



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

GALVESTON COUNTY CHAPTER
May 2011

Support Meetings held on 2nd Monday
of the Month (exception is December)

Mail:
PO Box 568
Texas City, TX 77592

Phone:
(409) 996-9440
(Calls to this number will be returned
within 24 hours)

Website:
www.tcfgalvestoncounty.org

Co-Chapter Leaders:
Larry Oshel
Bambi Oshel
grammy127@earthlink.net

Treasurer:
Dana Rogers
sabalo130@comcast.net

Newsletter:
Lori Kelly
For email submissions:
sabalo130@comcast.net
grammy127@earthlink.net



Next Meeting
May 9, 2011
7:00 pm

at
First United Methodist Church
317 Fifth Avenue N
Texas City, TX 77590

National Office: The Compassionate Friends
PO Box 3696
Oak Brook, IL 60522-3696
(877) 969-0010
www.compassionatefriends.org

Special Thanks

Texas City Terminal Railway
For all your support of the
Galveston County Chapter
The Compassionate Friends

Manning Masonry Co, Inc.
For the placement of the bricks
In the Memorial Garden

Anniversaries and birthdays are difficult for bereaved parents. In the days ahead, may we lovingly remember these children and support their families. Your child is listed here only at your request, with a signature on the response form in this newsletter. You need to submit it only once.

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

MAY REMEMBRANCES

Mary Lee Bonura

May 1st

Judy Bonura, mother

Sonny Henderson

May 2nd

Doris Henderson, mother

Christopher E Hughes

May 4th

Jolenta Court, mother

Becky Kurusz

May 4th

Helen Kurusz, mother

Keith Scott Chance

May 6th

Millie Chance, mother

John Terry Billingsley, II

May 6th

Cora Eleanor Billingsley, mother

'Bucky' James F Weaver III

May 7th

Barbara Carter, mother

Denshay Jarahd Benson 'DJ'

May 10th

Candace Ford, mother

Margie Ford, grandmother

Treslynn Ford, sister

Randy Alan Helms

May 12th

Jennifer Grant, mother

Amanda Nicole Curcio

May 19th

Beatrice Vega-Curcio, grandmother

Brian Matthew Welch

May 21st

Pamela Parr, mother

Kevin George Auker

May 22nd

Dolores Avalos-Corcoran, mother

Johnathan Marshall

May 23rd

Kim Stout, mother

Kevin E Claunch

May 23rd

Robert & Bonnie Claunch, parents

Erik Scott Steinmetz

May 23rd

Margaret Williams, mother

Shelley Kathleen Sikes

May 25th

Erin Sikes, mother

Dylan Russell

May 31st

Ronnie Johnson & Mandi Bellmyer,

MAY BIRTHDAYS

Thomas Ross Key III

May 1st

Marvin & Bonita Wicher, parents

Teresa Smith

May 2nd

Emilie & Arnold Sefcik, parents

Omar L Mora

May 11th

Robert & Olga Capetillo, parents

Jerry W Haney

May 13th

Dugan & Shirley Haney, parents

Dylan Russell

May 13th

Ronnie Johnson & Mandi Bellmyer, parents

Thomas Cory Philips

May 16th

Karen Philips, mother

Toby J. Menduni

May 18th

Vicky J. Hays, mother

Robert David Nuss

May 18th

Joyce Nuss, mother

Brenda Jean Keller

May 19th

Glenda Spielman, mother

Ashlyn Leigh Shoemaker

May 20th

Crissy & Joel Helmke, parents

Tonya DeSha Johnson

May 26th

Angela Hollins, mother

Please take a few moments to reflect on the children on this page and remember their families. A phone call or a note to the family would be so special and kind. None of us forgets our child's special days and the messages we receive that say 'I care', can help us get through them.

Special Information

Save the Date
Sunday, May 8th
Mother's Day Balloon Release
See page 6 For more information

TCF National Conference
Minneapolis, MN
July 15—17, 2011
more information on page 9



Our cookbooks, **Recipes of Times Remembered, Volume 2**, are now available. You can find them at Rust & Dust, 1519 6th St N, Texas City, Thursday through Saturday from 10 am to 5 pm. The cook books are \$10 each.



A Note from the Newsletter Editor:

When submissions are received we try extremely hard to place the submission in the newsletter exactly as submitted. However, there are times when this is not possible. You are always welcome to send the pictures and notes, poems, etc in without setting it up. I am always happy to lay out your page for you. Please email your submissions to grammy127@earthlink.net or sabal0130@comcast.net or snail mail it in to the po box. Submissions are welcome anytime!

Thanks,
Lori
Newsletter Editor

IN MEMORY OF MY LOVING SON

KEVIN GEORGE AUKER



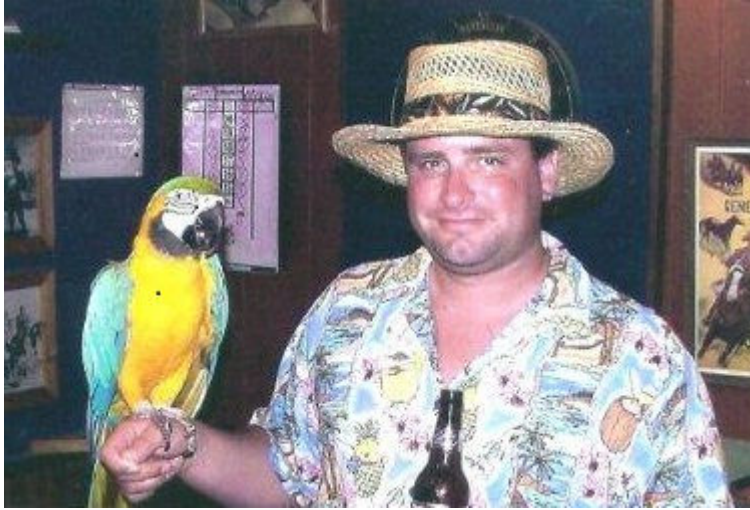
Love's Remembrance

Tonight, I light this Cross
for you, **Kevin**,
And as your name is spoken aloud,
a testament that you lived,
I will gratefully remember, the clearness of your eyes
Your beautiful smile
Your kindness as you grew.
Your measured steps toward adulthood cut short
many hearts filled with memories, your legacy.
Tonight, I light this Cross
for you, **Kevin**.
And as the Cross is glowing
In the night with love,
I will remember not your death, but your life.
I will pray that memories and love and eternity
will blend together, bonding us forever,
my loving son, **Kevin**

**Gone but Not Forgotten
Forever in our Hearts**



Love Mom and Patric
Brother: Brian P. Auker; Nephew: Joshua R. Auker
Grandmother: Elvira Avalos
Galvan, Garza, Avalos and Wise families.



Kevin Claunch
1-11-73 5-23-06

Robert & Bonnie Claunch
parents

Dear Kevin,

You were a natural on the water...near or far, the Spirit of the sea will always be with you. We love you and we miss you!

Mom and Dad



*What greater honor, that when a man moves forward,
he leaves behind in each of us the best of what he was.*

Mac McGovern



Mother's Day at the Garden

Come spend some time with your fellow TCF'ers on Mother's Day at our beautiful Children's Memorial Garden. We will start the informal event at 1:00 pm with a 'bring your own' picnic. This will be followed with a balloon release at 2:00 pm. We will furnish the balloons and markers to write a message to your child on your balloon. This gathering is a good way to meet and greet fellow chapter members and to remember our children. We need not walk alone. We are The Compassionate Friends.

Hope to see you there.

Steering Committee



On pain and healing...

In pain management used for patients with chronic pain, it is taught not to tighten around the pain but to relax and allow the pain to be present. The idea is that when pain is resisted, it intensifies. When we breathe deeply and acknowledge the presence of pain, it has room to move and can dissipate more readily. Pain is there to tell us something, to warn us of possible danger. This is as true for emotional, spiritual and mental pain as it is for physical pain. When pain speaks, we need to listen. All it takes is paying attention to our pain so that when it comes we remember to breathe and get soft. We don't want to fight with our pain. We want to learn from it.

Time does not heal. But healing does take time. Give yourself the gift of time. To become whole means that as we open to the pain, we open to the loss. We break open and, as a consequence, we get bigger and include more of life. We include what would have been "lost" to us if our hearts and minds had closed against the pain, We include what would have been lost if we had not taken the time to heal. As singer/songwriter Carly Simon tells us: "There's more room in a broken heart."

From the chapter, "Time Does Not Heal All Wounds," of the book, "Good Grief" by Deborah Morris Coryell

Memorial Nature Walk - 2011

Our Memorial Nature Walk was a success in so many ways. Many turned out to remember their children and proudly wore their TCF Memorial t-shirts. Everyone that started the walk was able to finish in honor of their child/children/grandchild. We had donations of water and watermelons that were enjoyed by all. Several family members brought their pets that joined in and made the walk with us.

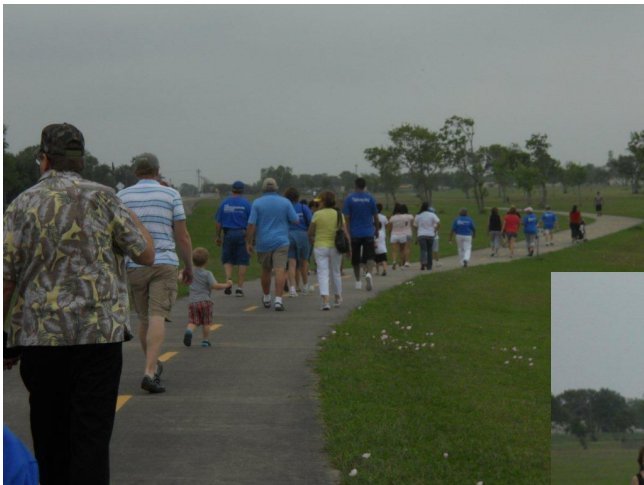
It was agreed by all that we should make this walk an annual event for our chapter. There were several who had wonderful suggestions for next year. So if you weren't able to join us this year maybe you could mark your calendar for next year. It was wonderful to see so many sporting their blue TCF t-shirts and snake their way through Texas City's Bay Street Park in memory of their child.

"We Need Not Walk Alone – We are the Compassionate Friends"

And

We will remember our Children.

*Compassionately,
Dana Rogers*



Mother's Day Revisited

Many of us in TCF do not look forward to Mother's Day. On this holiday, when the whole nation is celebrating the joys of parenthood, grieving parents often feel a special anguish.

Mother's Day this year looms as a particularly difficult milestone for me, Sunday, May 10, 1998, is not only Mother's Day but also the second anniversary of the death of my ten-year-old son, Jacob. Because this day of private sadness also happens to be a day of public celebration, I decided that I should start thinking early about the occasion. I engaged in a little research about the holiday and learned a story that I think is worth sharing.

Mother's Day was the creation of a woman named Anna Jarvis in the early years of this century. Anna, who never married and never had children of her own, devoted herself to establishing a national Mother's Day as a way of honoring her beloved mother, who died on May 9, 1905. In Anna's view, her mother deserved a memorial because she had lived selflessly and endured considerable suffering - seven of her eleven children had died in early childhood. According to historians, Anna's mother mourned the deaths of her children throughout her life.

Anna insisted that the holiday always fall on a Sunday so that it would retain its spiritual moorings. Because of her efforts, President Woodrow Wilson finally proclaimed the second Sunday in May as Mother's Day. Although Anna couldn't prevent the new holiday from quickly becoming a marketing phenomenon, she did try. Speaking out against "the mire of commercialization" that threatened to engulf Mother's Day, Anna attempted to preserve her creation as a true "holy day," a time for solemn reflection and prayer.

Mother's Day, then, was borne of a daughter's grief and love. More importantly, it was intended as a tribute to a bereaved mother—a brave woman who lost multiple children but who managed to live with an abiding kindness and generosity toward others. I like knowing this background, and my attitude towards Mother's Day has been colored by the knowledge. The holiday now makes me think of the common sorrow that links all bereaved parents. I feel a bond with Anna's mother that stretches over time and space. In a broader sense, the woman for whom the holiday was founded reminds me of people I've met at TCF who have continued to live productive, meaningful lives in the face of unthinkable loss.

Finally, Mother's Day in its origins symbolizes both the joy and the vulnerability inherent in parenthood. Anna's mother knew all too well that from the moment a child is born, hope and the possibility of tragedy go hand in hand. She understood the fragility of life.

Enriched by its own history, Mother's Day is easier for me to tolerate. The coincidence of dates this year—Mother's Day and the anniversary of my son's death—is not as jarring as it once seemed. Although the commercial images of the modern Mother's Day still make me wince, I can turn off the television and envision the kind of day that Anna Jarvis had in mind: a time for quiet reflection and the sharing of cherished memories.

Barbara Atwood
In memory of Jacob
TCF, Tucson, Arizona

Mother's Day Brings Joy and Pain

Mother's Day used to mean special times, great moments, sweet gifts and acknowledgement of the deep bond that Mothers share with their children. I have many happy memories of Mother's Days past. Their value is incalculable.

But that was before . . . everything now is measured in "before" and "after." When I lost my only child, Mother's Day changed. Now Mother's Day has a different meaning . . . one that is not as happy as it once was, but one that still reinforces the many years I shared with my son on this earth.

I was considering this strange paradigm, this shift in my thinking over the past six plus years, and I have come to the conclusion that eventually bereaved parents begin to accept the death of their children on a subconscious level. But before that happens, our subconscious minds wage war on our conscious minds and we experience such terrible emotional lows. It's an internal fight for each of us. Along with the fight to survive, to acquire the will to continue living, we are battling internal forces that must resolve themselves. Once that internal war ends, our healing begins. We will always love and miss our children. We will always shed copious tears for no reason. But something inside of us has shifted, shaping our perspective from this point forward.

So, this Mother's Day I will acknowledge my beautiful son, the wonderful life that he lived, the joy I received in raising him and the wisdom I acquired through the gift of my child. We learn unconditional love when we become mothers. We learn foresight, gentleness, joys in the simple elements of life. I will remember past Mother's Days and think of the wonder that is my only child. I will remember him with much love, more than a few tears and a special sense of thankfulness that his life graced mine for over 35 years.

I will honor the fact that I am a mother. Although my son does not share this earthly plane with me, he is forever my child and I am forever his mother. This is a bond that time, space and death do not alter. Quietly, with serenity and peace in my heart, I will mark this Mother's Day doing what I want to do. I will know what that will be when I get there. Live in the moment . . . that's another element of life that I learned from my son.

We are each unique on our grief journey, and we will each mark this Mother's Day in a different way. Whatever your choice might be, make it your day . . . your day to celebrate the eternal bond between mother and child. There is nothing more beautiful.

*Annette Mennen Baldwin
In memory of my son, Todd Mennen
TCF, Katy, TX*

**Reserve Rooms Now for 2011 TCF National Conference
in Minneapolis, MN**

Room reservations can now be made for TCF's 34th national conference, this year in Minneapolis, Minnesota July 15-17. The conference, which has the theme "Shining Stars-Guiding Hope" is being held at the Sheraton Bloomington Hotel Minneapolis South, only about 10 minutes from the Minneapolis St. Paul International Airport (shuttles will be available to and from the hotel—as well as the hotel and the Mall of America). Special room rates are \$129 per night for King or Double Bed with third and fourth persons at an additional \$10 each in the same room. Reservations can be made online or by telephone. Go to TCF's national website at www.compassionatefriends.org and click on "TCF 2011 National Conference – Minnesota" under "News and Events" for how to reserve a room and for latest up-to-date information on the conference and the Walk to Remember, held on the final day of the event. Information will also be made available on Facebook at The Compassionate Friends/USA.

Love Gifts

By Jerre Sue Massa
In memory of
Jay Frank Massa

Chapter Information

LOVE GIFTS

A love gift is a special way to remember a child.

The Compassionate Friends charges no dues, and your voluntary donations are our only source of income. All gifts are tax deductible. TCF is a 501 (c) 3 nonprofit organization and 100% of all income is used to reach bereaved families through this newsletter, brochures, our grief materials library, and special events like our annual December Candle Lighting Remembrance and our Garden remembrance.

Checks should be made payable to
The Compassionate Friends
PO Box 568
Texas City, TX 77592

NEWSLETTER

In order to include your child's information in the newsletter written permission must be on file. If you would like to have your child's information included please send in the data sheet so that we can insure that we have the correct information.

Submissions for the newsletter are always welcome and can include short articles, poems & book reviews. Please include any authors or other sources if known.

All submissions are due for inclusion in the newsletter by the 20th of each month, some exceptions may arise but will be included as a note in the newsletter.

Submissions should be sent to either the PO Box listed under the love gifts or emailed to Bambi Oshel at grammy127@earthlink.net or Dana Rogers at sabalo130@comcast.net



***Note:** When you purchase a brick to be placed in the Memorial Garden be advised that they are placed randomly. The bricks are put in place by the generosity of Manning Masonry Co, Inc. While someone within the organization will be notified after installation of a set of bricks is completed, notification prior to the installation is not available.*

Beautiful Memorial Garden Bricks

Acme Engraved Bricks @ \$50.00 each

Please make checks payable to Compassionate Friends and mail to **P.O. Box 568 Texas City, TX 77592**. Should you have any questions regarding this order form please call **Louise Krone at (281) 534-3639** or email at lak51757@yahoo.com

To order an engraved brick: Fill the appropriate boxes below with desired inscription.

LINE 1														
LINE 2														
LINE 3														

LINE 1														
LINE 2														
LINE 3														
LINE 4														

Customer's Name: _____ Phone No: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: - Zip: _____

Amount Enclosed: _____

Thank you for supporting the Compassionate Friends Memorial Garden

Love Gifts, monetary or
Gifts-in-kind are a beautiful expression of our deep
And never-ending love for our children, and help us "reach out" to bereaved families.
Our expenses include postage, printing & special programs.
TCF is a 501 (c) (3) Organization—donations are tax deductible.
Time is also a wonderful gift, volunteers are always needed.
Thank You for contributing and supporting the work of our local chapter.