. They were powerful adversaries. They took toll of his energies and endurance. They exhausted the last vestiges of his courage, and only God knows how this child of His suffered in the silent skirmishes that took place in his soul"

Victor M. Parachin

BUTTERFLY RELEASE PROGRAM

Saturday, September 23, 2023 at 3 PM

Upper Merion Township Park (back of Police Station)
175 West Valley Forge Road, King of Prussia, PA 19406

Diagonally across from our monthly meeting place at Good Shepherd Church.
This event will be held in back of the township building, left of the gazebo.

Cost \$6.50 per butterfly - August 19th last day to place order.
There is no admission or parking fee.

Water will be provided by the chapter. Please bring folding chairs or a
blanket to sit on.

A family may order one butterfly to share, or order one butterfly for each family member. You may order as many butterflies as you wish. All butterflies must be preordered. If you are unable to attend on this date, we can release the butterfly that you have purchased in your loved one's name. The names of all loved ones will be read during the program.

For questions, please call TCF Valley Forge 484-919-0820
Any further details will be posted at the VF website. www.tcfvalleyforge.org

REGISTRATION FORM

Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

Address: _____

Name of loved one

Your Relationship to them

Name of loved one

Your Relationship to them

Name of loved one

Your Relationship to them

Total number of butterflies ordered: _____ \$6.50 each

Total money (no credit cards) enclosed: _____

Please forward registration and check to: Rhonda Gomez, 12 Brook Circle,
Glenmoore, PA 19343

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 Credo



*A bereavement organization
For parents, siblings and families
We offer friendship, love and understanding
We talk, we listen, we share, we care.*

Valley Forge Chapter
of the Compassionate Friends
Rhonda Gomez
Chapter Leader
12 Brook Circle
Glenmoore PA 19343



**The
Compassionate
Friends Inc.**

September 2023

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