



The Compassionate Friends

Greater Omaha Chapter

P.O. Box 540852, Omaha, NE 68154

mail@tcfomaha.org (English) or

correo@tcfomaha.org (Spanish)

402-571-4011

www.tcfomaha.org

Non-Profit
US Postage
PAID
Omaha, NE
Permit #1300

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.

Mar/Apr 2009

Información en Español en pagina 6 / Information in Spanish on Page 6.

Address Service Requested

MEETINGS/REUNIONES

PARENTS, GRANDPARENTS & ADULT SIBLINGS

7:00 p.m. — 1st Thursday of the month

New Cassel Retirement Center

900 N. 90th Street —Auditorium Level 2, Omaha, NE

Additional parking & entrance in back (ring bell on dock)

Thurs Mar 5 Touchstone 5 - Recognize you are not crazy

Thurs Apr 2 Holidays - Birthdays and Anniversaries

-Bring a Memory Book for April 2nd Meeting-

Thurs May 7 Creating Memorials

Thurs June 4 Mothers/Fathers Speak

Thurs July 2 Vacating without your child

Special Birthday Table

Our chapter has a monthly birthday table. If your child's birthday is this month, please bring a photo/memento and share a special memory. You are also welcome to bring your child/sibling's favorite food or birthday cake to share with the group. We hope you will take this opportunity to share your child with us.

REUNION EN ESPAÑOL/MEETING IN SPANISH

7:00 p.m. - 3er miércoles de cada mes/3rd Wed. of every month

One World Community Health Center Conference Room

4920 S. 30th Street, Omaha NE

Kelly 712-326-4308

Mier/Wed. 18 Marzo/March

Mier/Wed. 15 Abril/April

Mier/Wed. 20 Mayo/May

Mier/Wed. 17 Junio/June

Mier/Wed. 15 Julio/July

DAYTIME MEETING

Noon — 3rd Tuesday of the month

Tues, Mar 17 Tish's —1115 S 35 Street, Council Bluffs

Tues, Apr 21 Tish's —1115 S 35 Street, Council Bluffs

Tues, May 19 Tish's —1115 S 35 Street, Council Bluffs

**Please send information by April 15, 2009
for the May/June Newsletter**

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

Sat., 4th of April at 2:00pm at Panera's Oakview

Come and be a part of the steering committee!

We are in need of more help with our Omaha chapter of Compassionate Friends.

We are especially needing to fill the following positions:

Co-Leader - Treasurer - Secretary

Funding - solicit corporate donations and grants
Outreach - distributing brochures & establishing relationships in the community

If you can help with these positions or anything else or just want to find out what else you can do to help us then we would love to see you at the meeting on the 4th of April!

Newsletter Editor: Kelly Kleckner-Silva

Contact at: mail@kellykleckner.com or 712-326-4308

Love Gifts · Address Change · Authorization To Print Name & Dates

Mail to: The Compassionate Friends , PO Box 540852, NE 68154

Your Name _____

Address _____ Email _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

Love Gift Donation of \$ _____ In Memory of _____

DIRECT MY GIFT TOWARD:

- Memorial Programs
- Outreach (Printing, postage, phone, web)
- Angel of Hope Project
- General Fund (90% local/10% national)

Message: _____

[I GIVE MY PERMISSION TO PRINT MY CHILD'S NAME, BIRTH & DEATH DATES IN THE NEWSLETTER](#)

Child's Name _____

Birth Date _____ Death Date _____ Your Relationship _____

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

You will no longer receive the newsletter if 2 years have passed since our last contact with you. You may be added back to our list at your request. 2009

IN MEMORY OF BRYNN BABEL
FOREVER IN OUR HEARTS



Beautiful heart pendants have been designed from the Omaha Chapter's worldwide candle lighting votive and given to the chapter for a fundraiser. The sterling silver heart is 3/4".

Chain not included. \$40.00

♥ Gifts of Love ♥

Your donations help spread the message of hope and healing. TCF is a 501c3 organization and funded only by donations. Monetary gifts in any amount are deeply appreciated and we gratefully accept these gifts knowing our children are warmly remembered. Chapter expenses include printing, postage, library, yellow pages, and memorial programs.

- ♥ In memory of Brianna Eastman by Robert G. Eastman ♥ Anonymous gift through United Way
- ♥ In memory of Shawn Boomer Lattimer by Debora Lantz "We love and miss you always"
- ♥ In memory of Nicole Spiegel/Wheeler by Randy & Jan Spiegel "We love and miss you forever."
- ♥ In memory of Oscar Mercado-Lopez by Harlem Montano ♥ In memory of Oscar Mercado-Lopez by Laura Lopez
- ♥ In memory of Jose De Jesus Martinez by Jesus & Emma Martinez
- ♥ In memory of Brian Joseph Salado by Bruce & Debora Tagwerker -
"Happy 32nd Birthday! You will always be forever in our hearts. Love your entire family and your children."
- ♥ In memory of Dana Ray Herren by John & Phyllis Herren "We love and miss you."
- ♥ In memory of Joseph Ramspott by Ed & Pam Ramspott

In Memory of My Daughter

Lord, I know you're always busy, for you've many things to do, but when sorrow overcomes me, well, I need to talk to you. For I've lost someone precious, and she's with you up above, and she is someone that I needed, and she is someone that I loved. I am feeling lost and all alone, and though I do believe, I need you, Lord, to hold me up, and help me while I grieve. Please give me strength & courage, Lord, to bear what I must bear. And nudge me when my faith is weak, to remind me you are there. Give me hope for my tomorrow, tell me my life will still go on, Show me, Lord, that all this darkness, will be followed by the dawn. You've led me through so many things. You've pulled me through before. Hold me up, Lord, 'till I'm through this, and I am strong once more. Your Mom

Martha Peterson, mom of Ashley Peterson 1990-2008, TCF Omaha

Where Are The Resources?

Once you find your way through the tunnel of numbness and reality slaps you in the face, you quickly realize that the world has continued moving on without you. You might return to work, or try to resume your life as it was before. But, life as we once knew it is no more and will never be. And, we seriously doubt that we will ever enjoy life again.

This is when we discover that we might need help getting through this. Notice I said "getting through this", not "getting over this". There are resources available, but when we are numb with grief, sadness and devastation, functioning is difficult let alone searching for resources.

Compassionate Friends is obviously one of the first resources we'll talk about. Here you can find others who are experiencing the same grief that you are. The leaders of this group have managed to bring hope and comfort to so many parents. The meetings are very helpful, the special events help bring comfort and recognition to our children and here you find parents who understand your loss. They have a fabulous library and I recommend checking out the various books which are terrific resources.

A good grief counselor is invaluable. Not all therapists have the experience of loss to be of help, but many do. It takes some searching to find the right one. This is the time in your life to set aside any pre-conceived ideas about being weak when seeking out help.

Grief Support Groups are an immense help. Many mortuaries and churches conduct such groups. On occasion you will see seminars from these resources.

I was fortunate enough to find an angel by the name of Joanne Sharon who literally saved my life. Joanne conducts many spiritual support groups for Mothers who have lost children. She began this group some years ago and from this gathering came the beginning of a Fathers Support Group as well.

Friends, Family and Co-workers often times have lost children and you might not even know it. They surface and can become a huge source of strength and understanding. As much as these people would like to help you, if they haven't lost a child they simply cannot understand the pain that you are in. But don't resist help no matter where it comes from. My co-workers couldn't have been more supportive. They held me up when I was down, they reminded me of my faith when it wavered and didn't hesitate to use David's name. And, what would I be without my dedicated cousin who constantly fed me Bible verses and encouragement to be a better person and make a difference in the world.

My crash and burn came 3 months after we lost our son. I thought I was doing fine until one day the stress of a busy day got the best of me. I ended up in a storage room with a co-worker who was praying for me while holding me up. I'll never forget the compassion she showed me that day, she was put in front of me for a reason. And, on that day I discovered that I stood no chance of healing or mending without help. A trip to the Doctor got me on the right track. I soon discovered a therapist, two support groups and yes even an anti-depressant. Sometimes it takes a combination of resources to move forward. If one resource doesn't work for you, try another. The key is to keep trying until you find the support you need to once again enjoy life.

Diana Bodnar, David's Mom, TCF Omaha

In Memory of McKenna Rose Winton

Our daughter McKenna Rose recently died from Meningitis...she met heaven on June 23, 2008. McKenna had a very rare form of Meningitis that overtook her innocent body in one short day. McKenna was an organ donor...and her courage has helped save the lives of many other children! She is an example of what we all should aspire to be someday....making such an impact on this world in only 34 days. Her time with us was short...but her death can never take away the memories we have of her!.

In our search to make something good come from this terrible time in our lives, my husband and I decided to hold the First Annual golf classic, to honor our daughter and to help others. On May 23, 2009 we are hosting the 1st annual McKenna Rose Memorial golf classic at Pacific Springs, to benefit the Meningitis Foundation of America. The Meningitis foundation of America is a non-profit organization that focuses on creating public and medical awareness, supporting sufferers of meningitis and their families and supporting research for preventive vaccines and treatments. If you would like more information about the tournament and join us in fighting this disease and supporting this great foundation please contact:

Steve and Nicole Winton at Nicole_3202@hotmail.com or 402-202-0065.

If you would like to learn more about the Meningitis Foundation of America check their website at www.MUSA.org

Steve and Nicole Winton, TCF Omaha

**Thank you to the following businesses and professionals who have generously assisted us
in our mission to offer hope to bereaved families.**

New Cassel Retirement Center · One World Community Health Center · KBBX 97.7 FM Radio Lobo - Sergio Robles



It is time to think about our 2009 banner. Once again we will be having members from our group take our banner to Portland Oregon to the National Conference in August. "The walk to remember" will be on Sunday morning and we will walk our children's name through the streets of Portland. If you would like to include your child's name on the banner, please submit this form. Remember even if you registered in 2008, we need your permission and a new form for 2009.

Remember...You do not walk alone. If you cannot donate at this time, please just send us your child's name.

NEBRASKA REMEMBERS BANNER

1. _____ 2. _____

3. _____ 4. _____

Yes, I would like to support the work of the Compassionate Friends Greater Omaha Chapter with a donation of:

\$ _____ (\$10.00, \$25.00, \$50.00 or other amount) Banner fundraising will be used for Outreach.

Deadline: July 1, 2009

Please mail this completed form and contribution to:

**The Compassionate Friends
1334 North Hickory
Wahoo, Ne. 68066**

♥ Angel of Hope Memorial ♥

The Omaha Chapter's Angel of Hope will be located at Boystown, overlooking the lake. The project will begin after 100 bricks have been purchased, and the Angel will be placed after 200 bricks have been purchased. Watch our website for updates. www.tcfomaha.org The Compassionate Friends is a 501c3 non-profit organization. Your gift is tax-deductible. Donations can be made at any Omaha State Bank location. Find a location near you at omahastate.com. Total cost of project is \$ 30,000.

The Angel of Hope was introduced to the world in the book *The Christmas Box*, Richard Paul Evans. In the book, a woman mourns the loss of her child at the base of an angel monument. Though the story is mostly fiction, the angel monument once existed but was lost in the 1984 Salt Lake City flood. A new bronze statue was commissioned by the author in response to reports that grieving parents were seeking out the angel as a place to grieve and heal. In its wing is inscribed the word HOPE. Local Compassionate Friends members shared a vision of a quiet place where families could go to remember their children and heal. It stands as a symbol of hope for all parents and loved ones who have experienced the death of a child, no matter what age.

The Angel of Hope Fund has grown to \$9,000!!!

Bricks ordered by April 1 will be installed early summer. **Bricks ordered by August 1** will be installed in the fall.

Benches are sold out, so we are making available a 12x16 granite tile for \$1000.

For a donation of \$3000, your child will be recognized at the memorial as a "Friend of the Angel".

Angel of Hope Donations from December 14, 2008 through February 15, 2009

♥ Aaron & Daphne Dallner - Denise Dallner ♥ Bob & Lynn Schmill.....Matthew Schmill

♥ Al & Joyce Schlosser - Lynnette Angers Schlosser ♥ Bodo & Diane Hirniak - Heidi Hirniak

♥ Carolyn Yates, Peter & Marilyn Starke - Kelly Marlene Martin ♥ Cheryl Anding - Richie Sehi

♥ Duane & Debi Haack, Steve & Nicole Winton - McKenna Winton ♥ Ed & Janice Stepanek - Liesbeth Hahn

♥ Ed & Anne Parks - Erin Pelster ♥ Jim & Kathy Lewis ♥ Julie Pelster - Steve Brummels

♥ Larry & Dianne Jung - Tara Jung ♥ Lavern & Sally Schrage - Erin Pelster ♥ Lorraine Beaman - Addie Mixan

♥ Steven & Sheri Gilbert - Erin Pelster ♥ Tom & Mary Lynne Kauffman - Lindsey Kaufman ♥ Tyler & Tracy Fiene - Riley Fiene

Birth Certificates for Stillborn Babies

My husband and I married in 2000. I had great intensions to finish graduate school and then start a family. A year later we started to try to get pregnant, and 2 years later we were still childless and very jealous of friends and family who were able to have kids. In November of 2004 I had gone to the doctor thinking I had the flu. To my surprise I was pregnant. What an honor for us. We were beyond words and I had finally been given the gift of life.

At 32 weeks I did not feel any movement. An ultrasound confirmed I had lost my baby that we had yearned for so long. I delivered Gavin Robert on June 15, 2005. I had the chance to hold this precious child and have footprints and handprints made. He was perfect to us. Before leaving the hospital I was told I would be getting the death certificate in the mail following the autopsy. I was shocked to find out I would not be receiving a birth certificate. I was pregnant, I did carry this baby for 32 weeks, I felt him move, I heard his heart beat and most important, I gave birth to him. It was an insult to my husband and me after waiting so long for a birth.

On April 17of 2008 Governor Dave Heineman signed into legislature a bill that allows parents to get a birth certificate resulting in stillbirth. On December 27th 2008 I received what completed my journey after all these years, proof I gave birth to a beautiful baby boy.

If you would like information on how to get a certificate for your child, please contact me at 980-2956 and ask for Jennie or e-mail me at bobt48@yahoo.com. The website to receive the application can be found at www.hhs.state.ne.us/vital_records.htm.

Jennie Thompson , TCF Omaha

Creating Memorials

The families in our chapter are a great resource to each other in finding ways to memorialize our children. If you have done something in memory of your child, please send your story to us. Include contact information, vendors, or anything that helped you achieve your memorial.... quilts, jewelry, candles, books, websites, garden stones, adopting a roadway, signs, foundations, homemade gift items....everything. We have a lot of creative families. Each project will become a page in the Memorials Scrapbook. Send it before the May 7 meeting. TCF, PO Box 540852, Omaha 68154.

MEMORIAL WEBSITES FROM OUR CHAPTER.

www.mattsdream.org

<http://www.kudym.com/joel/>

<http://www.tara-jung.memory-of.com/about.aspx>

<http://www.foreverbrendan.com/>

<http://our.homewithgod.com/hennys/>

<http://chad-chase.memory-of.com>

www.diegoceballos.com

Español/Spanish

Esta hoja informativa es para todos nosotros. Si, Ud. tiene un niño o conoce a un niño que falleció y quiere compartir un poema o algo que escribió.

Porfavor enviarlo a la direccion:

correo@tcfomaha.org

Credo de Los Amigos Compasivos

No tenemos que caminar solos. Somos Los Amigos Compasivos. Nosotros tendemos las manos mutuamente con amor, con comprensión y con esperanza. Nuestros hijos han fallecido de todas las edades y por distintas causas, pero el amor por nuestros hijos nos une. Tu dolor es mi dolor, igual que tu esperanza se convierte en mi esperanza.

Venimos de todos los caminos de la vida y desde distintas circunstancias. Somos una familia única porque representamos muchas razas y credos. Somos de todas las edades. Algunos de nosotros han procesado su pena, pero otros todavía sienten el dolor tan reciente e intensamente fuerte que nos sentimos desvalidos y sin esperanzas.

Algunos de nosotros estamos luchando por conseguir contestaciones. Algunos sentimos coraje, culpa o depresión intensa; otros irradian una paz interna, pero cualquier dolor que traemos a esta actividad de Los Amigos Compasivos, es el dolor que compartimos según compartimos el amor por nuestros hijos con cada uno de nosotros.

Estamos buscando y luchando para divisar un futuro para nosotros, pero estamos comprometidos a edificar un futuro juntos, según tendemos las manos a cada uno con amor y compartimos el dolor al igual que las alegrías, compartimos el coraje al igual que la paz, compartimos la fe al igual que las dudas y nos ayudamos mutuamente a compartir la Pena y Crecer.

No tenemos que Caminar Solos, Somos Los Amigos Compasivos.

Book Reviews

The Shack by Wm. Paul Young A Must Read Book!

I can only imagine my friends talking behind my back. "Should we have her read it? Will it be too painful for her to read? Maybe it will be healing!" Oh, the blessing of friends! They told me about the thought-provoking book called, The Shack, by Wm. Paul Young.

This book is about a man, Mack, whose child was abducted and brutally murdered. In a note from "Papa" he is invited back to the shack where his daughter, Missy, was murdered. With much anxiety he makes the trip and meets three people who he learns are actually The Trinity. Mack comes to understand the Father, Son, & Holy Spirit. Through his journey he comes to understand God's mercy.

For those of us who have lost a child, we have so many questions for God. I wonder if Young lost a child because he seems to know our pain so well! Young describes God in terms that humanize Him.

I've always said that I didn't blame God for my daughter, Shannon's, death, but as I read this, I came to recognize my hidden anger. While there are parts of this book that may not fit with my Christian doctrines, I was moved to feel closer to God, His mercy, and love. I'm no expert in religion, so it's hard to believe I'm writing this, but I do know the book brings me closer to God, my understanding of how Shannon died, and the many questions that I have surrounding her death. It offers hope and healing.

I intend to reread this book, with a highlighter in hand, and then find my friends to sit and chat. I know we have quite a lot to talk about!

I'm not even sure if you have to be of the Christian faith to benefit from this book. To help you in your journey, go get a copy of The Shack, and read it today!

Anne Lloyd, mom of Shannon, TCF Omaha

A Grace Disguised by Gerald L Sittser

As I look outside and see the once again snow-covered ground, I am reminded of my ever changing grief. Now that I am a few years out, I see that this "grief thing" is a process and not an all or nothing experience. I am like the cyclical weather patterns. Sometimes I am sunny and warm, other times I am blanketed by the cold. Interpreting my emotional state through my faith helps me find answers, or partial answers, that I so desperately need and want.

In his book, A Grace Disguised, Gerald L. Sittser talks about his journey through grief and how his faith helped him find comfort. The author lost his mother, his wife, and his youngest daughter in a drunk-driving accident. In losing three members of different generations, a burden was placed on him that most of us could not fathom enduring. He relates how he searched for answers to the "why" questions and how his faith helped him deal with the tough questions.

He talks about tragedy and forgiveness, grief and grace, justice and mercy, darkness and light, and other faith-based issues that many of us struggle with in our own journeys. The explanations are easy to understand and insightful. The emotions he relays are raw and painful, but genuine in nature. There are no easy answers to many of the questions raised, but he gives reasonable answers to those he can.

The author admits that life was a constant struggle after the death of his loved ones. It was an honest statement to say that his faith was shaken after such a tragic loss. It took him a long time to discover what helped him through those hard times. Even though he found it hard to continue believing while grieving, it was his faith in the end that helped him recover. Trust came back slowly and he gradually was able to find joy again.

I liked the realism that this book portrayed. I could relate well to the author's thoughts and situations. This is where I am. When the cold, hard truth of my son's death blankets my thinking & my world, I turn to my faith for strength. I still struggle with partial answers, but am learning to find comfort. Perhaps in time, the warmth of the sun will melt away the cold and I will find joy again. If you are looking for faith-based answers to melt away your cold, I would recommend this book.

Janet Todd, mother of Brian, TCF Omaha

♥ Our Children Remembered ♥

In the days ahead, especially remember these children and their families...on the day of their birth and on the anniversary of their death. If your child has a birthday this month, bring a photo or memorabilia for the birthday table, and a treat to share at the meeting

BIRTHDAYS

March

3/2 AARON MICHAEL HARTLINE VONKNORRING
3/5 FENTON (PEN) KELLER
3/15 SHERRI LYNN BOYER
3/21 STEVE STARKS
3/22 JOANNE BETTS
3/23 NICK BOWEN
3/25 MICHAELA OLSON
3/25 MICHAELA CECILIA KORIN OLSON
3/29 BRIAN JOSEPH SALADO
3/29 THOMAS DAVID ROSE
3/31 HEIDI ANN HIRNIAK

April

4/6 DAVID DUFFY
4/8 TIMOTHY RONALD LARSEN
4/8 SOPHIA MIEKO HERNANDEZ
4/10 DENA JEAN SCHOLL
4/15 DAVID RIESBERG JR
4/18 SCOTT BLEVINS
4/19 DAREN MICHAEL BASHOR
4/24 TOMMY L. CRAFT
4/24 MATTHEW A. SCHMILL
4/24 MATTHEW MEISINGER
4/26 RICHIE A. SEHI
4/28 ELIZABETH IRENE WESSLING
4/28 ANGELA KATSKEE TRELLES
4/30 JACKIE HEYDENREICH KLINE

Corrections: Birthdates: 2/18 Jose Martinez
2/27 Galilea Suarez Lemus

Angel Date: 2/19 Daniel DeLeon

ANGEL DATES

March

3/1 RAY NASTASE
3/1 KARLENE PATRICE LAVON BLAKE
3/1 BRENT BLANCHARD
3/2 GALILEA SUAREZ LEMUS
3/6 LUANN MILLER
3/8 DANIEL ROBERT STEPANEK
3/15 DANA RAY HERREN
3/19 JACKIE HEYDENREICH KLINE
3/21 NICK BOWEN
3/26 PHYLLIS NENEMAN BECKERS
3/26 BABY MICHAEL BECKERS
3/27 JOSEPH RAMSPOTT
3/27 ELIZABETH IRENE WESSLING
3/28 SASHA ALAINA CORONA
3/31 JORDYN ANNE FLEISCHMAN

April

4/1 JAY KRIER
4/3 ANGELA KATSKEE TRELLES
4/6 JACOB BULL
4/8 DAVID JOESTING
4/11 JIM LEHMAN
4/12 SCOTT WOODRICH
4/12 DARIN BLANCHARD
4/16 SANDY HANRAHAN
4/24 BRIAN JOSEPH SALADO
4/24 MATTHEW A. SCHMILL
4/25 MICHAEL RAY HAWES
4/27 LAUREN CHAMBERS
4/29 CHAD W. HARLOW



We need your authorization to list your child here. Sign & submit the form on Page 2. We are sorry if we have made an error. If you don't see your child's name, please submit the form again.

