



NEWSLETTER

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

May-June 2014

© 2014 The Compassionate Friends, All rights Reserved Vol. 19 Issue 3

YOU ARE INVITED

The Compassionate Friends - Metrowest Chapter meets twice a month. Evenings on the third Tuesday from 7:30 to 9:30 pm in the library of St. Mary's Parish Center, Route 16, Washington St., Holliston. The parish center is located between the church and the rectory. Our next two meetings will be on:

May 20th June 17th

The **Tuesday** afternoon meetings will be held on the last Tuesday of the month next to St. Mary of the Assumption Church in Milford at the parish center. **Please call Ed or Joan Motuzas at (508) 473-4239 by the last Monday or earlier if you plan to attend.**

Directions....On Route 16 (Main St.) going north through downtown Milford (Main St.) at Tedeschi's Market on the left, take a left at the lights onto Winter St. The parish center is the last building before the church. Going south on Route 16 (East Main St.) after Sacred Heart Church on the left, bear right on Main St., continue past Dunkin' Donuts on the right, proceed to the next set of lights and take a right onto Winter St. There is parking on both sides of the street. Look for Compassionate Friends signs to meeting room. Our next two meetings will be on:

May 27th June 24th

WHO ARE WE?

The Compassionate Friends is a nonprofit, nonsectarian, mutual assistance, self-help organization offering friendship and understanding to bereaved parents and siblings.

Our primary purpose is to assist the bereaved in the positive resolution of the grief experienced upon the death of a child and to support their efforts to achieve physical and emotional health.

The secondary purpose is to provide information and education about bereaved parents and siblings for those who wish to understand. Our objective is to help members of the community, including family, friends, employers, co-workers, and professionals to be supportive.

Meetings are open to all bereaved parents, grandparents and siblings. No dues or fees are required to belong to the Metrowest Chapter of The Compassionate Friends.

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. ©2014

Weather Cancellation

In the event of inclement weather on meeting days or nights, if in doubt call:

**Ed or Joan Motuzas at
(508) 473-4239**



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS OF METROWEST



Chapter Information

Co-leaders

* Ed Motuzas 508/473-4239
 * Joan Motuzas 508/473-4239

Secretary

* Joan Motuzas 508/473-4239

Treasurer

* Joseph Grillo 508/473-7913

Webmaster

* Al Kennedy 508/533/9299

Librarian

Ed Motuzas 508/473/4239

Newsletter

Ed Motuzas 508/473-4239

Senior Advisors

* Rick & Peg Dugan 508/877-1363

Steering Committee *

Judy Daubney 508/529-6942
 Janice Parmenter 508/528-5715
 Linda Teres 508/620-0613
 Mitchell Greenblatt 508/881-2111
 Judith Cherrington 508/473-4087
 Carol Cotter 774/219-7774

The chapter address is:

The Compassionate Friends
 Metrowest Chapter
 26 Simmons Dr.
 Milford, MA 01757-1265

Chapter Web Page
www.tcfmetrowest.com

Regional Coordinator
 Rick Mirabile
 11 Ridgewood Crossing
 Hingham, MA 02043
 Phone (781) 740-1135
 Email: Rmirabile@comcast.net

The Compassionate Friends has a national office that supports and coordinates chapter activities. The national office can be reached as follows:

The Compassionate Friends
 P.O. Box 3696
 Oak Brook, IL 60522-3696
 Voice Toll Free (877) 969-0010
 Fax (630) 990-0246

Web Page: www.compassionatefriends.org

TRIBUTES, GIFTS AND DONATIONS

There are no dues or fees to belong to *The Compassionate Friends*. Just as our chapter is run entirely by volunteers, your voluntary, tax-deductible donations enable us to send information to newly bereaved parents, purchase pamphlets and books, contribute to the national chapter and meet other chapter expenses.

THANK YOU to the friends who help keep our chapter going with their contributions.

Love Gifts

Ms. Betty Myers in loving memory of her son **William Bruce-Tagoe** on his anniversary July 6th
 Janet Raneri in loving memory of her son **Major Robert Raneri** on his birthday May 5th and his anniversary June 22nd.
 Mr. & Mrs. Burton Stuchins in loving memory of their son **Alan R. Stuchins** on his birthday March 2nd.

When Fathers Weep at Graves

I see them weep
 the fathers at the stones
 taking off the brave armor
 forced to wear in the work place
 clearing away the debris
 with gentle fingers
 inhaling the sorrow
 diminished by anguish
 their hearts desiring
 what they cannot have--
 to walk hand in hand
 with children no longer held--
 to all the fathers who leave a part
 of their hearts at the stones
 may breezes underneath trees of time
 ease their pain
 as they receive healing tears
 ...the gift the children give.

Alice J. Wisler
For David, in memory of our son Daniel



Our Children Remembered

As a regular feature, the newsletter acknowledges anniversaries of the deaths of our children/siblings and their birthdays. This issue covers the months of May and June. If information about your loved one is missing, incorrect or our chapter files are in error, please send the correct data, including your name, address, and telephone number, the name of your loved one and the birthday and date and cause of death to the newsletter editor, Ed Motuzas, 26 Simmons Dr., Milford, MA 01757-1265.

Anniversaries

May

LAUREN THIBEAU FLANAGAN
IAN MacINNES HODGMAN
COREY S. VAUTIER
BEATRICE HUDSON
NICHOLAS POST
LEA M. SIEBERT
SUSAN A. QUINLIVAN
DONNA M. KIELION
LISA RANDALL
ROBERT L. LOMBARD JR.
DOLORES ROSE BERGERON
MICHAEL PATRICK MURPHY

June

RYAN SEAN BARTLETT
DANIEL R. ADILETTO
CHRISTOPHER MARC DULLEA
MATTHEW PISAPIA
RUSSELL J. TERES
LAURIE SLOPEK
MAJ. ROBERT M. RANERI
SAMANTHA HAMILTON
IAN GREENBLATT

Birthdays

May

LEX ROTHMAN
COLIN M. DORAN
JENNIFER L. GOLDSWORTHY
MICHAEL P. McLAUGHLIN
SCOTT W. RUTH
MAJ. ROBERT M. RANERI
LEAH CATHERINE TEPPER
KELLI S. DONOVAN
MICHAEL PATRICK MURPHY
WILLIAM C. LEWIS
MARC P. LEWIS
MEAGHAN TAYLOR McGRATH
KRISTEN DONOVAN

June

DONNA ANN WOLFSON
GERALDINE DiCARLO
SCOTT MOTUZAS
JUSTIN MAYER
STEVEN GRILLO
NICHOLAS L. BOUDREAU
NICOLE FRADE
NICHOLAS POST
JOSEPH WEBSTER

E-Mail Edition: Must have Adobe Acrobat Reader Version 6 or higher to download pdf newsletter

Go Green



Green goes with everything

To our wonderful e-mail subscribers, Thank You!
By receiving your newsletter in this format, you are saving trees (to make paper), chemicals (to produce ink), money (for postage), and waste products from printing and from newsletters that are only printed if you need the hard copy.

Our chapter and the world appreciates your generosity



THE SIBLING CORNER



This page is dedicated to siblings together adjusting to grief thru encouragement & sharing

"Siblings Walking Together." We are the surviving siblings of The Compassionate Friends. We are brought together by the deaths of our brothers and sisters. Open your hearts to us, but have patience with us. Sometimes we will need the support of our friends. At other times we need our families to be there. Sometimes we must walk alone, taking our memories with us, continuing to become the individuals we want to be. We cannot be our dead brother or sister; however, a special part of them lives on with us.

When our brothers and sisters died, our lives changed. We are living a life very different from what we envisioned, and we feel the responsibility to be strong even when we feel weak. Yet we can go on because we understand better than many others the value of family and the precious gift of life. Our goal is not to be the forgotten mourners that we sometimes are, but to walk together to face our tomorrows as surviving siblings of The Compassionate Friends.

THE AFTERMATH OF SUICIDE

I had never experienced the death of a close loved one before my brother died. When David died, my world came crashing down around me, shattering me into a million pieces. My brother and I were close, but I had no suspicion that he was contemplating suicide and had been for a long time. The night my sister called to tell me he was dead is etched in my memory forever. If I shut my eyes, I can go back to that time and place almost three years ago and still hear her voice. It is a very painful memory and one that I don't call up, but it is there nonetheless.

The overwhelming feelings of shock, disbelief, numbness, despair, and sadness are very vivid. At the same time, I was outraged at what he had done to us, to me. How dare he do this! I couldn't even begin to guess how many times I said, "I can't believe this is happening."

The first six months was a confusing and emotionally draining period for me. I was obsessed with wanting to have answers, especially from him. I read many books on suicide and finally after reading Iris Bolton's book "My Son, My Son," I came to realize what she said was true: "You can ask why a million times but you finally have to let it go, because the person you need the answers from is not here to give them to you. If only for the sake of your own sanity, you have to stop asking why."

Our family drew closer together from this tragedy, and it made me more aware of how much I value and love them. I also had the support of a good friend who was willing to spend hours talking and crying with me. I still get very angry at my brother for changing our lives so irrevocably. That anger inevitably turns into sadness. I cannot see his smiling face, or hear his laughter, or watch him grow into adulthood. Yes, I had 4 dreams for him, too.

He was an intelligent, warm, sensitive and caring young man, and I was eager to see what direction his life would take. I can't help but wonder what he would be like today. I miss him very much.

I will never agree with his solution, but it was his choice to make and I have to learn to live with it. I am absolutely certain beyond a shadow of a doubt that I will see him again. Only then will I get answers to my questions. I have no choice but to wait until that time.

**Nicki Wright
TCF, MO-KAN, KS**

Life Is Something That Comes and Goes

**Life is something that comes and goes
As silently as the gentle wind blows - one day here,
the next day gone.**

You try to understand the reason of it all,
Why some remain when others are called.
The purpose is there if only you see
That only God knows what will be.

**Life is something that comes and goes as silently as
the gentle wind blows.**

I pray and pray for the day
When I will hear my brother say,
"I love you kid sister, I'll see you soon.
Think of me when you look at the moon."
I look outside and see the moon so bright,
As full as can be, shedding its light.
I stare at the stars and the heavens above
And remember my brother so full of love.

He was my friend, my father, my keeper,
And since he died, the road seems steeper.
But I must have faith in Jesus, My Lord,
Who helps me understand the truth of His word.

(continued on next page)



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS OF METROWEST



(continued from last page)

Life is something that comes and goes

As silently as the gentle wind blows,
one day here, the next day gone.

**Breta Dodd, Age 16
TCF, Grand Junction, CO**

Month of May Brings Tears, Fond Memories

The month of May is a time of many memories and many tears for mothers who have lost a child to death. The memories are tied to our natural association of May as being the “Mother’s Day” month. We can’t escape the reminders. Second only to the Christmas season in commercialization, Mother’s Day is thrust at us in television commercials, billboards, radio spots, magazine and newspaper ads and special features, local and national news shows and each store we enter. Heartbreaking, emotional, touching movies or television shows are aired in May in big part because of Mother’s Day. The reminders are endless. Our emotions build and build until we think we will snap.

Most of us have memories of happier Mother’s Days, time spent with our children opening their gifts and reading their special cards, talking, laughing and enjoying the moment. The counterpoint to our memories is that Mother’s Day intensifies the deep void that will always remain in our lives. In the words of one mother, “One day after my son had been gone for several months, I realized that this nightmare life is my life forever.” May is doubly difficult for this mother because of Mother’s Day and because her son died in May. May is doubly difficult for me as my son was born in May.

Even without a birth or death anniversary, May can be extremely stressful and sad. We enter the countdown on the first day of May. Some of us begin to improve after Mother’s Day passes, some of us can’t let go until the month ends. Some of us suffer lingering effects for several weeks or months.

My first Mother’s Day without my son was a horrifying time. No gifts, no cards, no call. I took all the cards he had given me for Mother’s Day and put them on my piano....the time honored place in our home for special occasion cards. My second Mother’s Day was different. I simply refused to acknowledge it. My husband gave me a card and a small gift, and we left it at that. A few tears, but we decided to relax and do things that would keep us away from the Mother’s Day celebrations.

This will be my third Mother’s Day without my son. I do miss him terribly; there will be no replacement for that relationship in my life. Unlike losing a parent, a spouse, a grandparent, a sibling or a friend, the loss of our child means the loss of a big part of ourselves.

That is our new reality. What will I do this Mother’s Day? I don’t really know, but it will dawn on me that I should do one thing or another.

What you do this Mother’s Day is your choice. You owe no explanation to anyone. As we walk through this grief of losing our children, we owe no explanations. Our love for our dead children lingers, and in that love is a goodness and purity that allows us to gently be ourselves. Our emotions are not intended to offend; but sometimes the pain is so overpowering that we must block out the world. And sometimes, we are able to overcome it. I will handle it the best way I can. So will you.

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

Graduation Time

It’s June and graduation time again. Your child would have been among those wearing the cap and gown, walking down the aisle to the ever stirring “Pomp and Circumstance.” Now there is a vacant spot in the line. Should you attend? Can you stand the pain? Will people think you are strange?



As always you must follow your heart. So, go if you’d like to and don’t hide your tears. It’s quite all right to miss your own child while celebrating the achievements of others.

Just remember: that your instincts are the most important ones; that no one else can make this decision for you, and that it doesn’t really matter what other people think.

It was your child who died. This is your pain and you have the right to feel it and deal with it in your own way, and may a bit more healing take place in the doing.

**Peggy Gibson
TCF, Nashville, TN**



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS OF METROWEST



Vinnie and the Sunflower

A part of life is death.
And a part of death is remembering.

And for a little boy named Vinnie, there are two sisters who are determined that every time you spot a towering sunflower plant, you'll think of him and remember him, too, even though you never looked into his sweet face, heard his infectious laugh, nor felt his unconditional love.

Thirteen-year-old Angela and nine-year-old Elyssa Rubertino of Ohio figure they have distributed thousands of sunflower seeds originating from a single special sunflower planted by their four-year-old brother for a preschool project in April of 1993, only two weeks prior to his death. A victim of a hit and run drunk driver, Vinnie was struck after purchasing ice cream from a truck on the street outside his home.

The sunflower, which was sprouted in a paper cup, was carried home by Vinnie only a week prior to his death. It sat on a kitchen counter, overlooked in the aftermath of the accident.

"After Vinnie was killed we kind of forgot about it for a week or two," says Angela. "Once we realized that we still had it, Mom and Dad wanted to do everything they could to make sure the sunflower lived. We took care of it and my dad, sister, and I planted it together in the garden. Dad watered and cared for the sunflower every day."

Family members were astonished to see it not only thrive, but eventually reach 8 feet 5 inches, towering over the eaves trough to their family home.

As fall came and the plant started to droop and die, the family removed the head and saved it through the winter, planting 200 seeds in cups in the spring, giving them to family members and friends.



"After we had planted them my father was talking to our reverend and he said that a way to keep Vinnie's memory alive would be to keep the sunflower and re-plant seeds from it every year," recalls Angela. "Last year we planted them ourselves and started little seedlings so they were actually growing when we gave them to people. This year we only did that for family members and friends. Everybody else got seed packets.

Elyssa, then seven, who first noticed the sunflower plant still alive in the kitchen, honored Vinnie's memory with a poem that the family attached to a green (Vinnie's favorite color) straw and put in with each seedling. The poem provided the explanation of why the family was giving people the sunflower:

*This plant we started as a tiny seed
From our little treasure "Vinnie"
He watched as the little plant grew...
Until that very day, he saw no more.*

*We cry a lot as days go by,
We watched it grow from bottom to top.
Of course we always have that memory
In our very own backyard.*

The poem was especially appropriate this year as the Rubertino's backyard was filled with more than 35 sunflowers, giving the family thousands of seeds from the original replantings.

Some of the plants came from Vinnie's original sunflower while others were from sunflowers grown last year from the seeds of Vinnie's plant. "It's kind of like the sunflower's children and grandchildren," observed Angela.

During his short life, Vinnie was very close to his family, especially his two sisters.

"He's definitely the best person I've ever met in my life," says Angela. "He was very wonderful, kind, always polite. Everyone he met would always say how wonderful he was.

"I love him so much! It is very different not having him around. Every day when I would come home from school he would always be right there to say 'Hi, how was your day?' He would be kind of like a second dad to me because he was always asking me questions about what I would do at school and about what it was like. He liked to play with me a lot but he was really Elyssa's constant playmate."

Vinnie enjoyed all the things a typical 4-year-old would like including Nintendo, Disney movies, Ninja Turtles, fishing, and his special shirt, which was his security blanket. He even liked to play golf. One of his prized possessions came from his dad, Vince who spotted it at a golf show. Vince agreed to purchase a new golf bag and new golf clubs, but only if the seller would include a matching miniature golf bag that was being used to hold business cards. The deal was struck and Vinnie received the special present for Christmas in 1991. He was only two and had two clubs to go in it. He and his sisters often golfed in the backyard and Tuesdays were special because he and his "Papa" always went putting.

(continued on next page)



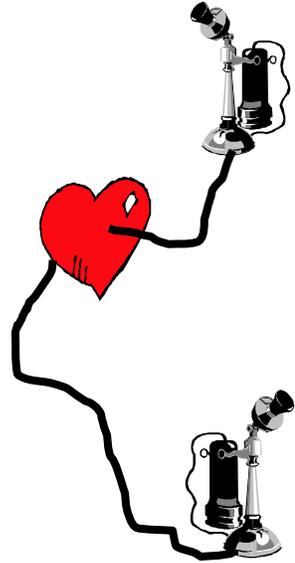
THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS OF METROWEST



Phone Friends

Sometimes it helps to just be able to talk to someone; maybe at a time when pain or stress seems too much to bear. We maintain a list of Telephone Friends; people who are willing to listen, to commiserate, to give whatever support they can. In a time of need, feel free to call one of our Telephone Friends.

- Ed & Joan Motuzas, ...**Scott**, age 31, Kidney and Liver Failure,(508)473-4239
- Janice Parmenter,**Tyler**, age 29, Chronic Addiction,(508)528-5715
- Judy Daubney,**Clifford**, age 27, Suicide,(508)529-6942.
- Linda Teres,.....**Russell**, age 19, Automobile Accident,(508)620-0613
- Mitchell Greenblatt,....**Ian**, age 18, Automobile Accident,..... (508)881-2111
- Judith Cherrington,....**Jeffrey**, age 48, Cancer,(508)473-4087
- Sandra Richiazzi.....**Bryan C. Plunkett**, Automobile Accident,.....(508)877-8106



It is always useful to have more Telephone Friends; individuals who are willing to provide support and comfort via the telephone. The chapter provides guidance for those who want to help. When you listen and talk to the bereaved, you make a difference. A longer list of Telephone Friends increases the likelihood that someone will be available when needed. Call Ed Motuzas at (508) 473-4239 if you would like to be a Telephone Friend.

(continued from last page)

Angela and Elyssa honor the memory of their brother in many ways. They have spoken at the Victim's Rights Vigil held annually in Painesville, evoking both smiles and tears as they remember their brother.

Last year *The News-Herald* praised the sisters who, surrounded by speechmaking dignitaries and polished politicians, "spoke more eloquently than anyone else of the loss they experience as victims of crime." Following the service, the girls handed out 200 packets of sunflower seeds in memory of Vinnie and planted a tree and sunflowers at the Victim's Rights Memorial Garden.

The paper quoted Elyssa: "I miss my brother every morning and night. I used to play house with him and swing him in a laundry basket. It was fun. All that is gone forever . . . Please don't drink and drive."

Just two weeks after Vinnie's death, Angela began speaking at high schools about drinking and driving and what effect it has had on her family and friends. She also attended a police officers training seminar and spoke of the importance of doing drug and alcohol tests at any crash.

"I do keep a journal of my daily thoughts and feelings. And we have various photo albums around. Anytime we are missing him or just want to see a picture of him, we go through and look at our favorite pictures. We have a lot of videos that we can watch anytime we want.

"I go into his room a lot to look at his things. We've left his room the same. I won't allow my parents to change it. It is exactly the way he had it the day he died.

Nothing has been moved or changed. I wanted that to stay the same and my parents are allowing it to be the way it was. I like to go in there and when I see it the way it was, it reminds me of him. I can almost see him there."

Now that thousands of seeds have been harvested from the sunflowers, a green ribbon highlights each packet of sunflower seeds given away and instructions on the care of the sunflower plants are attached with the request to continue Vinnie's memory by replanting the seeds:



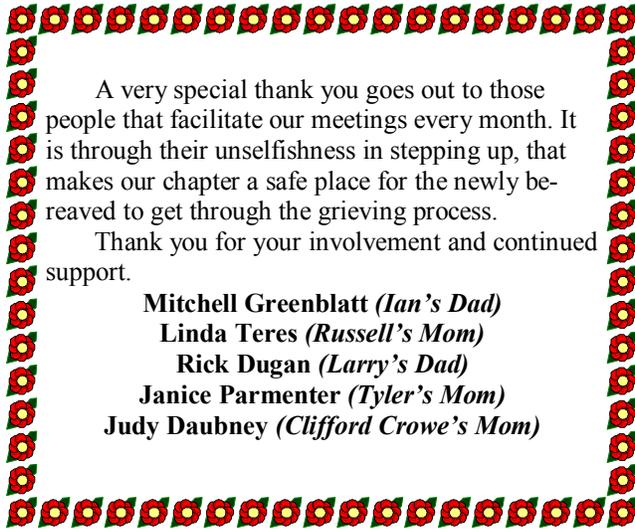
"His short lived life was bright and strong like his sunflower. Your plant was started from a seed from the head of his sunflower. As you watch it grow may a part of Vinnie shine through."

As the sunflowers borne from Vinnie's lone plant spread across the country, increasing in numbers each year, "it just reminds me that people do care about Vinnie and are trying to keep his memory alive," says Angela. "They remember him by planting the seeds. So when I see one, I always think of Vinnie as being remembered and well loved!"

Wayne & Pat Loder
TCF, Lakes Area, MI



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS OF METROWEST



A very special thank you goes out to those people that facilitate our meetings every month. It is through their unselfishness in stepping up, that makes our chapter a safe place for the newly bereaved to get through the grieving process.

Thank you for your involvement and continued support.

- Mitchell Greenblatt (Ian's Dad)**
- Linda Teres (Russell's Mom)**
- Rick Dugan (Larry's Dad)**
- Janice Parmenter (Tyler's Mom)**
- Judy Daubney (Clifford Crowe's Mom)**

Demon Depression

On November 3rd, 1994 my life changed forever.

Depression pulled the trigger that took our daughter's life. There were no apparent signs. (I now know there were many signs that she was in trouble.) We knew she was sad. She lost her beloved husband to cancer on March 3rd, 1994. He was her third husband and the only one who really loved her. The other two had left her for someone else after ten years of marriage. Her husband died a terrible death; seventy-eight days in the hospice room. Donna was at his side day and night. On the day he died she had gone home to feed their cat. She blamed herself that she wasn't there to say goodbye. He had been in a coma for days. Donna went through all the motions. She went back to work as Weekday Early Education Director of our church. Everyone did all they could to ease her loss. She was loved by all who knew her. We were proud that she was doing so well. How little we knew.

Depression is a silent killer waiting in the dark. Depression is not a weakness, it is not a sin; it is an illness. It hides like a thief in the night stealing treasures from the heart. There is no joy behind a quiet smile, only a resolve. Depression wears many faces. Donna could never hurt anyone. She loved her family, her church, her God. Depression was the killer here. We love her, and God loves and understands her. I know she is at peace with Him. We will see her again in a far better place. But, oh how we miss her now.

We who are not depressed dare not judge those who are. If we are not walking in their shoes, we can't know their pain. If you know someone who is hurting for whatever reason, be alert. Often they are wearing a mask for the world to see. There is help if depression is known in time. Time is the key. Each day that passes, the tunnel vision goes deeper.

At some point, they can't be reached. That happened to Donna. The doctor told us he had no idea she was that depressed. As I said, there were no signs. But we didn't know they were signs. She didn't eat much (she was never a big eater). She wore the same clothes a lot (she never liked to shop). She ate lots of candy bars (she loved chocolate). More than likely there was a chemical imbalance (her doctor said).

Donna was (is) our only child. How do we go on without her? The only answer I know is our memories and our hope in a loving God who sees all and understands each of His children.

SHADES OF YOU
 What is a 'friend'?
 What is a 'friend'?
 It is shades of you;
 The one who holds your hand
 Your loyalty and grace
 As you walk in shadows,
 God's love coming through.
 Of Life's shifting sand.
 What is a 'friend'?
 What is a 'friend'?
 A smile in the dark;
 Especially one like you;
 When sadness consumes,
 Who never fails to ask
 No song from the lark.
 Is there something I can do?

Thank you, Compassionate Friends for caring. The above poem is for good friends.

Gladys Case
In memory of our daughter, Donna
TCF Chapter, Baltimore, MD

About Compassion

We do know about compassion well enough, don't we? Compassion means empathy-identifying with someone else's experience. Understanding someone else's feelings, sharing someone else's pain or joy. But do we always know HOW to "do it"?

For instance, one of the most important components of compassion is also the most difficult to achieve: it is the loving willingness and ability to suspend one's own wisdom and convictions in order to acknowledge and fully recognize someone else's experience. This is often primarily an emotional experience.

There are lots of genuinely caring people, like me. We are compassionate most of the time we listen well, we do not necessarily have to have our opinions heard at all times.



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS OF METROWEST



NEWSLETTER MAILING LIST UPDATE (THIS PAGE WILL BE PRINTED EVERY OTHER EDITION)

We continue to update our mailing list. We want everyone who reads our newsletter to receive it; however, mailing costs make this update necessary. We want to send it where it is being read. Your donations allow us to print and mail this newsletter and to reach out to hundreds of parents and siblings.

Please fill out this form now if you wish to be added to or removed from our mailing list. This form should be filled out annually. If we don't hear from you in a year's time you will be notified through the newsletter that your name will be removed from our mailing list unless we hear from you.

If you are able to make a donation at this time, it will be gratefully received. Please mail to address below.

PLEASE FILL OUT THIS FORM AND RETURN IT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

I (do___) (do not___) wish to continue receiving the TCF newsletter.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

(Parent / Sibling / Grandparent___) (professional___)

(Donation included___) Make checks payable to "The Compassionate Friends" or TCF

If there are any errors in spelling or other information in this newsletter, please call it to my attention so that I may correct it. Please use this page to send back information, reverse side is addressed for your convenience.

Mail to: TCF Metrowest, 26 Simmons Dr., Milford, MA 01757-1265

CHANGE OF ADDRESS?

PLEASE ADVISE US OF ADDRESS CHANGES TO INSURE YOUR RECEIVING THE NEWSLETTER, THEY ARE NOT FORWARDED BY THE POST OFFICE.

Fold & Tape

The Compassionate Friends
Metrowest Chapter
26 Simmons Dr.
Milford MA 01757-1265

Fold & Tape



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS OF METROWEST



(continued from page 8)

Yet often (and with the most loving of intentions) we give advice and comfort from our own point of view. Of course, the advice is mostly very good advice. The comforting comes from deeply valid and patently useful insights. But does it come too soon? Should it come at all?

The best advice, reasoning or uplifting comments are of limited value to those in grief. What they need is emotional, spiritual & even practical "soul support." The word compassion means, after all, a passion shared, "feeling life together." Have you ever been with someone who, for a time genuinely tried to understand and know your experience? Someone who did not try to reduce, divert or diminish your grief, someone who accepted the way you felt accepted your reasons, did not contradict you? That is the greatest gift of compassion: to have at your side a person who accepts your grieving life as closely as possible, without imposing advice, critical comments (however gently offered) or trying to "soothe" your feelings by means of an emotional veil.

Think about it: when someone stands with you, comforting to your experience. This works something like an orthopedic cast (not an elegant comparison, but ...). It supports the broken spot, keeps it from sustaining further damage, allows it to heal. It leaves to your own inner strength the chance to overcome, rather than straining your grief with admonitions, cautions, well-intentioned advice. It reflects the part of you, now hidden, that will be strong enough to survive. If only for a while, someone's compassion braces you against the winds of pain, like the tender tree needs a brace until its roots can hold its own.



Compassion does not require agreement with what may seem like unreasonable notions (grief is not "reasonable!"). Compassion means accepting grief reactions without trying to "fix" them. Thus we support the griever in finding her/his own (slow) solutions an indispensable tool for survival, healing and restoration. And in accepting a griever's reactions, we give one of the other great gifts which compassion provides: We are also saying, "I believe in you. Trust yourself."

Sascha Wagner
TCF, Aurora, CO



Other Area TCF Chapters

- MA/CT Border Towns Chapter (Dudley, Webster areas)
Chapter Leaders: Paul & Anne Mathieu
(508) 248-7144.....ampm1259@charter.net
- South Shore Chapter (Hingham, Weymouth areas)
Martha Berman
(781) 337-8649.....mmartha1@comcast.net
- Worcester Chapter
Chapter Co-Leaders: Lisa Holbrook
(774) 482-6066.....sixholes@charter.net
Mary Vautier....
(508) 393-7348.....mjvautier@msn.com
- Central Middlesex Chapter (Needham, Concord)
Chapter Leader: Carol Gray-Cole
(781) 444-1091.....cgc603@aol.com



WEE SMALL HOURS

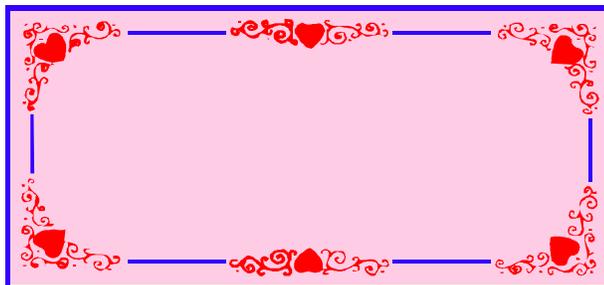
"In the wee small hours of the morning..." is a good way to describe the loneliness of grief. When death visits our homes, our families, or our friends, it leaves grief, loneliness, and desolation in its wake. How do we survive? Is continuing worth the pain? How do we face another day, or hour, or minute? Why should this have happened to me? What can I do to stop the pain?

"In the wee small hours...is the time I miss you most of all." During that time no ray of light or relief from grief seems possible. Nothing seems to work right. However, we can find our way into a sunlight both bright and warm, both invigorating and encompassing. The help we so urgently need to find our way out may be the unexpected phone call, the hand reaching out to assist, the letter or card sent in sympathy, or the friend who encourages us to talk and talk some more. We need not question how that help finds us. It is enough that it is there when it is most needed. It is enough that we can reach out and find a compassionate friend. And when we do, we begin to fill the wee small hours...with large and wonderful memories of our loved ones.



Roy P. Peterson
March 22, 1994
TCF, Lexington, KY

The Compassionate Friends
Metrowest Chapter
26 Simmons Dr.
Milford, MA 01757-1265



*This newsletter is printed
through the generosity of
The Copy Stop
Milford, MA*

TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Coming to your first meeting is the hardest thing to do. But you have nothing to lose and everything to gain. Try not to judge your first meeting as to whether or not TCF will work for you. The second, third, or fourth meeting might be the time you will find the right person - or just the right words said that will help you in your grief work.



TO OUR OLD MEMBERS

*We need your encouragement and support. You are the string that ties our group together and the glue that makes it stick. Each meeting we have new parents. **THINK BACK...** what would it have been like for you if there had not been any “oldies” to welcome you, share your grief, and encourage you? It was from them you heard, “your pain will not always be this bad; it really does get softer.”*



NEWSLETTER

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

May-June 2014

© 2014 The Compassionate Friends, All rights Reserved Vol. 19 Issue 3

YOU ARE INVITED

The Compassionate Friends - Metrowest Chapter meets twice a month. Evenings on the third Tuesday from 7:30 to 9:30 pm in the library of St. Mary's Parish Center, Route 16, Washington St., Holliston. The parish center is located between the church and the rectory. Our next two meetings will be on:

May 20th June 17th

The **Tuesday** afternoon meetings will be held on the last Tuesday of the month next to St. Mary of the Assumption Church in Milford at the parish center. **Please call Ed or Joan Motuzas at (508) 473-4239 by the last Monday or earlier if you plan to attend.**

Directions....On Route 16 (Main St.) going north through downtown Milford (Main St.) at Tedeschi's Market on the left, take a left at the lights onto Winter St. The parish center is the last building before the church. Going south on Route 16 (East Main St.) after Sacred Heart Church on the left, bear right on Main St., continue past Dunkin' Donuts on the right, proceed to the next set of lights and take a right onto Winter St. There is parking on both sides of the street. Look for Compassionate Friends signs to meeting room. Our next two meetings will be on:

May 27th June 24th

WHO ARE WE?

The Compassionate Friends is a nonprofit, nonsectarian, mutual assistance, self-help organization offering friendship and understanding to bereaved parents and siblings.

Our primary purpose is to assist the bereaved in the positive resolution of the grief experienced upon the death of a child and to support their efforts to achieve physical and emotional health.

The secondary purpose is to provide information and education about bereaved parents and siblings for those who wish to understand. Our objective is to help members of the community, including family, friends, employers, co-workers, and professionals to be supportive.

Meetings are open to all bereaved parents, grandparents and siblings. No dues or fees are required to belong to the Metrowest Chapter of The Compassionate Friends.

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. ©2014

Weather Cancellation

In the event of inclement weather on meeting days or nights, if in doubt call:

**Ed or Joan Motuzas at
(508) 473-4239**



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS OF METROWEST



Chapter Information

Co-leaders

* Ed Motuzas 508/473-4239
 * Joan Motuzas 508/473-4239

Secretary

* Joan Motuzas 508/473-4239

Treasurer

* Joseph Grillo 508/473-7913

Webmaster

* Al Kennedy 508/533/9299

Librarian

Ed Motuzas 508/473/4239

Newsletter

Ed Motuzas 508/473-4239

Senior Advisors

* Rick & Peg Dugan 508/877-1363

Steering Committee *

Judy Daubney 508/529-6942
 Janice Parmenter 508/528-5715
 Linda Teres 508/620-0613
 Mitchell Greenblatt 508/881-2111
 Judith Cherrington 508/473-4087
 Carol Cotter 774/219-7774

The chapter address is:

The Compassionate Friends
 Metrowest Chapter
 26 Simmons Dr.
 Milford, MA 01757-1265

Chapter Web Page
www.tcfmetrowest.com

Regional Coordinator
 Rick Mirabile
 11 Ridgewood Crossing
 Hingham, MA 02043
 Phone (781) 740-1135
 Email: Rmirabile@comcast.net

The Compassionate Friends has a national office that supports and coordinates chapter activities. The national office can be reached as follows:

The Compassionate Friends
 P.O. Box 3696
 Oak Brook, IL 60522-3696
 Voice Toll Free (877) 969-0010
 Fax (630) 990-0246

Web Page: www.compassionatefriends.org

TRIBUTES, GIFTS AND DONATIONS

There are no dues or fees to belong to *The Compassionate Friends*. Just as our chapter is run entirely by volunteers, your voluntary, tax-deductible donations enable us to send information to newly bereaved parents, purchase pamphlets and books, contribute to the national chapter and meet other chapter expenses.

THANK YOU to the friends who help keep our chapter going with their contributions.

Love Gifts

Ms. Betty Myers in loving memory of her son **William Bruce-Tagoe** on his anniversary July 6th
 Janet Raneri in loving memory of her son **Major Robert Raneri** on his birthday May 5th and his anniversary June 22nd.
 Mr. & Mrs. Burton Stuchins in loving memory of their son **Alan R. Stuchins** on his birthday March 2nd.

When Fathers Weep at Graves

I see them weep
 the fathers at the stones
 taking off the brave armor
 forced to wear in the work place
 clearing away the debris
 with gentle fingers
 inhaling the sorrow
 diminished by anguish
 their hearts desiring
 what they cannot have--
 to walk hand in hand
 with children no longer held--
 to all the fathers who leave a part
 of their hearts at the stones
 may breezes underneath trees of time
 ease their pain
 as they receive healing tears
 ...the gift the children give.

Alice J. Wisler
For David, in memory of our son Daniel



Our Children Remembered

As a regular feature, the newsletter acknowledges anniversaries of the deaths of our children/siblings and their birthdays. This issue covers the months of May and June. If information about your loved one is missing, incorrect or our chapter files are in error, please send the correct data, including your name, address, and telephone number, the name of your loved one and the birthday and date and cause of death to the newsletter editor, Ed Motuzas, 26 Simmons Dr., Milford, MA 01757-1265.

Anniversaries

May

- LAUREN THIBEAU FLANAGAN
- IAN MacINNES HODGMAN
- COREY S. VAUTIER
- BEATRICE HUDSON
- NICHOLAS POST
- LEA M. SIEBERT
- SUSAN A. QUINLIVAN
- DONNA M. KIELION
- LISA RANDALL
- ROBERT L. LOMBARD JR.
- DOLORES ROSE BERGERON
- MICHAEL PATRICK MURPHY

June

- RYAN SEAN BARTLETT
- DANIEL R. ADILETTO
- CHRISTOPHER MARC DULLEA
- MATTHEW PISAPIA
- RUSSELL J. TERES
- LAURIE SLOPEK
- MAJ. ROBERT M. RANERI
- SAMANTHA HAMILTON
- IAN GREENBLATT

Birthdays

May

- LEX ROTHMAN
- COLIN M. DORAN
- JENNIFER L. GOLDSWORTHY
- MICHAEL P. McLAUGHLIN
- SCOTT W. RUTH
- MAJ. ROBERT M. RANERI
- LEAH CATHERINE TEPPER
- KELLI S. DONOVAN
- MICHAEL PATRICK MURPHY
- WILLIAM C. LEWIS
- MARC P. LEWIS
- MEAGHAN TAYLOR McGRATH
- KRISTEN DONOVAN

June

- DONNA ANN WOLFSON
- GERALDINE DiCARLO
- SCOTT MOTUZAS
- JUSTIN MAYER
- STEVEN GRILLO
- NICHOLAS L. BOUDREAU
- NICOLE FRADE
- NICHOLAS POST
- JOSEPH WEBSTER

Go Green



Green goes with everything

E-Mail Edition: Must have Adobe Acrobat Reader Version 6 or higher to download pdf newsletter

To our wonderful e-mail subscribers, Thank You!
By receiving your newsletter in this format, you are saving trees (to make paper), chemicals (to produce ink), money (for postage), and waste products from printing and from newsletters that are only printed if you need the hard copy.

Our chapter and the world appreciates your generosity



THE SIBLING CORNER



This page is dedicated to siblings together adjusting to grief thru encouragement & sharing

"Siblings Walking Together." We are the surviving siblings of The Compassionate Friends. We are brought together by the deaths of our brothers and sisters. Open your hearts to us, but have patience with us. Sometimes we will need the support of our friends. At other times we need our families to be there. Sometimes we must walk alone, taking our memories with us, continuing to become the individuals we want to be. We cannot be our dead brother or sister; however, a special part of them lives on with us.

When our brothers and sisters died, our lives changed. We are living a life very different from what we envisioned, and we feel the responsibility to be strong even when we feel weak. Yet we can go on because we understand better than many others the value of family and the precious gift of life. Our goal is not to be the forgotten mourners that we sometimes are, but to walk together to face our tomorrows as surviving siblings of The Compassionate Friends.

THE AFTERMATH OF SUICIDE

I had never experienced the death of a close loved one before my brother died. When David died, my world came crashing down around me, shattering me into a million pieces. My brother and I were close, but I had no suspicion that he was contemplating suicide and had been for a long time. The night my sister called to tell me he was dead is etched in my memory forever. If I shut my eyes, I can go back to that time and place almost three years ago and still hear her voice. It is a very painful memory and one that I don't call up, but it is there nonetheless.

The overwhelming feelings of shock, disbelief, numbness, despair, and sadness are very vivid. At the same time, I was outraged at what he had done to us, to me. How dare he do this! I couldn't even begin to guess how many times I said, "I can't believe this is happening."

The first six months was a confusing and emotionally draining period for me. I was obsessed with wanting to have answers, especially from him. I read many books on suicide and finally after reading Iris Bolton's book "My Son, My Son," I came to realize what she said was true: "You can ask why a million times but you finally have to let it go, because the person you need the answers from is not here to give them to you. If only for the sake of your own sanity, you have to stop asking why."

Our family drew closer together from this tragedy, and it made me more aware of how much I value and love them. I also had the support of a good friend who was willing to spend hours talking and crying with me. I still get very angry at my brother for changing our lives so irrevocably. That anger inevitably turns into sadness. I cannot see his smiling face, or hear his laughter, or watch him grow into adulthood. Yes, I had 4 dreams for him, too.

He was an intelligent, warm, sensitive and caring young man, and I was eager to see what direction his life would take. I can't help but wonder what he would be like today. I miss him very much.

I will never agree with his solution, but it was his choice to make and I have to learn to live with it. I am absolutely certain beyond a shadow of a doubt that I will see him again. Only then will I get answers to my questions. I have no choice but to wait until that time.

**Nicki Wright
TCF, MO-KAN, KS**

Life Is Something That Comes and Goes

**Life is something that comes and goes
As silently as the gentle wind blows - one day here,
the next day gone.**

You try to understand the reason of it all,
Why some remain when others are called.
The purpose is there if only you see
That only God knows what will be.

**Life is something that comes and goes as silently as
the gentle wind blows.**

I pray and pray for the day
When I will hear my brother say,
"I love you kid sister, I'll see you soon.
Think of me when you look at the moon."
I look outside and see the moon so bright,
As full as can be, shedding its light.
I stare at the stars and the heavens above
And remember my brother so full of love.

He was my friend, my father, my keeper,
And since he died, the road seems steeper.
But I must have faith in Jesus, My Lord,
Who helps me understand the truth of His word.

(continued on next page)



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS OF METROWEST



(continued from last page)

Life is something that comes and goes

As silently as the gentle wind blows,
one day here, the next day gone.

**Breta Dodd, Age 16
TCF, Grand Junction, CO**

Month of May Brings Tears, Fond Memories

The month of May is a time of many memories and many tears for mothers who have lost a child to death. The memories are tied to our natural association of May as being the “Mother’s Day” month. We can’t escape the reminders. Second only to the Christmas season in commercialization, Mother’s Day is thrust at us in television commercials, billboards, radio spots, magazine and newspaper ads and special features, local and national news shows and each store we enter. Heartbreaking, emotional, touching movies or television shows are aired in May in big part because of Mother’s Day. The reminders are endless. Our emotions build and build until we think we will snap.

Most of us have memories of happier Mother’s Days, time spent with our children opening their gifts and reading their special cards, talking, laughing and enjoying the moment. The counterpoint to our memories is that Mother’s Day intensifies the deep void that will always remain in our lives. In the words of one mother, “One day after my son had been gone for several months, I realized that this nightmare life is my life forever.” May is doubly difficult for this mother because of Mother’s Day and because her son died in May. May is doubly difficult for me as my son was born in May.

Even without a birth or death anniversary, May can be extremely stressful and sad. We enter the countdown on the first day of May. Some of us begin to improve after Mother’s Day passes, some of us can’t let go until the month ends. Some of us suffer lingering effects for several weeks or months.

My first Mother’s Day without my son was a horrifying time. No gifts, no cards, no call. I took all the cards he had given me for Mother’s Day and put them on my piano....the time honored place in our home for special occasion cards. My second Mother’s Day was different. I simply refused to acknowledge it. My husband gave me a card and a small gift, and we left it at that. A few tears, but we decided to relax and do things that would keep us away from the Mother’s Day celebrations.

This will be my third Mother’s Day without my son. I do miss him terribly; there will be no replacement for that relationship in my life. Unlike losing a parent, a spouse, a grandparent, a sibling or a friend, the loss of our child means the loss of a big part of ourselves.

That is our new reality. What will I do this Mother’s Day? I don’t really know, but it will dawn on me that I should do one thing or another.

What you do this Mother’s Day is your choice. You owe no explanation to anyone. As we walk through this grief of losing our children, we owe no explanations. Our love for our dead children lingers, and in that love is a goodness and purity that allows us to gently be ourselves. Our emotions are not intended to offend; but sometimes the pain is so overpowering that we must block out the world. And sometimes, we are able to overcome it. I will handle it the best way I can. So will you.

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

Graduation Time

It’s June and graduation time again. Your child would have been among those wearing the cap and gown, walking down the aisle to the ever stirring “Pomp and Circumstance.” Now there is a vacant spot in the line. Should you attend? Can you stand the pain? Will people think you are strange?



As always you must follow your heart. So, go if you’d like to and don’t hide your tears. It’s quite all right to miss your own child while celebrating the achievements of others.

Just remember: that your instincts are the most important ones; that no one else can make this decision for you, and that it doesn’t really matter what other people think.

It was your child who died. This is your pain and you have the right to feel it and deal with it in your own way, and may a bit more healing take place in the doing.

**Peggy Gibson
TCF, Nashville, TN**



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS OF METROWEST



Vinnie and the Sunflower

A part of life is death.
And a part of death is remembering.

And for a little boy named Vinnie, there are two sisters who are determined that every time you spot a towering sunflower plant, you'll think of him and remember him, too, even though you never looked into his sweet face, heard his infectious laugh, nor felt his unconditional love.

Thirteen-year-old Angela and nine-year-old Elyssa Rubertino of Ohio figure they have distributed thousands of sunflower seeds originating from a single special sunflower planted by their four-year-old brother for a preschool project in April of 1993, only two weeks prior to his death. A victim of a hit and run drunk driver, Vinnie was struck after purchasing ice cream from a truck on the street outside his home.

The sunflower, which was sprouted in a paper cup, was carried home by Vinnie only a week prior to his death. It sat on a kitchen counter, overlooked in the aftermath of the accident.

"After Vinnie was killed we kind of forgot about it for a week or two," says Angela. "Once we realized that we still had it, Mom and Dad wanted to do everything they could to make sure the sunflower lived. We took care of it and my dad, sister, and I planted it together in the garden. Dad watered and cared for the sunflower every day."

Family members were astonished to see it not only thrive, but eventually reach 8 feet 5 inches, towering over the eaves trough to their family home.

As fall came and the plant started to droop and die, the family removed the head and saved it through the winter, planting 200 seeds in cups in the spring, giving them to family members and friends.



"After we had planted them my father was talking to our reverend and he said that a way to keep Vinnie's memory alive would be to keep the sunflower and re-plant seeds from it every year," recalls Angela. "Last year we planted them ourselves and started little seedlings so they were actually growing when we gave them to people. This year we only did that for family members and friends. Everybody else got seed packets.

Elyssa, then seven, who first noticed the sunflower plant still alive in the kitchen, honored Vinnie's memory with a poem that the family attached to a green (Vinnie's favorite color) straw and put in with each seedling. The poem provided the explanation of why the family was giving people the sunflower:

*This plant we started as a tiny seed
From our little treasure "Vinnie"
He watched as the little plant grew...
Until that very day, he saw no more.*

*We cry a lot as days go by,
We watched it grow from bottom to top.
Of course we always have that memory
In our very own backyard.*

The poem was especially appropriate this year as the Rubertino's backyard was filled with more than 35 sunflowers, giving the family thousands of seeds from the original replantings.

Some of the plants came from Vinnie's original sunflower while others were from sunflowers grown last year from the seeds of Vinnie's plant. "It's kind of like the sunflower's children and grandchildren," observed Angela.

During his short life, Vinnie was very close to his family, especially his two sisters.

"He's definitely the best person I've ever met in my life," says Angela. "He was very wonderful, kind, always polite. Everyone he met would always say how wonderful he was.

"I love him so much! It is very different not having him around. Every day when I would come home from school he would always be right there to say 'Hi, how was your day?' He would be kind of like a second dad to me because he was always asking me questions about what I would do at school and about what it was like. He liked to play with me a lot but he was really Elyssa's constant playmate."

Vinnie enjoyed all the things a typical 4-year-old would like including Nintendo, Disney movies, Ninja Turtles, fishing, and his special shirt, which was his security blanket. He even liked to play golf. One of his prized possessions came from his dad, Vince who spotted it at a golf show. Vince agreed to purchase a new golf bag and new golf clubs, but only if the seller would include a matching miniature golf bag that was being used to hold business cards. The deal was struck and Vinnie received the special present for Christmas in 1991. He was only two and had two clubs to go in it. He and his sisters often golfed in the backyard and Tuesdays were special because he and his "Papa" always went putting.

(continued on next page)



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS OF METROWEST



Phone Friends

Sometimes it helps to just be able to talk to someone; maybe at a time when pain or stress seems too much to bear. We maintain a list of Telephone Friends; people who are willing to listen, to commiserate, to give whatever support they can. In a time of need, feel free to call one of our Telephone Friends.

- Ed & Joan Motuzas, ...**Scott**, age 31, Kidney and Liver Failure,(508)473-4239
- Janice Parmenter,**Tyler**, age 29, Chronic Addiction,(508)528-5715
- Judy Daubney,**Clifford**, age 27, Suicide,(508)529-6942.
- Linda Teres,.....**Russell**, age 19, Automobile Accident,(508)620-0613
- Mitchell Greenblatt,....**Ian**, age 18, Automobile Accident,..... (508)881-2111
- Judith Cherrington,....**Jeffrey**, age 48, Cancer,(508)473-4087
- Sandra Richiazzi.....**Bryan C. Plunkett**, Automobile Accident,.....(508)877-8106



It is always useful to have more Telephone Friends; individuals who are willing to provide support and comfort via the telephone. The chapter provides guidance for those who want to help. When you listen and talk to the bereaved, you make a difference. A longer list of Telephone Friends increases the likelihood that someone will be available when needed. Call Ed Motuzas at (508) 473-4239 if you would like to be a Telephone Friend.

(continued from last page)

Angela and Elyssa honor the memory of their brother in many ways. They have spoken at the Victim's Rights Vigil held annually in Painesville, evoking both smiles and tears as they remember their brother.

Last year *The News-Herald* praised the sisters who, surrounded by speechmaking dignitaries and polished politicians, "spoke more eloquently than anyone else of the loss they experience as victims of crime." Following the service, the girls handed out 200 packets of sunflower seeds in memory of Vinnie and planted a tree and sunflowers at the Victim's Rights Memorial Garden.

The paper quoted Elyssa: "I miss my brother every morning and night. I used to play house with him and swing him in a laundry basket. It was fun. All that is gone forever . . . Please don't drink and drive."

Just two weeks after Vinnie's death, Angela began speaking at high schools about drinking and driving and what effect it has had on her family and friends. She also attended a police officers training seminar and spoke of the importance of doing drug and alcohol tests at any crash.

"I do keep a journal of my daily thoughts and feelings. And we have various photo albums around. Anytime we are missing him or just want to see a picture of him, we go through and look at our favorite pictures. We have a lot of videos that we can watch anytime we want.

"I go into his room a lot to look at his things. We've left his room the same. I won't allow my parents to change it. It is exactly the way he had it the day he died.

Nothing has been moved or changed. I wanted that to stay the same and my parents are allowing it to be the way it was. I like to go in there and when I see it the way it was, it reminds me of him. I can almost see him there."

Now that thousands of seeds have been harvested from the sunflowers, a green ribbon highlights each packet of sunflower seeds given away and instructions on the care of the sunflower plants are attached with the request to continue Vinnie's memory by replanting the seeds:



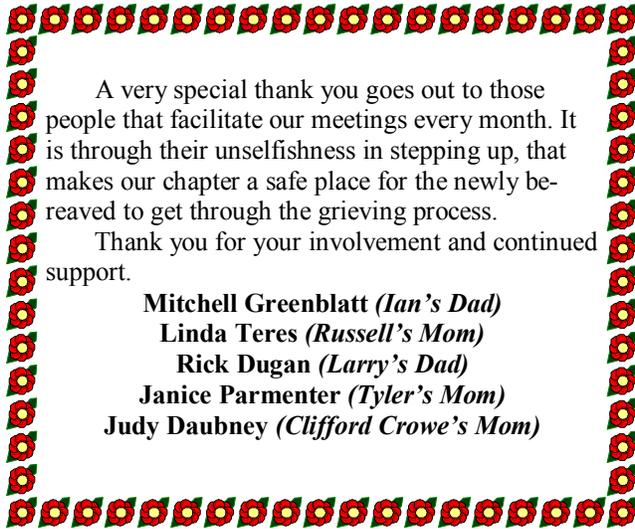
"His short lived life was bright and strong like his sunflower. Your plant was started from a seed from the head of his sunflower. As you watch it grow may a part of Vinnie shine through."

As the sunflowers borne from Vinnie's lone plant spread across the country, increasing in numbers each year, "it just reminds me that people do care about Vinnie and are trying to keep his memory alive," says Angela. "They remember him by planting the seeds. So when I see one, I always think of Vinnie as being remembered and well loved!"

Wayne & Pat Loder
TCF, Lakes Area, MI



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS OF METROWEST



A very special thank you goes out to those people that facilitate our meetings every month. It is through their unselfishness in stepping up, that makes our chapter a safe place for the newly bereaved to get through the grieving process.

Thank you for your involvement and continued support.

- Mitchell Greenblatt (Ian's Dad)**
- Linda Teres (Russell's Mom)**
- Rick Dugan (Larry's Dad)**
- Janice Parmenter (Tyler's Mom)**
- Judy Daubney (Clifford Crowe's Mom)**

Demon Depression

On November 3rd, 1994 my life changed forever.

Depression pulled the trigger that took our daughter's life. There were no apparent signs. (I now know there were many signs that she was in trouble.) We knew she was sad. She lost her beloved husband to cancer on March 3rd, 1994. He was her third husband and the only one who really loved her. The other two had left her for someone else after ten years of marriage. Her husband died a terrible death; seventy-eight days in the hospice room. Donna was at his side day and night. On the day he died she had gone home to feed their cat. She blamed herself that she wasn't there to say goodbye. He had been in a coma for days. Donna went through all the motions. She went back to work as Weekday Early Education Director of our church. Everyone did all they could to ease her loss. She was loved by all who knew her. We were proud that she was doing so well. How little we knew.

Depression is a silent killer waiting in the dark. Depression is not a weakness, it is not a sin; it is an illness. It hides like a thief in the night stealing treasures from the heart. There is no joy behind a quiet smile, only a resolve. Depression wears many faces. Donna could never hurt anyone. She loved her family, her church, her God. Depression was the killer here. We love her, and God loves and understands her. I know she is at peace with Him. We will see her again in a far better place. But, oh how we miss her now.

We who are not depressed dare not judge those who are. If we are not walking in their shoes, we can't know their pain. If you know someone who is hurting for whatever reason, be alert. Often they are wearing a mask for the world to see. There is help if depression is known in time. Time is the key. Each day that passes, the tunnel vision goes deeper.

At some point, they can't be reached. That happened to Donna. The doctor told us he had no idea she was that depressed. As I said, there were no signs. But we didn't know they were signs. She didn't eat much (she was never a big eater). She wore the same clothes a lot (she never liked to shop). She ate lots of candy bars (she loved chocolate). More than likely there was a chemical imbalance (her doctor said).

Donna was (is) our only child. How do we go on without her? The only answer I know is our memories and our hope in a loving God who sees all and understands each of His children.

SHADES OF YOU
 What is a 'friend'?
 What is a 'friend'?
 It is shades of you;
 The one who holds your hand
 Your loyalty and grace
 As you walk in shadows,
 God's love coming through.
 Of Life's shifting sand.
 What is a 'friend'?
 What is a 'friend'?
 A smile in the dark;
 Especially one like you;
 When sadness consumes,
 Who never fails to ask
 No song from the lark.
 Is there something I can do?

Thank you, Compassionate Friends for caring. The above poem is for good friends.

Gladys Case
In memory of our daughter, Donna
TCF Chapter, Baltimore, MD

About Compassion

We do know about compassion well enough, don't we? Compassion means empathy-identifying with someone else's experience. Understanding someone else's feelings, sharing someone else's pain or joy. But do we always know HOW to "do it"?

For instance, one of the most important components of compassion is also the most difficult to achieve: it is the loving willingness and ability to suspend one's own wisdom and convictions in order to acknowledge and fully recognize someone else's experience. This is often primarily an emotional experience.

There are lots of genuinely caring people, like me. We are compassionate most of the time we listen well, we do not necessarily have to have our opinions heard at all times.



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS OF METROWEST



NEWSLETTER MAILING LIST UPDATE (THIS PAGE WILL BE PRINTED EVERY OTHER EDITION)

We continue to update our mailing list. We want everyone who reads our newsletter to receive it; however, mailing costs make this update necessary. We want to send it where it is being read. Your donations allow us to print and mail this newsletter and to reach out to hundreds of parents and siblings.

Please fill out this form now if you wish to be added to or removed from our mailing list. This form should be filled out annually. If we don't hear from you in a year's time you will be notified through the newsletter that your name will be removed from our mailing list unless we hear from you.

If you are able to make a donation at this time, it will be gratefully received. Please mail to address below.

PLEASE FILL OUT THIS FORM AND RETURN IT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

I (do___) (do not___) wish to continue receiving the TCF newsletter.

Name_____

Address_____

City_____ State_____ Zip_____

(Parent / Sibling / Grandparent___) (professional___)

(Donation included___) Make checks payable to "The Compassionate Friends" or TCF

If there are any errors in spelling or other information in this newsletter, please call it to my attention so that I may correct it. Please use this page to send back information, reverse side is addressed for your convenience.

Mail to: TCF Metrowest, 26 Simmons Dr., Milford, MA 01757-1265

CHANGE OF ADDRESS?

PLEASE ADVISE US OF ADDRESS CHANGES TO INSURE YOUR RECEIVING THE NEWSLETTER, THEY ARE NOT FORWARDED BY THE POST OFFICE.

Fold & Tape _____

The Compassionate Friends
Metrowest Chapter
26 Simmons Dr.
Milford MA 01757-1265

Fold & Tape _____



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS OF METROWEST



(continued from page 8)

Yet often (and with the most loving of intentions) we give advice and comfort from our own point of view. Of course, the advice is mostly very good advice. The comforting comes from deeply valid and patently useful insights. But does it come too soon? Should it come at all?

The best advice, reasoning or uplifting comments are of limited value to those in grief. What they need is emotional, spiritual & even practical "soul support." The word compassion means, after all, a passion shared, "feeling life together." Have you ever been with someone who, for a time genuinely tried to understand and know your experience? Someone who did not try to reduce, divert or diminish your grief, someone who accepted the way you felt accepted your reasons, did not contradict you? That is the greatest gift of compassion: to have at your side a person who accepts your grieving life as closely as possible, without imposing advice, critical comments (however gently offered) or trying to "soothe" your feelings by means of an emotional veil.

Think about it: when someone stands with you, comforting to your experience. This works something like an orthopedic cast (not an elegant comparison, but ...). It supports the broken spot, keeps it from sustaining further damage, allows it to heal. It leaves to your own inner strength the chance to overcome, rather than straining your grief with admonitions, cautions, well-intentioned advice. It reflects the part of you, now hidden, that will be strong enough to survive. If only for a while, someone's compassion braces you against the winds of pain, like the tender tree needs a brace until its roots can hold its own.

Compassion does not require agreement with what may seem like unreasonable notions (grief is not "reasonable!"). Compassion means accepting grief reactions without trying to "fix" them. Thus we support the griever in finding her/his own (slow) solutions an indispensable tool for survival, healing and restoration. And in accepting a griever's reactions, we give one of the other great gifts which compassion provides: We are also saying, "I believe in you. Trust yourself."



Sascha Wagner
TCF, Aurora, CO



Other Area TCF Chapters

- MA/CT Border Towns Chapter (Dudley, Webster areas)
Chapter Leaders: Paul & Anne Mathieu
(508) 248-7144.....ampm1259@charter.net
- South Shore Chapter (Hingham, Weymouth areas)
Martha Berman
(781) 337-8649.....mmartha1@comcast.net
- Worcester Chapter
Chapter Co-Leaders: Lisa Holbrook
(774) 482-6066.....sixholes@charter.net
Mary Vautier....
(508) 393-7348.....mjvautier@msn.com
- Central Middlesex Chapter (Needham, Concord)
Chapter Leader: Carol Gray-Cole
(781) 444-1091.....cgc603@aol.com



WEE SMALL HOURS

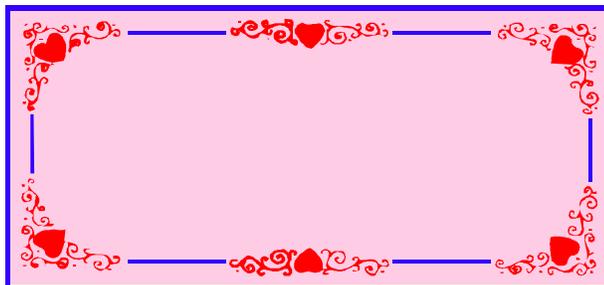
"In the wee small hours of the morning..." is a good way to describe the loneliness of grief. When death visits our homes, our families, or our friends, it leaves grief, loneliness, and desolation in its wake. How do we survive? Is continuing worth the pain? How do we face another day, or hour, or minute? Why should this have happened to me? What can I do to stop the pain?

"In the wee small hours...is the time I miss you most of all." During that time no ray of light or relief from grief seems possible. Nothing seems to work right. However, we can find our way into a sunlight both bright and warm, both invigorating and encompassing. The help we so urgently need to find our way out may be the unexpected phone call, the hand reaching out to assist, the letter or card sent in sympathy, or the friend who encourages us to talk and talk some more. We need not question how that help finds us. It is enough that it is there when it is most needed. It is enough that we can reach out and find a compassionate friend. And when we do, we begin to fill the wee small hours...with large and wonderful memories of our loved ones.



Roy P. Peterson
March 22, 1994
TCF, Lexington, KY

The Compassionate Friends
Metrowest Chapter
26 Simmons Dr.
Milford, MA 01757-1265



*This newsletter is printed
through the generosity of
The Copy Stop
Milford, MA*

TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Coming to your first meeting is the hardest thing to do. But you have nothing to lose and everything to gain. Try not to judge your first meeting as to whether or not TCF will work for you. The second, third, or fourth meeting might be the time you will find the right person - or just the right words said that will help you in your grief work.



TO OUR OLD MEMBERS

*We need your encouragement and support. You are the string that ties our group together and the glue that makes it stick. Each meeting we have new parents. **THINK BACK...** what would it have been like for you if there had not been any “oldies” to welcome you, share your grief, and encourage you? It was from them you heard, “your pain will not always be this bad; it really does get softer.”*