



The Compassionate Friends

Greater New Orleans Chapter
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

VOLUME 5, ISSUE 6

June 2023

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

JOIN US IN REMEMBERING OUR CHILDREN

Millie and I will be displaying photos of our Chapter's children, grandchildren, and siblings at the TCF National Conference in Denver, Colorado. If you wish your child, grandchild, or sibling's photo to be displayed then please notify us via text or email. We can use an existing photo or you can send us a new one. Photos will be displayed on the Photo Boards and will be view by members from throughout the nation. Please text or email requests to 504-265-0581 or tcfnola@gmail.com.

William and Millie Hunton - TCFNO

SAVE THE DATE – OCTOBER 14TH

Memorial Walk and Auction

To be held in the Children's Memorial Garden in Lafreniere Park – See Page 5
See attached flyer for full details and Business Donation letter.

THE STUDENT BECOMES THE TEACHER

Some of the finest people I know are the ones in our group. I often wonder why. Were these people compassionate, warm, and calm before? Or did the instantaneous change imbue them with kindness—like Popeye eating his spinach?

We have been in this club—the one no one wants to join—since January 27, 2001, when our 31-year-old son was killed in the crash of an airplane carrying members of the Oklahoma State University men's basketball team and staff.

Continued on Page 3 – See Teacher

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:

June 12, 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 Jun23 |
| 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
Wixom, MI 48393

nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org
www.compassionatefriends.org
877-969-0010

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:

Phone: (504) 265-0581
Email: tcfnola@gmail.com
www.tcfneworleans.com
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 Memorial Walk & Auction

The Greater New Orleans TCF Chapter is sponsoring a Children's Memorial Walk followed with an Auction on October 14, 2023 at Lafreniere Park in Metairie, LA to raise funds for the operating expenses of our chapter.

We are encouraging you to contact any vendors you may know who will be willing to donate merchandise or gift cards. We will also welcome any items you may wish to donate. This can range from anything old or new. If we are going to have a successful fundraiser this year then we are going to need your help.

This letter is to ask YOU, our MEMBERS, to help us make our Children's Memorial Walk a great success. We are asking for a donation. All donations are tax deductible and will be acknowledged. For cash donations please make checks payable to The Compassionate Friends GNO. Non-cash items donated will be auctioned off at our auction following the Children's Memorial Walk.

We greatly appreciate any help you can give us.
Please feel free to contact me to arrange a donation.
William Hunton – 504-251-1938

Teacher - Continued from Page 1

As the shock gradually diminished, drip by drip, I went looking for something. I wasn't seeking catharsis or comfort. And certainly not "closure," the difficult-to-define term that I grew to despise.

I flailed around, a whimpering blob, looking for a bit of normalcy. I hoped my wife/sweetheart and I could return to the Ozzie-and-Harriet life we had once enjoyed at home with Will and his kid brother, Nate.

I leaned heavily on others. I was needy and inadequate. Kind people put up with me and said, "Here, give us your hand. We will help you."

I could not see the hope that was just over the horizon.

The grief in those early days came in waves, like the cold fronts, "blue northers," that sweep into the Southern Plains each winter along with deep purple clouds. As a child, I thought those fronts were called "blue moths." And so the blue moth of grief became my symbol for grief.

The blue moth was a regular visitor to our house.

Before the tragedy, "normal" for me was found outdoors—backpacking trips, marathon runs, and long bicycle rides. So, grasping at straws, I decided to try the big kahuna—a bicycle ride across America.

The 36-day, 2,700-mile journey carried me over mighty rivers and mountain ranges, past mansions and grungy shanties, across deserts and lush fields of cotton. The narrow-wheeled Cannondale bicycle took me to a place where I could see the world differently—to a place of peace and of togetherness with others who shared our dilemma.

Long story short, I wrote a book about the odyssey, *Riding with the Blue Moth*.

A month after the book was published, I received an e-mail from a stranger.

"After we lost our daughter I had no hope," she wrote. "Then someone gave your book to me. I did not want it, but as a courtesy to my friend, I began reading. The first two chapters were almost impossible for me to read, because your trials in the first few days were so sad and so similar to ours. But I kept at it. I laughed. I cried. I read passages to my husband and our son. I want you to know that this book has changed my life. I know now that there is a reason to live. Perhaps we, too, can be a lantern to others."

Goodness gracious, that note opened my eyes. Me, a lantern? Me, a Johnny Appleseed? Me, once Mr. Helpless, now serving others? Once, it had seemed utterly impossible. But now . . . well, yes, the student could become the teacher. I began to speak to groups, meet with people, share our story. I have no training in counseling, but I can do two things pretty darn well: listen and hug.

The Compassionate Friends organization says it best: *as seasoned grievers reach out to the newly bereaved, both are helped to heal*. Those who are grieving are remarkable people. Give us your hand; we will help you.

By Bill Hancock, TCF



NEWSLETTER DEDICATION IN LOVING MEMORY OF
Ellie Rae Siddall

June 7, 2022 ~ October 10, 2022



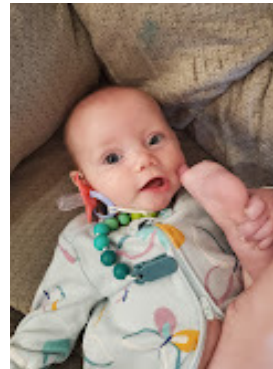
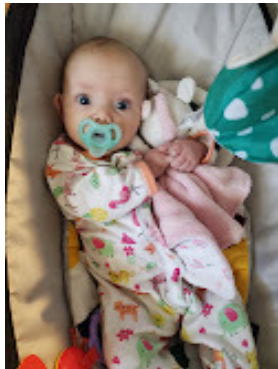
Ellie,

I cannot believe it is your first birthday. We miss you more than words can say. Even though we only had four months with you, we are so grateful the time we did have and all the memories we made in that time. You had the biggest personality and lit up our lives.

We wish more than anything you were here to celebrate your first birthday, but we will still celebrate you every time. We all love you and there will never be a day we do not think of you.

Happy birthday baby girl.

Love you always, Mom, Dad, Bentley, Lucas, and Hailey.



Dedication sent in by
Annie Siddall

NEWSLETTER DEDICATION IN LOVING MEMORY OF
Jenny Ann Kimball

June 13, 1988 – February 23, 2001



Dear Jenny,

This year you would have been 35 years old. Where has the time gone? You were 12 years old when you passed away in that car accident. Well this year seemed to go by so fast. Every year does get a little easier, but I still miss you so much. Every time I need a pick me up you always seem to find a way to send me a sign. Like the red cardinal or a song on the radio. When I pass the cemetery to and from work, I tell you Hello and Goodnight. Then you send me a sign, so I know you hear me. Tell Mom and Aunt Alice Hi for me. I remember the night you left us. All of your friends still keep in touch with me. Can you send Dad some good vibes his way? He could use some help. Work is going good for me. As usual, I will do something special for your birthday, just don't know what yet. Well I will end this letter the same way I always do. I loved being your **SISTER**.

Miss you and Mom more than you will ever know.

Love, Jaimie



Dedication sent in by Jaimie Kimball

NEWSLETTER DEDICATION IN LOVING MEMORY OF
Aubrey Pitre

June 16, 1987 – February 19, 2018

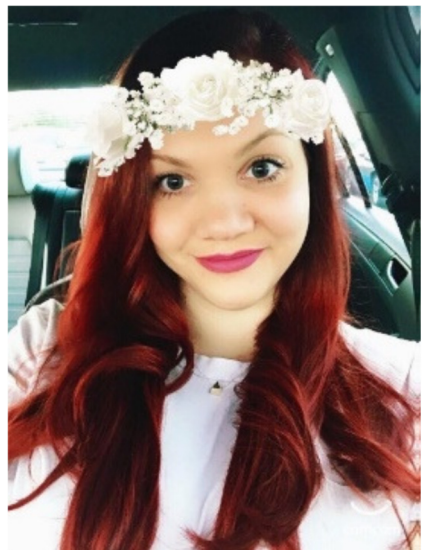
Aubrey, my angel,

I wake up every morning by the fiery roosters crow,
Only to hear, I just don't know, I just don't know.
I lie in my bed holding my rosary between my hands while praying,
Rolled up in a ball weeping and laying.
I don't want to get up, no not yet,
What lies ahead in my empty, lonely day, I fret.
Forcing myself to arise,
I do so with despise.
My day goes on, so very, very long,
Awaiting the stars and moon to shine bright, so I that I don't have to try anymore today to be strong.
Every day I shed deep, painful tears,
See, my daughter Aubrey, my angel, has gone to heaven and doesn't have any more fears.
She has reached solace and is in peace,
Not only being with The Lord Jesus, but all of her worries and suffering did cease.
My heart is missing a huge piece, so painful, so broken,
But I know I will be with Aubrey, my angel, again as Jesus has spoken.
I love and miss you so much Aubrey, my angel,



Momma

P.S., It's Aubrey's 36th birthday today. I am a member of a grief group for parents that have lost a child.
I wrote this one night as Aubrey was in my mind, as always.
I'm not to the point of celebration yet, but I have hopes of being there one day.



Dedication sent in by Kathy Perkins

NEWSLETTER DEDICATION IN LOVING MEMORY OF

Sherrell Ann Gorman

June 20, 1964 – April 23, 2022



You've just walked on ahead of me, and I've got to understand.
You must release the ones you love and let go of their hand.
I try and cope the best I can but I'm missing you so much.
If I could only see you and once more feel your touch.
Yes, you've just walked on ahead of me, don't worry I'll be fine.
But now and then I swear I feel your hand slip into mine.
God took you into his loving home, here just wasn't meant to be.
He wrapped you in His loving arms and whispered,
"come home and be with me."
You tried so hard to stay with us and your fight was not in vain,
God took you to His loving home and freed you from your pain.



*Happy Birthday Baby girl,
Love & miss you,
Mom, Stan, Tammy, Nik & Elaine*

Dedication sent in by Charlene Gorman



LOVE GIFT DEDICATION IN LOVING MEMORY OF

Michele C. Hogan

June 5, 1966 ~ March 23, 2022

Momma loves you and misses you tremendously!



Dedication sent in by Wanda Hogan

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.

NEWSLETTER DEDICATION IN LOVING MEMORY OF
Erin Peters

June 18, 1996 - October 30, 2016

Happy Heavenly Birthday my Angel



You are missed even more than you know!

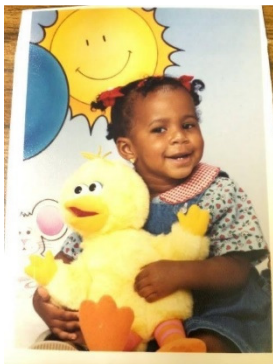
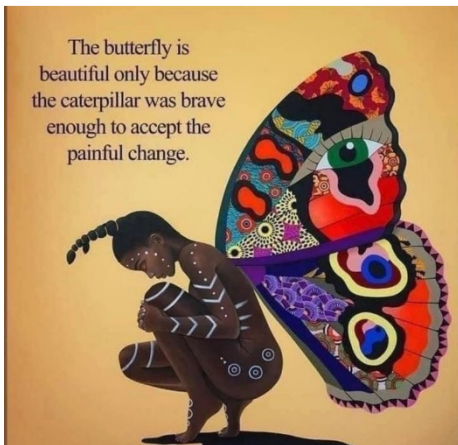
Since you have been gone, my heart aches and there is a big empty hole. Although I smile and try to enjoy my days, inside I am torn apart screaming in silence and pain.

Thank You for choosing me to be your earthly mother!!

I will cherish our memories shared throughout your 20 years, while longing for the day I get to hold you in my arms again. I still hear your voice telling me to "Be strong and to live my life." It is not easy but I have decided to take your advice.

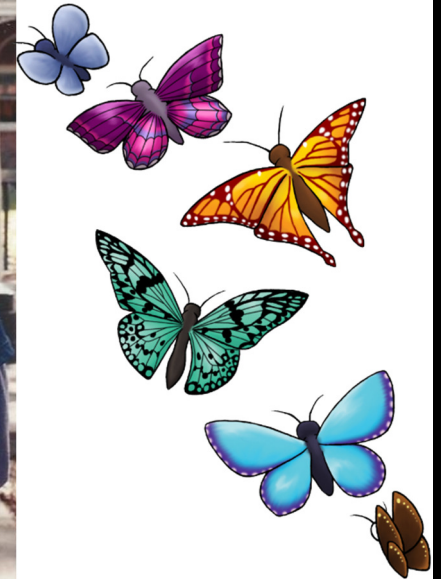
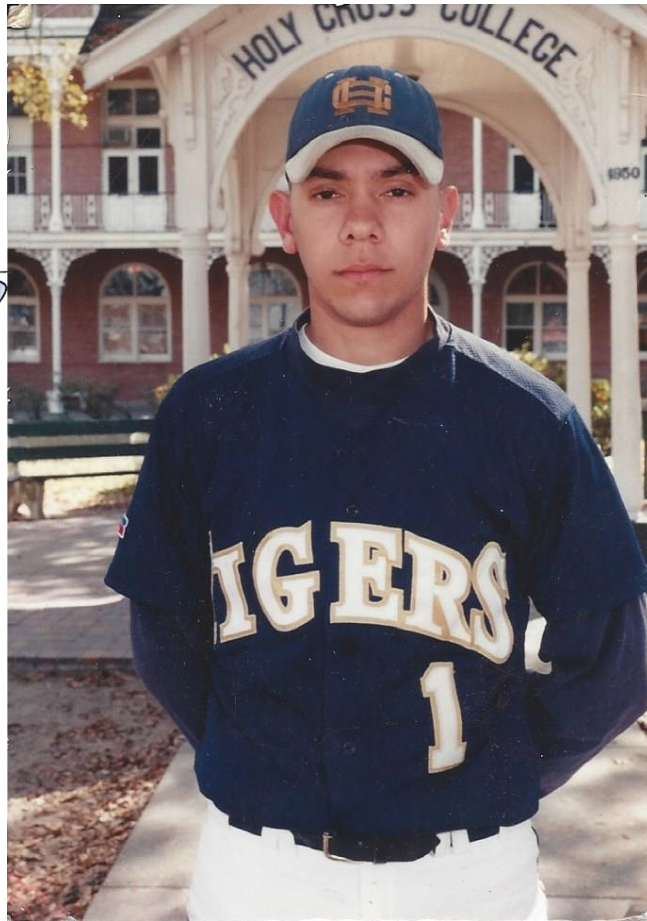
Our time will come again sweetie, until then I must keep pushing forward in your honor. Until that day arrives, I will just have to survive!

Missed Severely by Mom, Dad, and Big Sis Erica



Dedication sent in by Dena and Errol Peters

NEWSLETTER DEDICATION IN LOVING MEMORY OF
Jonathan Richard Wallace
January 7, 1981 - June 9, 2003



Another year has gone by... 20 years now!! Wow!!

I MISS YOU SO MUCH!!

I never imagined my life without you... I never imagined the emptiness that I feel...
You are forever in our hearts Jonathan and we will always love you!!
Until we meet again...



Love Always,
Mom, Dad & Jessica



Dedication sent in by Niecy and Stanley Wallace

NEWSLETTER DEDICATION IN LOVING MEMORY OF

Paul Mills

June 27, 1974 ~ April 3, 2021

My Son, My Beautiful Boy



When my son was born, he unfolded slowly, carefully, outward and I saw his long arms and elbows that crooked just like mine. I said out loud, "Don't put the tag on, it's my son Paul." I came to realize as he grew that he was probably undiagnosed high intelligent Asperger's. Large sounds frightened him. He freaked out when separated from his family and had to be attached to his sister to be able to go to daycare camps, but not with his own age group. He was brilliant always - drawing intricate war scenes as a young child, drawing fighter jets shooting missiles at one another, so much that the paper tore through and he had to start the war all over again. He became a master war historian. He knew about every single kind of war and he read so many books - hundreds of books on wars. He painted the stories out painstakingly in acrylic paint to look almost like comic book hues. But, when you looked close he would show you the terror we did to one another in awful ways, no matter what era. He was a well-loved Rock God. He taught himself how to play the guitar. He had an underground calling of people who would show up at dark in out of the way joints to hear my son play Hard Rock, loud and wonderfully bold. If you go to my Facebook page, one of his sets is the very first thing that you see, which looks like a photograph, but it is actually a video. Be prepared to rock out. He fought the good fight but the addiction won and he is at peace now. He is my Right Wing, 6.5 feet tall with long strong feathers. He tells me he loves me and that he is at peace. He is asking me to go forward with my own dreams even in my grief at the loss of both him and now his sister. They are once again side-by-side at peace together and with me all the time. Ayme, my Left Wing is just lower than my head. My beloveds. I am doing the best that I can. Going forward as best I can.



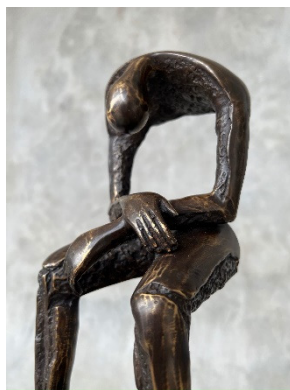
*I miss you dearly!
Love always, Mom*

Dedication sent in by Susan Monroe



A Father's Grief

It must be very difficult
To be a man in grief.
Since "men don't cry"
and "men are strong"
No tears can bring relief.
It must be very difficult
To stand up to the test.
And filed calls and visitors
So that she can get some rest.
They always ask if she's alright
And what she's going through.
But seldom take his hand and ask,



"My friend, how are you?"
He hears her cry in the night
And thinks his heart will break.
And dries her tears and comforts her
But "stays strong" for her sake.
It must be very difficult
To start each day anew.
And try to be so very brave –

He lost his child too.

Eileen Knight Hagemeister

Our Children Remembered



Angel Birthdays

| | | |
|---------------------------|--------|--|
| | | |
| Michele C. Hogan | Jun 5 | Daughter of Wanda Hogan |
| Connor Nicholas McKeithen | Jun 6 | Grandson of Barbara and Terry McKeithen |
| Ellie Rae Siddall | Jun 7 | Daughter of Analyn Siddall |
| Nathaniel Freedman | Jun 8 | Son of Robin Freedman |
| Jayson Hardesty | Jun 8 | Son of Shirley Hardesty |
| Onzaye Morris | Jun 10 | Son of Diane Morris; Brother of Nia Woods |
| Frankie Matto III | Jun 12 | Son of Beth O'Neal and Frank Matto, Jr. |
| Jenny Ann Kimball | Jun 13 | Sister of Jaimie Kimball |
| Aubrey Pitre | Jun 16 | Daughter of Kathy Perkins |
| Monica Lynn Savoie | Jun 17 | Daughter of Susie and Ron Savoie |
| Erin Peters | Jun 18 | Daughter of Dena and Errol Peters; Sister of Erica |
| Sherrell Ann Gorman | Jun 20 | Daughter of Charlene Gorman |
| Joseph P. Traina | Jun 22 | Son of Cynthia and Paul Blache |
| Mason McStay | Jun 22 | Son of Donna and Ross McStay |
| Matthew Minton | Jun 24 | Son of Rebecca Minton |
| Paul Mills | Jun 27 | Son of Susan Monroe |
| Chase Anthony | Jun 30 | Son of Sandy and Brent Chester; Brother of Molly |
| | | |

Angel Anniversaries

| | | |
|----------------------------|--------|---|
| | | |
| Rennie Lee Coludrovich | Jun 1 | Son of Lana and Rennie Lee Coludrovich, Sr. |
| Challing Eugene Albert | Jun 2 | Son of Liz and Stephen LeBlanc |
| Terrance J. Mascaro | Jun 4 | Brother of Melanie Boudreaux |
| Brian Jones | Jun 6 | Son of Laura Porter |
| Sheri Bundy | Jun 7 | Daughter of Carita and Buddy Arnold |
| Jeffrey Hergert | Jun 7 | Son of Donald & Roxanne Hergert |
| Casey James Hart | Jun 8 | Son of Debra Hart; Step Son of Lynn Champagne |
| Jonathan Richard Wallace | Jun 9 | Son of Claranecia and Stanley Wallace; Brother of Jessica |
| Jessica Lynn Smith | Jun 12 | Daughter of Connie Smith |
| Michael Troy Rognes | Jun 15 | Son of Alyson Carriere |
| Rosalie Miranda Fournett | Jun 15 | Daughter of Isabel Miranda-Vigne |
| Randall "Randy" Greg Ardon | Jun 17 | Son of Diane Ardon; Brother of Ryan Ardon |
| Julie Ann Marino | Jun 18 | Sister of Sharon Nami |
| Amie Miller | Jun 19 | Daughter of Darwin and Dawn Miller |
| Lindsay Nichols | Jun 21 | Daughter of Jolene Dufrene |
| Caridad Rea | Jun 23 | Sister of Isabel Miranda-Vigne |
| Jeffrey Samuel Rodosta | Jun 24 | Son of Margie Galloway |
| Melissa Rein Banderet | Jun 25 | Daughter of Wendy and John Rein |
| John "Jay" Joseph Lawson V | Jun 27 | Son of Christi Vercher |
| Rene Michael Ford | Jun 28 | Grandson of Kelly Ford |
| Taylor Friloux | Jun 29 | Daughter of Jamie Reavis and Suzi Guerin |
| Elizabeth M. Vaughn | Jun 30 | Daughter of Wanda Vicari |
| | | |



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**