



The Compassionate Friends

Greater New Orleans Chapter
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

VOLUME 5, ISSUE 5

May 2023

Chapter Leaders: William and Millie Hunton 504-265-0581 Email address: tcfnola@gmail.com

A BEREAVED MOTHER IS...

A Bereaved Mother Is someone who stands at a grave wondering how she is going to live the rest of her life without this child.

A Bereaved Mother Is someone who thinks she will spend the rest of her life with this horrendous feeling inside.

A Bereaved Mother Is someone who has to learn how to live all over again.

A Bereaved Mother Is someone who wishes they would take Mother's Day out of the calendar.

A Bereaved Mother Is someone who has to learn to accept the loss of her beloved child and uses what she has learned to help others.

A Bereaved Mother Is someone who can again learn to smile, to look forward to the future and get excited again because her Compassionate Friends were there when she needed them.

Zel Hester TCF Atlanta, GA.

TCF Greater New Orleans Chapter Picnic and Butterfly Release

Our 2023 Picnic and Butterfly Release was truly a successful event with great weather for the day and excellent support from our members and community. It was heart-warming to see so many members, friends, and families. Thank you to all the readers and performers who truly put their heart into the event. Thank you to the early set-up crew and those who helped us put the final touches together.

So many people were taking pictures throughout the event. If you have photos you would like to share please send them to us at tcfnola@gmail.com. We will add them to our website photo section. **See pages 3-5 for photo highlights.**

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.

BIRTHDAY RECOGNITION: Birthdays can be found on "Our Children Remembered" page. We do encourage both you and your family to come when it is your child's birthday month, to share your child with all of us with photos and memories. You will receive a special birthday gift in memory of your child. Bring that treasured picture of your child that always makes you smile so we may smile with you. Refreshments in honor of your child, grandchild, or sibling are welcomed.

NEXT MONTHLY MEETING:

May 8, 2023

**Lafreniere Park Foundation
Center Conference Room**

7:00 – 9:00 pm

2nd Monday of every month

UPCOMING MEETINGS:

| | | |
|-----------|-----------|-------------------|
| 9 Jan 23 | 13 Feb 23 | 13 Mar 23 |
| 10 Apr 23 | 8 May 23 | 12 Jun 23 |
| 10 Jul 23 | 14 Aug 23 | 11 Sep 23 |
| 9 Oct 23 | 13 Nov 23 | 11 Dec 23 ZOOM |

REGIONAL COORDINATOR

Denise St. Pierre
504-460-2970
denisestp12@gmail.com

NATIONAL OFFICE

The Compassionate Friends
48660 Pontiac Trail # 930808
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UPCOMING EVENTS:

Butterfly Release

April 22, 2023 – held in the Children's Memorial Garden in Lafreniere Park

Memorial Walk and Auction

October 14, 2023 – held in the Children's Memorial Garden in Lafreniere Park

WorldWide Candle Lighting

December 10, 2023 – Held in the Foundation Center Patio in Lafreniere Park

To all those newly bereaved, who are receiving this newsletter for the first time and to all our Compassionate Friends, we wish you were not eligible to belong to this group, but we want you to know that you and your family have many friends. We, who received love and compassion from others in our time of deep sorrow, now wish to offer the same support and understanding to you. Please know we understand, we care, and we want to help. **You are not alone in your grief.**

Meetings are held the 2nd Monday of each month at the Foundation Center Conference Room in Lafreniere Park at 7:00 P.M. We are a self-sustaining organization with no funds except what we receive through donations from members and newsletter recipients. Please join with us at a meeting.

Grief support after the death of a child

The Compassionate Friends is a national non-profit, self-help support organization that offers friendship, understanding, and hope to bereaved parents, grandparents and siblings. There is no religious affiliation and there are no membership dues or fees.

The secret of TCF's success is simple: As seasoned grievers reach out to the newly bereaved, energy that has been directed inward begins to flow outward and both are helped to heal.

The vision of The Compassionate Friends is that everyone who needs us will find us and everyone who finds us will be helped.

Big Thanks to Our Steering Committee

Contact:

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1104 Colony Rd
Metairie, LA 70003

| | |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| Chapter Leader | William Hunton |
| Chapter Co-Leader | Millie Hunton |
| Special Advisor | Denise St. Pierre |
| Treasurer | Isabel Vigne-Miranda |
| Facilitator | Millie Hunton |
| Newsletter Editor | William Hunton |
| Webmaster | William Hunton |

Steering Committee: William Hunton, Millie Hunton, Denise St. Pierre, Isabel Miranda-Vigne, Jan Dutilh, Linda Provance, and Dena Peters.

Denise St. Pierre, Regional Coordinator

(504) 460-2970

TCF National (877) 969-0010

www.compassionatefriends.org

The Meeting Agenda

7:00 p.m. - The meeting will begin with a short introduction followed by lighting of candle and then reading of the Credo. Remembering our children's birthdays of the month. Then followed by smaller groups of sharing.

8:45 p.m. - Meeting will close by recognizing our children's names. Feel free to visit with each other and check out a book from our library.

Newsletter Submissions: TCF Greater New Orleans welcomes all submissions to our newsletter. Send articles, poetry, love messages and scanned photos to: **TCF GNO, 1104 Colony Rd., Metairie, LA 70003.** You may also text photos and messages to 504-251-1938. As our chapter is only funded by your donations, we ask for a donation of **\$15** or more for a dedication for our newsletter. This is tax-deductible. We reserve the right to edit for space and/or content. Deadline for submissions is listed below. TCF Chapters may copy articles from this publication provided credit is given to the author and the original source. Errors and Omissions: Please notify me if any of your information is incorrect. Thank you!

Newsletter Dedications to be put in our newsletter are due the 20th of each month.

A Newsletter Dedication: is a special page dedicated in memory of your child with a poem or writing that you submit.

A Love Gift: is a short one or two sentence message in your child's memory.



BIRTHDAY CAKE: Our child's birthday is still such an important day to us bereaved parents. In TCF this is where we can celebrate our child's birthday and remember the love we still have for them no matter how long it has been since they died. Our members are welcomed to bring a cake or individual snacks to recognize their child's birthday. Notification is not necessary, but you are welcome to inform me, **William Hunton (504) 265-0581.** Please bring necessary utensils as the facility does not offer any items in this matter.

TCF Greater New Orleans Memorial Candles and 3" Photo Buttons

We are asking for donations of \$20 per candle. Candles will have 3 photos, name, dates, and an LED insert.

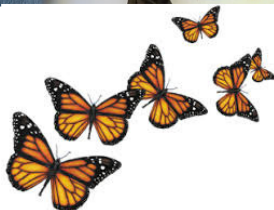
We are asking for donations of \$5 for each button or \$12 for three buttons.

Email Your Child's Photo to tcfnola@gmail.com or call William Hunton (504) 265-0581 for info.

Candles and/or photo buttons will be delivered to the next meeting if info is received 72 hours before meeting.

Please make checks payable to: TCF – GNO, 1104 Colony Road, Metairie, LA 70003.

TCF Greater New Orleans Chapter Picnic and Butterfly Release Photos







Our Butterfly Release on Saturday, April 22nd was a beautiful remembrance of our children, grandchildren, brothers and sisters – loved ones gone too soon. Over 200 people attended. The Painted Lady butterflies put on a great show – flying up in the air or landing on people’s hair, clothes, arms, hands!! Seeing them reminded us that butterflies are “signs of new life’ and “symbols of hope” that our children are living in another dimension with greater beauty and freedom.

The Significance of Mother's Day

I don’t think I really appreciated the significance of Mother’s Day until I myself became one. My life would never be the same and the death of my child did not alter the fact that I am still a mother. I still have the intense feeling of love for my child, a love greater than any I had known before. So as Mother’s Day approached, a day on which we recognize the love and pride of motherhood, I too, want to be remembered as a mother.

~by Ginny Smith, TCF, Charlottesville, VA~

NEWSLETTER DEDICATION IN LOVING MEMORY OF

David Allen Ashton, Jr.

April 1, 1982 ~ May 10, 2006



Happy 41st Birthday

My dear David Allen (Big Dave)!

Your sister Julie, dad and I miss you so much!!! I hope you celebrated your birthday on April 1st!!! Send us some signs as we love to get them. You are loved more than you can imagine and missed more than that. One day we will see each other again!!!

You left us too early!! Your friends still ask about you and truly loved you too!! You are missed terribly by your cousins too! This picture shows them so small but you wanted to stand in the front!!! You were so happy and funny! You left us to have to deal with your absence!! Your cousin Amelia Beatmann is with you in heaven and I hope you both are together with Mere, Grandma, Odette and Lydia!!

May you Rest in Eternal Peace!!

Love,

Mom, Dad and Julie



NEWSLETTER DEDICATION IN LOVING MEMORY OF

Eugene Vaughn

May 23, 1979 ~ December 27, 2019



I miss your smile, your laugh, your daily phone calls and the special times we shared. So many lives you touched and brought happiness and joy. Until we meet again - we will always love you.

Mom, Christina, Dad



Tears and Cheers

We will never stop loving our children. A thoughtful, gentle man named William Penn once wrote, "Those who love beyond the world cannot be separated by it. Death cannot kill that which does not die." We loved our children yesterday, we love them today, and we will love them tomorrow. There is neither force nor foe that can ever remove the love we have for our children. They live within us and beyond this world, now and forever. This is not the way we wanted our lives or their lives to be because our children belong, not to the ages, but to us. In the end, sadly, they are not ours to keep. They will always be ours to remember, to honor, and to love.

We hurt so much because we love so much. It is our curse to live with the reality of death's details. It is our Blessing to be given a glimpse of the infinite possibilities of perpetual Love. It is not a fair trade. Neither is this a bargain we sought to make. The Children that died too soon have broken our hearts while giving us the great gift of enlightenment. Where do we exchange that unwanted present for one minute with them when no refund line exists. We reach out to strangers, to family or friends to help us remember, to help us hope all is not lost. It helps. It is not a cure. This pitiful plight is not a wound that time heals.

Death cannot kill that which does not die. Our Children would no more leave us than we would stop loving them. Those that Love beyond the world cannot be separated by it. No one, no thing, not now, not ever can take away our love for our children. Our love defies death and taunts time while embracing and displaying its eternal nature. Sometimes Love travels an earthly path filled with tears and cheers inspired by the life of a child measured in moments or years. Our children live forever in the glorious, unending infinite light of our love, as we in theirs. That is our blessing. That is their gift and maybe they are waiting to see if we like it. Perhaps a cheer joined to the tear is what they need to hear.

From TCF database

MOTHER'S DAY...FATHER'S DAY... GRADUATIONS...PROMS

Spring comes—and with it comes the uneasy awareness of difficult days ahead. For those who are still going through all the "firsts" without your child, we share with you some special ways other parents have coped and managed. Mother's Day...Father's Day...graduations...vacations...these are special family times which often catch us unaware and bring unexpected tears and painful memories of young lives cut short. It does get better! And you can make these special days better with some planning and with encouragement from those who have already been there. Whatever the "special day" that lies ahead for your family, try to focus on doing something meaningful and tangible in remembrance of your child. Share as a family thoughts and suggestions about planting a tree or starting a rose garden, donating a book to the library or school, putting flowers on the altar, lighting a special candle or taking that long talked-of vacation. Tears and moments of sadness are okay, for they are expressions of love. Remember:

- Take one day at a time.
- Keep things simple by playing down the holidays and special days, while they are so painful.
- Change your routine from past years.
- Make plans to be "busy" during at least part of the day (go out to lunch or to a movie, or visit friends).
- Give your older children some "space." They not only feel your extreme sadness at these times; they also have their own feelings to deal with. The anticipation is often worse than the day itself!

From Fox Valley TCF Chapter, Aurora, Illinois

SAVE THE DATE – OCT 14, 2023 Memorial Walk and Auction

Our Memorial Walk and Auction will be held in the Children's Memorial Garden in Lafreniere Park. Now is a good time to start collecting sellable things for our Auction. Ask your favorite stores to donate a gift card as this is an economical way for them to advertise.

Save the Date! 46th TCF National Conference!! July 7-9

We are very pleased to announce The Compassionate Friends (TCF) 46th Annual National Conference in Denver! TCF's National Conference is an enriching and supportive event for many newer and long-time bereaved parents, grandparents, and siblings. Attendees come and find renewed hope and support, as well as strategies for coping with grief, all while making friendships with other bereaved people who truly understand the heartbreaking loss of a child, sibling, or grandchild. Lifelong friendships are often formed and rekindled each year at TCF conferences.

Unique and cherished highlights of our conference include our heartfelt Saturday evening Candle Lighting Program, Sharing Sessions, Keynote Addresses, Healing Haven, Butterfly Boutique, Crafty Corner, and Silent Auction. Our weekend of inspiration, sharing, and learning is followed by the Walk to Remember on Sunday morning.

This year's conference will be held at the Sheraton Denver Downtown. Many attendees arrive on Thursday since the conference begins early on Friday morning. We also have pre-conference activities that are offered on Thursday evening, that attendees find beneficial. We look forward to seeing you in Denver!

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.

IN THIS PLACE

Brave hearts, you are here. You have traveled
a dreadful distance. You have come,
seeking solace, understanding, hope,
threads to patch what death's so cruelly undone.
In this place you can relax and breathe . . .
the coats of others' expectations taken off.
Walk into these few days as into an oasis
where draughts of love and memories can be quaffed.
In this place all names can be spoken;
in this place each one's story can be told.
We will not be discouraged by your sorrow;
in this place ALL feelings, we enfold.

Here laughter does not mean we are forgetting;
we do not count how many tears are shed.
Both fuel us, fellow travelers, give us courage,
for the long and winding road we see ahead.
And those we love are pleased we are together,
smile down on us, and bless these days,
glad for every tiny step we are taking
as they send their light to guide us on our ways.
Traveling with us as we journey onward,
sending strength for what the miles may bring,
they are a part of everything we do that matters –
in every dance we dance, and every song we sing.

by Genesee Bourdeau Gentry, TCF



Our Children Remembered



Angel Birthdays

| | | |
|-------------------------|--------|---|
| | | |
| Timothy Moreau | May 3 | Son of Penny and Mike Moreau |
| Rene James Rachel | May 8 | Son of Kathy Rachel |
| Geri Lynn W. Cheatham | May 8 | Daughter of Linda Wilson |
| Chelsi Hampton Gourrier | May 9 | Daughter of Audrey Duncan Hampton |
| John "Buddy" Kemna Jr. | May 9 | Brother of Donna Marie Smithey |
| Jarrold Christopher | May 11 | Son of Myra Santos |
| Beau Charles Tedesco | May 21 | Son of Madelyn and Ted Tedesco |
| D. Conrad Dyer | May 22 | Son of Linda Doussan |
| Eugene Vaughn | May 23 | Son of Wanda Vicari |
| Richard "Ricky" Smith | May 24 | Son of Carole A. Clark |
| Ross Lee Ammann | May 24 | Son of Tina Simoneaux; Brother of Marie, Jack and Scott |
| Ronald J. Wroten | May 25 | Brother of Melanie and Jim Boudreaux |
| Gabriela "Gabby" Hebert | May 28 | Daughter of Rachel and Todd Hebert |
| Mario Anderson | May 29 | Son of Trinetta and Herbert Anderson |
| Blake Bassil | May 30 | Son of Debbie Bassil |
| Lauren Ann Brocato | May 30 | Daughter of Eileen Brocato |
| Dennis George Wedge | May 30 | Son of Lori Wedge; Grandson of Jeri McMullen; Nephew of Patti Goens; Cousin of Jennifer and Stefany Goens |
| | | |

Angel Anniversaries

| | | |
|----------------------------|--------|---|
| | | |
| Mary Lee Bonura | May 1 | Daughter of Judy and Dominick Bonura |
| Ty'shaunda Riles | May 6 | Daughter of Hishaunda Riles |
| Gertie Marie Beauford | May 8 | Sister of Kathy Beauford |
| Niva Rosa Murillo | May 10 | Sister of Millie Hunton |
| David Allen Ashton, Jr. | May 10 | Son of Patsy and David Allen Ashton, Sr.; Sister of Julie |
| Ana Maria | May 11 | Daughter of Carmen Sanchez |
| Jarrold Christopher | May 12 | Son of Myra Santos |
| Tynia C. Alexander | May 14 | Daughter of Charlene Alexander; Sister of Rickie, Jr. and Tiphane Alexander |
| Randy Grisoli | May 15 | Son of May Glo Monteleone |
| Kerry Arnold Degeyter | May 17 | Daughter of Dee Arnold |
| Luke Joseph Orgeron | May 17 | Son of James Orgeron, Jr. |
| Brady Michael Palmer | May 17 | Son of Kerri Palmer |
| Rachel Marie Scillitani | May 19 | Daughter of Samuel Scillitani |
| Connor Nicholas McKeithen | May 24 | Son of Chris McKeithen; Grandson of Barbara & Terry McKeithen |
| Blake Bassil | May 25 | Son of Debbie Bassil |
| Dennis George Wedge | May 25 | Son of Lori Wedge; Grandson of Jeri McMullen; Nephew of Patti Goens |
| Chester Joseph Reeder, III | May 26 | Son of Deborah and Chester Reeder |
| Ray Keith Constantine, Jr. | May 29 | Son of JoAnn Giovingo |
| Kevin Michael Flock | May 31 | Son of Janice and Jim Flock |
| | | |



**Phone
Friend
List**

Our listeners are willing to listen, understand, and share.

504-454-3293 – Melva Duhon, son, 41, suicide

504-456-8248 – Patsy Ashton, son, 24, drug overdose

504-559-2438 – Jaimie Kimball, sibling, 12, vehicle accident

504-265-0581 – William and Millie Hunton, daughter, 30, accidental overdose