



# THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

October 2010 Newsletter

WNY Chapter #2303

Batavia, NY 14020

**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.**

#### Upcoming Meetings

October 21, 2010  
November 18, 2009  
Meetings are held at  
The Holland Land Office Museum  
131 W. Main St  
Batavia, NY 14020  
Meeting Times: 7 -8:30pm

#### National: The Compassionate Friends, Inc.

PO Box 3696, Oak Brook, IL 60522-3696  
Toll Free 877-969-0010. Fax 630-990-0246  
[www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org)

The Compassionate Friends of WNY  
447 Ellicott St, Batavia, NY 14020  
Parent Contact, Chapter Leader, Founder  
Pat Wheeler 585-219-4570 or 716-601-9648  
[wwpatsuw@aol.com](mailto:wwpatsuw@aol.com)  
Donations can be mailed to Pat  
Treasurer, Parent Contact & Advertising  
Reed Vogel 585-535-7783  
Secretary:  
Genevieve Mahoney

*Our Regional Contact: Al Visconti*  
[altcfny@gmail.com](mailto:altcfny@gmail.com)

*Visit our local web site: [www.tcfowny.org](http://www.tcfowny.org)*

*Sends photos and/or stories of your child if you would like for our website [tcfowny.org](http://tcfowny.org)*

*The Compassionate Friends is about transforming the pain of grief into the elixir of hope. It takes people out of the isolation society imposes on the bereaved and lets them express their grief naturally. With the shedding of tears, healing comes. And the newly bereaved get to see people who have survived and are learning to live and love again. "*

*Simon Stephens, Founder of The Compassionate Friends*

**To include your child or children** on our web site, bring a photo along with a short story about them to the meeting. Pat will forward the information to our Webmaster so that your child or children can be remembered.

**Our Birthday Table** - Parents/Grandparents: We have a Birthday Table at our TCF meetings. If you would like to share your child's favorite cake or anything that will help you remember their birthday with others who are open to "celebrating" with you, please take this opportunity to share with us. You may bring photos and other mementos to the meeting as well.

**The chapter is here for everyone.** Please let us know what you are struggling with at this time. We will use that as our topic for an upcoming meeting.

**If you know of someone** who has suffered this ultimate loss, please let us know. We will send them our newsletter and invite them to share their grief with those of us still walking that path.

**Pat makes bricks in memory /honor of children or family members/friends. She routs out the name and dates if so desired. The writing is then in whatever color, such as red, green, blue or black. The brick can be scalloped or flat landscaping bricks. The bricks are free. Just contact Pat with your information. 219-4570**

## OUR CHILDREN LOVED AND REMEMBERED

Let us remember our children who have left us too soon

### September Birthdays

*Aubry, daughter of Jennifer Kubik  
September 14*

### September Remembrance Dates

*Matthew, son of Nancy & Jason Kota  
September 1*

*Damien, son of Allison Watson  
September 5*

*Patricia, daughter of Genevieve Mahoney  
September 11*

### October Birthdays

*Damien, son of Allison Watson,  
October 2*

*Buddy, son of Eleanor & George Filowick  
October 3*

*Liza, daughter of Marti Austin  
October 4*

*Torry, daughter of Joann & Don Yahn  
October 5*

### October Remembrance Dates

*Buddy, son of Eleanor & George Filowick  
October 7*

*Reed, son of Reed Vogel  
October 16*

*Sharon., daughter of Catherine Horton  
October 7*

Please contact Pat Wheeler if any of your child(ren's)  
Information is incorrect or missing. Phone 219-4570  
Or email at [wwpatsuw@aol.com](mailto:wwpatsuw@aol.com) or mail to home address  
at  
447 Ellicott St  
Batavia, NY 14020

**Thank you to the following donators:**

**Mc Andrew Funeral Home, gift to cover cost of candles  
For Concert Candle lighting Service and for  
informing those experiencing grief in the past few  
months about Alan Pederson's Concert  
Gilmartin's Funeral Home for informing those  
Experiencing grief in the past few months about  
Alan Pederson's Concert  
Walmart-gift card**

Alan Pederson, the songwriter and performer has contacted me and will be in our area on September 29<sup>th</sup>. It will be held at The Northgate Free Methodist Church on Bank St in Batavia, near the road that goes to GCC. It will start at 7pm and we're hoping to have a candle light service. For those of you lucky enough to have attended his concert last year, you know what a great performer he is. We are very honored and lucky that he is willing to perform for us. There will be a free will offering for both Alan and 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 farther 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 seeking and struggling to build a future for ourselves, but 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.**

To Get more people involved I would like you to ask to sign up to do a song or reading for our monthly meetings. Even if you can't do the reading, just having it to share with the group would be a great help.

# You are my sunshine

by Carol Clum, TCF, Medford, OR

As a child, I learned to sing on road trips in the family car. We sang "She'll be Coming 'Round the Mountain", "Row, Row, Row Your Boat" and my favorite:

You are my sunshine, my only sunshine,  
You make me happy when skies are gray.  
You'll never know, dear, how much I love you.  
Please, don't take my sunshine away.

Since my son's death, whenever I hear this song, I mentally change the spelling to 'son-shine.' When he left, skies surely turned gray. Gray skies continue to visit me in random moments of grief to the point that at times, it's impossible to see the sun. And when summer brings sunny days, it breaks my heart that he can't be here with me to light up my life.

Grief enhances our senses so that the absence of light allows us to perceive our need for light. A good example came one dark and dismal day as I sat reading, a part of me dwelling on my missing child. Ever so softly, warmth crept across my outstretched leg. I shot a glance in its direction and discovered a stream of golden sunshine. In my preoccupation, I hadn't noticed the parting clouds outside--the transformation from gloom to gleam. If I had not been sitting quietly, thinking of my child, I would have missed the gift-- missed an opportunity to find joy in that brief moment when 'son-shine' paid an unexpected visit. What a blessed gift it is to remember my child with joy.

There's a scientific reason that a sunny day brings some joy and energy to our lives. Bright light makes a difference to the brain chemistry. Lack of light causes a condition called Seasonal Affective Disorder. SAD doesn't occur only in the dark winter months. If you work the night shift or you spend all day in an office, wear sunglasses outside, spend your days off in a dimly lit home you may not be getting adequate light. All the more reason to grasp at every golden moment that comes our way. The true lifesavers in my grief journey are those small surprising occurrences that often go unnoticed.

When memories arrive on beams of joyous sunlight, I'm learning to take notice, to savor, then stock pile the simple pleasures that somehow appear in spite of heavy days. Sometimes light comes from deep within our hearts. Sometimes friends arrive with small rays of hope, guiding us through the darkest hours.

Summer brings moonlit evenings, the flash of lightening across an endless sky, fireflies in a Mason jar, the beam of a flashlight piercing the darkness, yellow butterflies at the break of day; all reminders that our children were bright and full of life.

We are on a dark journey. At the same time, we are on a righteous search for light, grasping at hope wherever we find it. When gray days return and winter seems endless, remember--it's not. As grief changes, we learn to survive the darkness, believing that light lies ahead. May sunshine bless you with small, precious moments of hope and joy in the coming summer days.

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**'Till We Meet Again.....**

I can no longer look upon your face  
But in my heart you'll always have a place  
For deep within me your seed still grows  
It left my body but not my soul

We shared a heartbeat for a brief time  
Your little body protected by mine  
You had to leave it but there was joy  
You were my special little boy

I watched you grow and learn and play  
It seems like it was yesterday  
You had a plan and never faltered  
Not knowing that your life would alter

You determinedly walked on your own path  
And lived the life you longed to have  
Yet never really got the chance  
To walk the walk and dance the dance

To leave you there on that cold day  
It was so hard to walk away  
A parent's nightmare had finally come  
The day I had to bury my son.

Although I know you're in a better place  
It's day-to-day for me with God's grace  
But life has a way of catching up time  
I'll be with you again baby mine.

Love Mom.

*Written by Deborah Streb (Rochester)*

*Mother of Adam Marano*

