



**Our
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.



TCF and Arlene

Roughly a year after Melissa and Emily passed, Mickey and I attended our first national conference, in Dearborn, MI. We were encouraged to attend since this was the closest the conference had been to Green Bay in some time. The conference is held in a different location each year. During the Friday luncheon, we were seated with a lady from Billings, MT, Arlene Priest. She was in her late 70's and her son passed away in 1980. She was a bereaved mother for 24 years and we were bereaved for barely a year. We got to know her pretty well during the conference. At the closing ceremony on Sunday, Mickey won a huge teddy bear, but we could not take it with us on the flight home. Knowing that Arlene drove to the conference with friends, she did not care to fly, Mickey gave the teddy bear to her. This was the start of a beautiful friendship that has lasted through the years.

Every year that we went to the conference, we made sure to find Arlene and catch up on our lives. Arlene exemplifies TCF in every sense of the word. Every year since we first met, we get a card with a handwritten note on Melissa and Emily's birthdays and the anniversary of their passing. She also lights a candle in their memory on these days for us. Mickey makes it a point to call her at least every other month or monthly to stay in touch as she is now in her mid 90's. We had the opportunity to fly to Billings in July and visit with her for several days. She was so grateful for our visit. She had to be sure to tell all of her friends, who check in on her because she could not believe that we would do that for her. We had a great time visiting with her and afterwards we felt so fulfilled that we made the trip to visit our long-time friend. We only wish you could all meet someone like Arlene. Over the years, she has really helped us on our grief journey with her lovely cards and inspiring notes. Mickey and I thought if only Arlene lived closer to our chapter, she would have made for an excellent program speaker. She left us with a couple of very inspiring sayings before we left. Here is one of them:

"To grieve without hope, is to forget that there is a tomorrow".

We are not sure if she came up with this saying or found or read it somewhere, but it sure makes a lot of sense on our grief journey.

In peaceful sadness, Melissa and Emily's Mom and Dad
Mickey and Steve

The Green Bay Chapter of The Compassionate Friends
meets the third Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m.
at First United Methodist Church, 501 Howe Street, Green Bay.
(Enter the parking lot off Monroe at Doty)
For further information contact:
Main Number: 920-370-3858
Sue DeLong, Remembering our Children
Mike Nieft, Steering Committee
Mickey Schmeisser, Chapter Leader/Newsletter Editor
Steve Schmeisser, Treasurer
Sue Van Straten, Remembering our Children
Carol Wautlet, Resource Coordinator
E-mail: compassionatefriendsgb@gmail.com
Website: compassionatefriendsgreenbay.org

Monthly Support Group

Tuesday, October 17, 2023 6 p.m.
A Child's Death Brings "Trauma That Doesn't Go Away"

Tuesday, November 21, 2023 6 p.m.
Forgiveness

Tuesday, December 19, 2023 6 p.m.
A Christmas Wish For Bereaved Parents



A JOURNEY TO THE “NEW NORMAL”

Karen Snepp
In Memory of my brother, Dave



May 31 marked seven years since my only sibling Dave died from cancer at age 32. This June 28 we would have been celebrating Dave’s 40th birthday with a big party, and I’d be kidding him about going bald, just like all the Snepp men before him. Instead, I’ll be getting ready for the TCF National Conference, at which I’ll share memories of his brilliance, great smile, and sense of humor with those who will never have the pleasure of meeting him in person.

At this point in my grief journey, most will be good memories of how Dave lived, rather than bad memories of how he died. I can’t recall the moment when that shift of perspective occurred, but I would like to share a few memories and milestones that have marked the way:

- Months after Dave died, I went to see the movie “Big”, starring Tom Hanks, and “lost it” when his mother stared out the window wondering if she’d ever see him again. I watched the movie again recently and didn’t lose it.
- It was three months before I felt up to sharing with anyone the details of the day my brother died at his home in Bellevue, Washington, in the company of Mom, Dad, and me. On the way home from that emotional conversation, I drove the wrong way down a one way street in downtown Chicago – it might be smart to have a friend drive you to your first few TCF meetings!
- I discovered that the grief path is not a straight line. A few good days can be followed by several bad ones. I’ve heard other TCF members call this their “roller coaster ride.”
- For a year, I couldn’t keep the radio on if “Wind Beneath My Wings” came on. For the next year, I kept it on but cried through it. Now, I can usually make it all the way through without any tears!

- With the help of TCF, I realized that despite friends expecting it to be possible, I’d never be “back to normal.” My focus instead shifted to finding my “new normal”. While I can’t point to a time when that happened (probably after the 1990 TCF Conference), THAT was a milestone.
- For three Christmases after Dave died, I didn’t put up a tree in my condo. For Christmas, 1991, as I was getting out ornaments for my first tree since his death, I came across a bunch of ornaments that he had had in his apartment. I came totally unglued then, but now I look forward to seeing those ornaments each Christmas.
- It was three years before I felt that I had enough emotional energy to pursue a relationship. Even now, I don’t have a lot of tolerance for guys I go out with that gripe about their brothers or sisters.

My most vivid “landmark” to date along my grief journey came in February 1993. Following my Dad’s father’s death in December, 1992, we were in Atlanta cleaning out my grandfather’s apartment, and I came across a pile of post cards and letters that Dave had written to my grandparents through the years. Earlier in my journey, a “blind side” such as that would have sent me into a tailspin. In this case, though, my immediate reaction was one of happiness, for I had found a part of Dave that I didn’t know I still had! I saved a few of the post cards, sent a couple to my cousin who was referenced in some of the letters, and (amazingly) threw the rest away. It was fun to share the memories, but I didn’t feel the need to hang onto them. It was at that point, nearly five years after Dave’s death, that I truly felt as if I was closing in on that “new normal.”



Thanksgiving Prayer

Charlotte Irick
TCF, Idaho Falls, ID



I’m thankful this Thanksgiving
That my grief is not so new.
Last year it was so painful
To think of losing you.
Death can’t claim my love for you
Tho we are far apart,
Sweet memories will always be
Engraved upon my heart.

Time can never bring you back.
But it can help me be
Thankful for the years of joy
You brought our family.
To all the parents with grief so new
I share your loss and sorrow.
I pray you find with faith and time
The blessings of each tomorrow.

Dragonflies

Pam Vogels
TCF Green Bay, WI
In Memory of my son, Jason
And husband Lee



On March 23, 2017, I lost my loving husband of 41 years from cancer caused by Agent Orange. It was a long, painful death. While I thanked God for taking him where there was no pain, I was devastated. He was gone, and I was lost. The only things that kept me going were my three children and my 7-yr. old granddaughter, Ariaah.

One day in August my son, Jason, his child Ariaah, and his girlfriend Sara went to visit Papa's grave. While Jason and Sara stood by the grave, Ariaah started chasing a dragonfly. It was as if the dragonfly and Ariaah were playing together. When they got home Sara and Jason said that they really believed Papa had been playing with Ariaah. That reminded me of times when Lee and Ariaah would chase dragonflies in our yard. That evening I went downstairs to our basement where I had been going through photos and cards, mostly to feel my husband's presence. I picked up an unopened box, and on top of the papers was an anniversary card that Lee had written for me on our 30th anniversary. On the outside was a picture of a beautiful dragonfly, and on the inside was a poem that he had written himself.

Know that there will come a time
When our love will whisper
In the beating wings of golden dragonflies
In the warm silence of summer mornings.

I was overcome with a feeling of peace and joy, because I knew that Lee was with me. Unfortunately, a month later, on Sept. 10, 2017, my dear, sweet Jason was taken away from me, too. He had overdosed on heroin, laced with fentanyl. I found him dead in his apartment. It was a nightmare that will never go away. Initially, I thought it was a suicide, because he had suffered from treatment-resistant depression most of his life and had talked about suicide on several occasions. However, it was determined that his death wasn't intentional, and a trial is coming up on, believe it or not, the first anniversary of Jason's death.

I was shocked and again devastated having to say good-bye to my first-born child. How could this be happening again so soon? While preparing for Jason's funeral, my

sister and I stopped at my home for a while. As I was standing on my porch waiting for my sister, a dragonfly started flying over my head and in front of me. I felt like I was watching a show. It got so close to me that I could have picked it up. Amazingly, a short while later another dragonfly joined the first one. Both flew around me for about 10 minutes. They would fly singly and then come together, always very close to me. Finally, they circled once more and then flew away side by side. I have no doubt that they were my husband and son telling me that they were together and free from pain. It was comforting and gave me the strength to get through another funeral.

The morning following the funeral was cold and rainy, certainly not a day for dragonflies. Jason was laid to rest close to his dad. Seeing them together was more than I could take, but as I began to cry, a dragonfly flew right over Jason's coffin, swirling around and around. And then the second one arrived and started swirling around, too! Everyone there had heard about the two dragonflies earlier that week, and when the two dragonflies flew away together, everyone started clapping and clapping. It was one of the most beautiful experiences I have ever had and one that I will never forget.

As I approach the first anniversary of Jason's passing, I feel the emotions that are still so strong and painful, and I know that it will be a very difficult time. But I hope it will also bring back memories of that last day and remember the joy I felt as Jason left this earth with his dad. I am hoping that they will both be with me as I face the trial for the man responsible for my son's death.

There have been other signs this past year when I have felt their presence, and I will continue to look for them. If you are open to miracles happening, look for signs of your own precious children who are right beside you. It might happen when you least expect it, but you will feel peace, knowing that they are waiting for you in that most perfect place on the other side of the rainbow.

I am so sorry for your losses.

Remembering our Children

During the three months that each newsletter covers, we include your child's birthday and the anniversary of your child's death — if we know those dates. Based upon TCF National policy, we will not print the year of your child's birth or death.

BIRTHDAYS

Mark Shafer (son of Bruce & Pat Shafer)	10/01	Cassandra LeMere-Zeller (daughter of Donald & Judith LeMere)	11/01
Kara Rojas-Spice (daughter of Jerry & Amy Spice)	10/03	Jessica Lindberg (daughter of Dana Ewald)	11/02
Michael Anderson (son of Ron & Lori Anderson)	10/04	Craig St. John (son of Debra St. John)	11/02
Josh Gilson (son of Ron & Cindy Gilson)	10/04	Matthew Skenadore (son of Jude Skenadore)	11/05
Allen O'Harrow (son of Cal & Lois O'Harrow)	10/04	Josh Kimes (son of Susan Kimes)	11/06
Peyton Haller (son of Paul & Angela Haller)	10/05	Chad Olson (son of Brenda Olson)	11/07
Corey Jonet (son of Dan & Lisa Jonet)	10/09	Nick Baugnet (son of DeeDee & Joe Baugnet)	11/10
Seth Philhower (son of Shaun & Stacy Philhower)	10/09	Jacob Kowalski (grandson of Jessica Fehlberg)	11/10
Leon Schroeder (son of Sawyer Schroeder, grandson of Marci Beck)	10/09	Debi Schultz (daughter of Barbara Fitzpatrick)	11/12
Colton Steinhorst (son of Tara Steinhorst)	10/09	Hunter Temme (son of Lisa Temme)	11/13
Matthew Arnold (son of Carrie & Bob Arnold)	10/10	Ryan Patrick Bergevin (son of Randy Bergevin & Barbara Vandebusch)	11/16
Noah Thomas Campbell (son of Kelli & Craig Campbell)	10/10	Ryan Rockstroh (son of Molly Rockstroh)	11/16
Chad Seitzer (son of Sandi & Fred Seitzer)	10/10	Jillian Faymonville (daughter of Louise Faymonville)	11/17
Benjamin Edinger (son of Rosanna Scannell)	10/15	Karson Fenlon (son of Donald & Jennifer Fenlon, grandson of Jan Hendricks)	11/17
Jack Natzke (son of Jason and Renee Natzke)	10/16	Zander Varga Schenzel (grandson of Nancy Varga)	11/17
Lailah Faith Pouwels (daughter of Ed & Carrie Pouwels)	10/20	Dane Cole (son of Don & Karol Cole)	11/18
Tara Beilke (daughter of Chuck & Judy Dams)	10/22	Dillon J. Mueller (son of George and Angel Mueller)	11/18
Evan Van Lanen (son of Dan & Peg Van Lanen)	10/22	Elias Gonzales (son of Maria Gonzales)	11/21
Todd Reigner (son of Arthur & Barbara Reigner)	10/23	Andy Haroldson (son of Ralph & Jean Haroldson)	11/24
Winnifred "Freddie" McClory (daughter of Bob McClory & Carrie Brooks)	10/25	Amber Mastey (daughter of Brett & Amanda Mastey)	11/25
Van Jarchow (son of Mike & Dixie Jarchow)	10/26	Jimmy Wanner Jr. (son of Keith & Pam Blondeim)	11/25
Shane Hopfensperger (son of Mike & Joann Hopfensperger)	10/28	Michael Kirst (son of Kris Kirst)	11/27
Troy Milan (son of Pam Milan)	10/28	Joe Hinton (son of Tom & Kathy Hinton)	11/28
Amelia Wesner (daughter of Jenny Wesner)	10/28	Federico Abarca (son of Concepcion Melgar)	11/29
Jaysen Calkins (son of Kate Calkins)	10/30	Austin Cottrell (son of Jeff & Nan Cottrell)	11/29
Thea L Jacques (daughter of Sally Martin)	11/01	Amanda Rose Skar (daughter of Wayne & Kim Skar)	11/29

Shane Lambert (son of Kim Lambert, grandson of Maria Lambert)	11/30	Joseph Jacques (son-in-law of Pat Wojcik)	12/17
Kyle Barr (son of Karen Strickfaden)	12/02	Jeremy DeMille (son of Marysue Gerondale)	12/23
Chris Krueger (son of Cheryl Krueger)	12/05	Andrea Eve Wirth (daughter of Thomas and Angela Wirth)	12/27
Crystal (Falish) Peterson (daughter of Steve & Darlene Enderby)	12/06	Nathan Axelrod (son of Johanna Axelrod)	12/28
Danielle Deda (daughter of Noel & Sally Deda)	12/07	Tom Manning (son of Peggy Manning)	12/29
Tara Reetz (daughter of Daniel & Jean Reetz)	12/08	Matthew Shukoski (son of Darlene VanHorn)	12/30
Travis Stelzer (son of Don & Pam Stelzer)	12/13	Marjie Duerr (daughter of Linda Duerr)	12/31
Jessica Demo (daughter of Sheila & Chuck Henrichs)	12/16	Darrian Seppanen (daughter of Janet Deterville)	12/31

ANNIVERSARIES

Matthew Kiefer (son of Mary Jo Hempel)	10/04	Jessica Lindberg (daughter of Dana Ewald)	10/26
Dillon J. Mueller (son of George and Angel Mueller)	10/04	Jacqueline Evers (daughter of Joe and Alice Evers)	10/27
Caitlin Van Duyse (daughter of Brenda VanDuyse)	10/04	Ryan Rockstroh (son of Molly Rockstroh)	10/27
Justin Banaszynski (son of Donna Baranczyk)	10/05	Jeffery Skenadore (son of Jude Skenadore)	10/29
Danielle Deda (daughter of Noel & Sally Deda)	10/09	Aidan Hammer Fry (son of Linda Hammer & Megan Fry)	11/01
Seth Philhower (son of Shaun & Stacy Philhower)	10/09	Karen Mary Schley (daughter of Jon & Ann Schley)	11/01
Jason Ison (son of Rene Ison)	10/10	Lance Vlies (son of Wendy Vlies)	11/01
George Stoneburner (son of Chuck & Judy Dams)	10/10	Joel Bagneski (son of Bill & Kelly Bagneski)	11/02
Wendy Jacques (daughter of Sally Martin)	10/12	Kira Smith (daughter of Tara Smith)	11/04
Jaysen Calkins (son of Kate Calkins)	10/16	Jason Banaszynski (son of Donna Baranczyk - Pagel)	11/06
Kelby Bagneski (daughter of Bill & Kelly Bagneski)	10/19	Cody Green (son of Dan and Gwen Green)	11/06
Jessica Lindberg (daughter of Dana Ewald)	10/20	Andy Haroldson (son of Ralph & Jean Haroldson)	11/06
Lailah Faith Pouwels (daughter of Carrie & Ed Pouwels)	10/20	Marjie Duerr (daughter of Linda Duerr)	11/07
Ryan Bader (son of Cheryl & Mark Bader)	10/24	Ryan Brunner (son of Bill & Sue Brunner)	11/08
Andrew Sorensen (son of Wendy Sorensen)	10/24	Mariah Early (daughter of Melissa Early)	11/17
Doug Cole (son of Don & Karol Cole)	10/25	Todd Konop (son of Dorothy & Tom Konop)	11/17
Gary Glebke (son of Joyce Glebke)	10/25	Shane Lambert (son of Kim Lambert, grandson of Maria Lambert)	11/17

Tami (Sam) Cornelius (daughter of Brenda Cornelius)	11/18	Austin Cottrell (son of Jeff & Nan Cottrell)	12/15
Tara Reetz (daughter of Daniel & Jean Reetz)	11/18	Adam Lee Schultz (son of Stan & Deb Schultz)	12/15
Alex Wolf (son of Keith Wolf)	11/20	Darrian Seppanen (daughter of Janet Deterville)	12/15
Jessica Demo (daughter of Sheila & Chuck Henrichs)	11/23	Aaron Lison (son of Adele Coopmans)	12/18
Benjamin Edinger (son of Rosanna Scannell)	11/23	Joe Hinton (son of Tom & Kathy Hinton)	12/20
Nicole Kowalkowski (daughter of Sharon & Roman Kowalkowski)	12/01	Kyle Barr (son of Karen Strickfaden)	12/24
Jacob Peters (son of Jerry & Natalie Peters)	12/01	Dana Kapla (daughter of Bob Kapla)	12/26
Paul Stone (son of Joan Stone)	12/01	Timmy Parent (son of Steven & Cindy Parent)	12/26
Mylisha Klapatch (daughter of Dennis Klapatch & Tamara Walker)	12/02	Thea L Jacques (daughter of Sally Martin)	12/27
Jack McDonough (son of Carrie Harrison)	12/03	Cassandra LeMere-Zeller (daughter of Donald & Judith LeMere)	12/29
Ross Ambrosius (son of Melissa & Rob Ambrosius)	12/09	Christopher Voght (son of Tammy Viegut & Timm Gay)	12/29
Brittani Walker (daughter of Mary Walker)	12/09	Ryan Jozwiak (son of Lenee & Eddie Jozwiak)	12/30
Brandon Scheider (son of Deb Scheider)	12/10	Joey Wesolowski (son of Jennifer Heller & John Wesolowski)	12/30
Jason Kurey (son of Deb Kurey)	12/11	Kevin Betker (son of Roy "Pete" & Renee Betker)	12/31

On behalf of our Chapter, I would like to thank Carol Wautlet for all her time, talent and treasure over the years serving on our steering committee. Carol will be stepping down from the committee at the end of the year. Her commitment has been instrumental making sure that our organization ran efficiently. We especially appreciate all of her behind the scenes efforts working on making our annual Worldwide Candle Lighting ceremony so successful. She was the Chapter Resource coordinator. She mailed post-cards to the newly bereaved with our chapter information so that they could find us and possibly attend a meeting. Thank you, Carol!



ANNOUNCEMENTS, COMMENTS, & MISC.

Calendar of Events 2023

October 17: A Child's Death Brings "Trauma That Doesn't Go Away"
November 21: Forgiveness
December 10: Candle Lighting at 1 pm
December 19: A Christmas Wish For Bereaved Parents

Please Visit Our Website:

www.compassionatefriendsgreenbay.org

All sorts of goodies are included:

- *Past Newsletters
- *Calendar of Events
- *Articles
- *Online Donations

Do you want to Share ??

Do you want to share a picture and/or story of your child? Would you like to write an article about how you're feeling? If you would like to submit a post for our newsletter, we would love to hear from you. We only ask that you remember copyright when submitting.

ANOTHER YEAR HAS PAST

Carol Pomrenke
TCF Green Bay, WI
In Memory of my son, Kory

Sadness continues even though time has past,
Why do these feelings continue to last?
There are always the memories of things we used to do
But there's no comparison when I did them with you.
We laughed, we cried, you would tell me jokes,
Sometimes we would exchange loving email notes.
The loss of you is still so fresh
And the heartache seems to be no less.
Know you're in my thoughts everyday,
And the emptiness and loneliness will never go away.



★ Please note:
If area schools are closed,
due to inclement weather, we will cancel
our scheduled meeting

Love gifts were recently given by:

Ameriprise Financial, in memory of all our Children
Ken and Mary Gehm, in memory of Jared Gehm
Joyce E. Glebke, in memory of Gary and Roberta Glebke
William and Sally Kostka, in memory of Kandy Kostka
Todd and Sandy Scheffen, in memory of Sam Compton
Pam Vogels, in memory of Jason Vogels



**THE
COMPASSIONATE
FRIENDS
of Green Bay**
Supporting Family After a Child Dies



PO Box 211
Green Bay, WI 54305

We need not walk alone!

Our monthly
support group
meets next on:

Tuesday,
October 17, 2023
at 6:00 p.m.

at First United
Methodist Church,
off Monroe at Doty.
Call 920-370-3858
for information.



The Compassionate Friends Worldwide Candle Lighting unites family and friends around the globe in lighting candles for one hour to honor the memories of the sons, daughters, brothers, sisters, and grandchildren who left too soon. As candles are lit at 7:00 p.m. local time, hundreds of thousands of persons commemorate and honor the memory of all children gone too soon.

NOTE: Our local chapter will be holding our ceremony on Sunday, December 10th at 1:00 pm.