



The Compassionate Friends of Tallahassee

<http://www.tcftallahassee.com>

V. 1 No. 2

December 2007

Steering Committee

Chapter Leader Becky Barch
 Co-Leader Sheila Ryan
 Secretary/
 Newsletter Janice Mazza
 Treasurer Gary Mathews
 Newsletter Janice Mazza
 Outreach Marie Primas-Bradshaw
 Juliacarol Love

Monthly Meetings

2nd Monday; 7:00 P.M.
 St. Stephen Lutheran Church
 2198 N. Meridian Rd.
 Tallahassee, FL 32303
 850-422-8404

It takes courage to come to the first meeting. Bring a friend or relative if you wish. You will find it is all right to laugh or cry, to share exactly how you feel or say nothing at all. You are not alone and we understand.

Donations

- ◆ Erma and Bruce Slager in memory of Kelly Slager
- ◆ Maryjane Thurston in memory of Jonathan Barch
- ◆ Robert and Helen Hoffelt in memory of William Hugh Mathews



We thank Jeff Herig, owner of FASTSIGNS® of Tallahassee, for donating a new sign to help our organization get noticed.

2096 North Monroe Street
 Tallahassee, FL 32303
 (850) 894-2400

Wish List

Small T.V. and VCR

TCF is a self-help organization offering friendship and understanding to bereaved parents and siblings.

How Do I Handle the Holidays?



A question commonly asked by bereaved people at this time of year is, "How can I get through the holidays?" There is really no single answer of what one should or shouldn't do. Hospice Foundation of America stresses one guiding principle: do what is comfortable.

"When we are already experiencing the great stress of bereavement, the additional strains of the holidays can create unbearable pressure," commented Jack Gordon, President of HFA. "The key to coping with grief during the holidays is to find the way that is right for you."

Some people find it helpful to be with family and friends, emphasizing the familiar. Others may wish to avoid old sights and sounds, perhaps even taking a trip. Others will find new ways to acknowledge the season.

Here are some key points from HFA's Holiday Grief Campaign:

Plan for the approaching holidays. Be aware that this might be a difficult time for you. The additional stress may affect you emotionally, cognitively, and physically; this is a normal reaction. It is important to be prepared for these feelings.

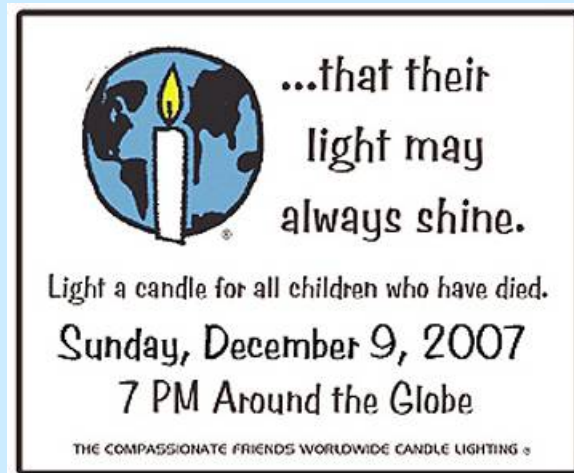
Recognize that holidays won't be the same. If you try to keep everything as it was, you'll be disappointed. Doing things a bit differently can acknowledge the change while preserving continuity with the past.

Be careful not to isolate yourself. It's alright to take time for yourself but don't cut yourself off from the support of family and friends.



TCF Library -- Checkout books and materials from our library. If you have suggestions or would like to donate a book to the collection let us know.

Light a Candle in Memory of a Child



Join the Tallahassee Chapter of The Compassionate Friends and Big Bend Hospice on Dec. 9, for the Worldwide Candle Lighting ceremony, and light a candle in memory of a child who has died so that "their light may always shine."

Tallahassee's Worldwide Candle Lighting service is open to the public and will begin at 6:30 p.m., at Big Bend Hospice, 1723 Mahan Center Blvd. The candle-lighting ceremony will be held from 7 to 8 p.m. Candles and light refreshments will be provided.

There will also be a service for families and friends in the Quincy area. It will begin at 6:30 p.m., at Centenary United Methodist Church, 206 N. Madison St, Quincy, FL. The candle-lighting ceremony will be held from 7 to 8 p.m.

Held annually on the second Sunday in December, the service unites bereaved families and friends and gives them the opportunity to honor children who have died, and remember and celebrate their lives.

Begun in the United States in 1997, the Worldwide Candle Lighting is believed to be the largest mass candle lighting on the globe, creating a virtual 24-hour wave of light as it moves from time zone to time zone. As candles light up at 7 p.m. local time around the world, hundreds of thousands of people commemorate and honor children in a way that transcends all boundaries.

If you can not attend a service you may leave a message in the TCF Remembrance Book on December 9 at The Compassionate Friend's USA website <http://www.compassionatefriends.org/>.

The Worldwide Candle Lighting gives bereaved families everywhere the opportunity to remember their child . . . ***that their light may always shine.***

Print the poster on page 6 – and post it at your office and/or church.



More Tips for Coping With the Holidays



Decide what you can handle comfortably and let friends and family know. Can I handle the responsibility of the family dinner, etc. or shall I ask someone else to do it? Do I want to talk about my loved one or not? Shall I stay here for the holidays or go to a completely different environment?

Make some changes if they feel comfortable for you. Open presents Christmas Eve instead of Christmas morning. Vary the timing of Chanukah gift giving. Have dinner at a different time or place. Let the children take over decorating the house, the tree, baking and food preparation, etc.

Re-examine your priorities: Greeting cards, holiday baking, decorating, putting up a tree, family dinner, etc. Do I really enjoy doing this? Is this a task that can be shared?

Consider doing something special for someone else. Donate a gift in the memory of your loved one. Donate money you would have spent on your loved one as a gift to charity. Adopt a needy family for the holidays. Invite a guest (foreign student, senior citizen) to share festivities.

Recognize your loved one's presence in the family. Burn a special candle to quietly include your loved one. Hang a stocking for your loved one in which people can put notes with their thoughts or feelings. Listen to music especially liked by the deceased. Look at photographs.

If you decide to do holiday shopping, make a list ahead of time and keep it handy for a good day, or shop through a catalogue or online.

Observe the holidays in ways that are comfortable for you. There is no right or wrong way of handling holidays. Once you've decided how to observe the time, let others know.

Try to get enough rest -- holidays can be emotionally and physically draining.

Allow yourself to express your feelings. Holidays often magnify feelings of loss. It is natural to feel sadness. Share concerns, apprehensions, feelings with a friend. The need for support is often greater during holidays.

Don't be afraid to have fun. Laughter and joy are not disrespectful. Give yourself and your family members permission to celebrate and take pleasure in the holidays.

Keep in mind that the experience of many bereaved persons is that they do come to enjoy holidays again. There will be other holiday seasons to celebrate.

Reprinted from *Bereavement & Loss Resources* a publication of Rivendell Resources and GriefNet.



TCF of Tallahassee would like to express their sincerest sympathy to Gary Mathews and his family. We hope that the memories of your father, Hugh "Doc" Mathews, help you find peace.



"Those we love remain with us, for love itself lives on,
And cherished memories never fade because a loved one's gone.
Those we love can never be more than a thought apart,
For as long as there is a memory, they'll live on in the heart."



2007 In the Rearview Mirror

It's hard to believe the end of the year is near. As we face the upcoming holiday season and wrap up 2007, I am reminded of the great energy our members contributed throughout the year to the Tallahassee Chapter of The Compassionate Friends. I would like wish everyone a peaceful and gentle holiday season and thank and congratulate those who helped us exceed our expectations!

As a result of our efforts we finished the year with these major accomplishments:

- Redecorated the Meeting Room
- Open Meeting held at Trinity Methodist Church
- Acquired a laptop computer for TCF
- Held a Garage/Rummage Sale
- Created "We Remember" Presentation
- Opened tcfot email account
- Organized chapter member information
- Distributed first e-newsletter
- Held a Pampered Chef Fundraiser
- Erected new sign at 2198 N Meridian Rd
- Sent *Suggestions for Clergy* pamphlets to area churches
- Held Candle lighting Service

What's Next?

Help us make 2008 a great year by supporting chapter activities and programs. Watch the <http://www.tcftallahassee.com> website for announcements and meetings. Members are welcome to attend any regular, steering committee and/or planning meeting. If you would like to share any thoughts or ideas, please contact Becky Barch. My e-mail is tcfot@yahoo.com or give me a call at 850-509-3303.

Take care this holiday season,
Becky Barch

Please

Please don't ask me if I'm over it yet.
I'll never get over it.
Please don't tell me he's in a better place.
He's not here with me.
Please don't say he isn't suffering any more.
I haven't come to terms of why he had to suffer at all.
Please don't tell me how you feel
Unless you've lost someone in the same way.
Please don't ask me if I feel better.
Bereavement isn't a condition that clears up.
Please don't tell me at least you had him for so many years.
What year would you like your loved one to die?
Please don't tell me God never gives us more than we can bear.
Please just say you're sorry.
Please just say you remember my loved one if you do.
Please mention my loved one's name.
Please be patient with me when I am sad.
Please just let me cry.

-- Unknown Author



Love Gifts A love gift is a wonderful way to remember your child while helping to fund chapter activities, newsletters, mailings, books for the lending library, information packets sent to newly bereaved families, etc. You may choose to donate a tax deductible love gift at any time; many parents do so on the birthday or anniversary of their death.

Our Children Loved, Missed, Remembered

Child	Date of Birth	Date of Death
Scott Paul Sullivan	December 5	
Gabriel Gershom Burke	December 5	
Samuel Maurice Williford	December 13	December 13
Faith & Daniel Henry	December 14	
David Edward Kinsey	December 15	
Kelly Lane Gaddy	December 17	
Stephanie Irene Louise Grantham	December 20	
Amy Beth Schauf	December 22	
Libby Lowery	December 28	
Rusty Laminack	December 29	
Stephen Love	December 30	
Sherry Lynn Fulcher	December 31	
Timothy E Page	December 31	
Christine (Christy) Lynn Schauf	December 31	
Amy Beth & Christine (Christy) Lynn Schauf		December 1
Douglas (Doug) Prado Dickert		December 1
Ronell Scroggins		December 3
Tiffany Miranda Spikes		December 3
Steven Patrick Piotrowski		December 7
Justin A Ferrell		December 11
Taylor Grace Lorch		December 15
Faith & Daniel Henry		December 15
Robbie Alexander		December 16
Sarah Elizabeth Cowling		December 20
Jonathan Frederick Barch		December 20
Michael Kenneth Eubanks		December 26
Sibling		
Sara Kathryn (Kathy) Hau		December 30

Come Light a Candle



...that their
light may
always shine.

Light a candle for all children who have died.

Sunday, December 9, 2007
7 PM Around the Globe

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS WORLDWIDE CANDLE LIGHTING ©

Open to everyone in the community, the Worldwide Candle Lighting is a special time to remember and celebrate the lives of all children who have died.

Service will be held outdoors weather permitting. Candles and light refreshments provided.

Date: Sunday, December 9, 2007

Location:

Big Bend Hospice
1723 Mahan Center Blvd.
Tallahassee, FL

Time:

Gathering between 6:30 – 7:00 PM
Candle lighting Service 7:00 – 8:00 PM



Sponsored by: Big Bend Hospice and The Compassionate Friends of Tallahassee, Website: www.tcfallahassee.com, Telephone (850) 422-8404, Email: tcfot@yahoo.com