

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS, INC.

A self-help organization offering friendship and understanding to bereaved families who have experienced the death of a child.

BRANDYWINE HUNDRED CHAPTER

www.BrandywineTCF.org

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September 2011

My Garden of Memories

It is so hard to experience the death of a child. That is not the natural order of things. Children are not supposed to die before parents. But the grim reality remains that this “unnatural order of things” does happen, and we, as parents, are left to heal our broken hearts, each of us in our own way.

Honor. I was taken back shortly after my son passed away when the counselor, who I was seeing at the time asked me, “Debbie, how are you going to honor Danny’s life?” Sadly, I was suddenly, silently stunned because I had not given it a thought; honoring Danny’s life? For the next several months that question passed through my brain often. How was I going to honor Danny? One way in which I have chosen to honor Danny was to devote much time and attention to the shade garden located on the side of our house and clearly visible from the three-framed window in the kitchen. Danny and I built that garden many years ago. It was a wonderful fun time as we decided together how we should build the wall, how tall it should be, and what we would put into it. We played together in the dirt adding rich garden soil. We spent time looking through gardening books to select specific plants, mostly perennials, that would flourish in the shade. We first

planted a wild geranium, which gets a delicate lavender-pink flower in the spring and always emits a specific fragrance when touched. It has done well but could probably do with a bit more sunshine, not unlike most of the people I know. Next, we transplanted two varieties of hostas into this newly created shade garden, which we knew would flourish in the dense shade on the side of the house. Daily I see the hostas are happy in large clumps of attractive foliage of

dark green and variegated white and yellow adored with tall, slender, and graceful shoots of a faint lilac lily like flower, symbolic of how I envision my Danny. Finally, we planted red Coral bells. It was fun for us to see how every year these plants grew larger and larger. This is exactly what happened to Danny. It was so much fun for me to watch Danny grow bigger and bigger, year after

year. Today, this garden is so full and has my constant attention. Thus every day as I look out my side kitchen window I honor Danny, and I smile with sweet memories of Danny floating in my mind and heart, and I know he, too, is smiling as I am writing these words.



By Debbie Fetzer
Danny Fulmer’s Mom

LOVE GIFTS

This month we thank the following
for their continued support of our local chapter

Kenneth & Ethel Blackman
in memory of thher son Kevin
Mary Ann Byrne
in memory of her son Jeffrey
Deborah Fetzer
in memory of her son Danny Fulmer
John Williams
in memory of his daughter
Maya B. Williams
Barbara Williams
in memory of her granddaughter
Maya B. Williams

If you would like to send a donation please send it to:
TCF
PO Box 114
Rockland, DE 19732
make check payable to
The Compassionate Friends.

This newsletter is sponsored by
Jill & Dean Decker
in memory of
Joe Decker



9/18/1972 - 11/26/1999
Think of you Everyday
Love You Forever.
Mom & Dad

Want to know what to reply
when someone says,
“It seems to me, - -
you should be getting over that
by now?”

How about the quote
from William Shakespeare?
“Everyone can master a grief
but he that has it.”

From the book by Martha Hickman
Healing After Loss.

Newsletter Sponsorship Criteria:

We are now accepting 2 sponsors/month.
\$100 Donation to BHCTCF Newsletter
(this still only covers part of cost)
Email a jpeg photo of your child
or send a photo.

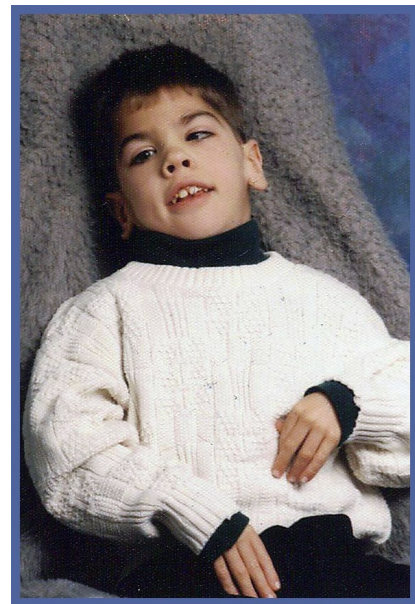
Include a short note to go with the photo.

Please submit by the 1st of the month
preceding the newsletter (i.e. May 1st
for the June Newsletter).

Or earlier if you want a specific month.

E-mail: othelITCF@verizon.net
Phone: 656-9288

This newsletter is sponsored by
the DuBois Family
in memory of
Eric
9/24/85 to 12/30/00



We love you and we miss you!
Love, Mom, Dad, Olivia and Leah

September Calendar

Sept. 13th

6:30 pm Social Time with **Birthday Cake**
To celebrate September birthdays
Bring your child's picture.

7 pm Meeting - General Sharing

Sept. 27th

6:15 pm Subs

7 pm **Guest Speaker**
Dealing with Grief
Virginia Smith, PhD
Counselor for 30 years
Currently teaches at Penn State
Previously at Neumann Univ.
& Peace Corps (with family)

**Birthday
Cake**

Donated by
Joe & Diane Adamo
In memory their daughter
Joyce Adamo Seidman



Subs on Sept. 27th
You are welcome to bring
Side Dishes, Desserts, Etc.

Library

We have a well stocked library, however we could use a librarian to help suggest books for our new (& old) members.



Nancy Taylor
(Suicide & Only Child)
234-1654

Need someone to talk with?
Having a bad day?
Give us a call.
We also suffered
the loss of a child.
So we know you are in pain.
We care about you
and want to help

Mary Mullin
(Suicide)
(610) 497-3447

Mary Welch
(Long Term Illness)
(302)475-7050

A WIN - Win Opportunity

Boscov's

Brandywine Hundred Chapter

TCF

Friends Helping Friends Day
Tuesday, October 4th

TCF sells you a ticket for \$5 **(we win)**

You get a 25% discount shopping pass* plus you will be eligible to win fabulous door prizes & free refreshments throughout the day. **(you win)**

Ask everyone you know if they want a ticket
and then contact Debbie Ferguson
302-561-0120 to reserve your tickets.

* Some exclusions - clearly described on the ticket.

Where Do We Meet?

Brandywine Valley Baptist Church
7 Mt. Lebanon Road

From I 95
go north on US 202 (Concord Pike)
Turn left onto Mt. Lebanon Rd.
Church is on right side of road
next to the YMCA.
Parking lot and entrance
in the back of the church.

SCHEDULED MEETINGS:

Meetings start at 7:00 p.m.
on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month

MEETING PLACE:

Brandywine Valley Baptist Church
7 Mt. Lebanon Road

DIRECTIONS:

From I 95 go north on US 202 (Concord Pike)
Turn left onto Mt. Lebanon Rd.
Church is on right side of road next to the YMCA.
Parking lot and entrance in the back of the church.

September Remembrances

error or omission?
Contact
Othell1@verizon.net

BIRTHS	
GABRIEL BOWMAN	September 11
KELLIE CAHALL	September 30
ROBERT BRADY CLARK	September 17
SEAN COATES	September 07
MICHAEL JAYE COLDIRON	September 26
ERIC CONNOLLY	September 24
GARY COVELLI	September 26
JOE DECKER	September 18
DANIEL EDMONDSON	September 03
KYLE KIRK	September 22
JEFFREY KULAS	September 12
CLAUDE P MATIC	September 06
ANDREW MCDONOUGH	September 03
MICHAEL MURPHY	September 06
SEAN O'BRIEN	September 17
AMANDA ROWE	September 07
BRIAN MICHAEL SCHOLL	September 25
MICHAEL SEERY, JR	September 24
JOYCE ADAMO SEIDMAN	September 15
MAYA B WILLIAMS	September 30

DEATHS	
CHARLIE ANDREWS	September 17
KEVIN BLACKMAN	September 22
JILL RUSSELL EDDY	September 03
DANIEL EDMONDSON	September 08
TRAVIS EDWARDS	September 13
MAURICE FAULKNER	September 16
BRYAN HOLLAND	September 13
NICK KLOSIEWICZ	September 23
SHAWN LEWIS	September 04
ASHLEY BRIE LOCKERMAN	September 07
SANDRA LEE LONG	September 02
DICK MAC INTYRE	September 20
EMMA MARIE MILLER	September 01
KATHLEEN PEPE	September 09
NICHOLAS MICHAEL REGER	September 05
GARY ROBBINS, II	September 13
DAVIS (DEEG) SEZNA	September 11
ASHLEY THARP	September 26

In My Pocket

I have memories in my pocket. They rattle just like change.
 My memories of you are treasures I carry wherever I go.
 They are stored in bits and pieces, parts of a beautiful whole.
 They give me comfort when I think I am alone.
 Yes, I have memories in my pocket, like so much other stuff I keep there.
 But of all the treasures I have, it's the memories of you that are the most precious.

Martin Baer, TCF North Short-Boston

Back To School

Mary Cleckley,
TCF - Atlanta GA

Strange things happen to you when your child dies.
You'll fail if you try to make sense of most of it.

Both my children had finished high school when my son died, yet I found the beginning of school- especially that first year - to be difficult. The bus stops in front of my home for the neighborhood children. Suddenly, as they all gathered to wait for the bus, I found myself reliving those simple, happier days of old; longing for them actually. It was a painful time.

Now, if I, whose children were grown and gone, had a problem with school starting, those of you who do have school age children must know that

your pain is normal, It's another reminder that life goes on - with or without our children - and acknowledging that hurts! I came to the conclusion that it was all right to pine for happier times and it was nothing to get upset about. As with many remnants of grief, I recognize it, . . . allow it and then get on with my life.

Maybe you're like me, you'll always be a little nostalgic about school starting. That would probably have been true even if my son had lived. Maybe you, too?

My Secret

Within days of my son's tragic death in a helicopter crash, it became my sad duty to remove his belongings from his apartment. In the numbing fog of shock and denial, I sifted through the contents of every drawer, cabinet and closet. The wrenching decisions of what to do with his clothes, his video tapes--even his toothbrush made my head swim.

Although I gave many of his things to his roommate, other friends and family and "Goodwill", I kept the "special" things for myself--school year-books, pictures, certain items of clothing ... and his collection of crazy T -shirts. I put this strange assortment of things in his foot locker, a remnant of his boarding school days.

What I didn't tell anyone was that I never laundered the T-shirts I found in the dirty clothes hamper. I just folded them and put them in the foot locker with my other memories. And from time to time during those first months of agonizing pain, I would sit on the floor, open the treasured remnants of a life that had been such a large part of mine.

Then I would take the unwashed T-shirts and bury my-face in them, inhaling the combined scents of his cologne, deodorant and perspiration, mixed with the wetness of my tears. It made me feel for just a moment that he wasn't really so far away. "What a per-

verse thing to do", I thought. "I'm sure no one else would ever understand my doing such a thing--they would surely think I had gone off the deep end." So I never told anyone about this strange behavior--and the odd comfort it gave me.

Months later at a National Conference, I heard a speaker tell hundreds of bereaved parents assembled about a mother whose baby had died suddenly and how she refused to wash the soiled shirt it was wearing but found comfort in holding it close to her and smelling it. "My gosh", I thought, "maybe I'm no so crazy after all".

Since this experience I have discovered that this is not as uncommon as I had thought. The scents of a loved one are as much a part of them as the sound of a voice, the touch of a hand or the tenderness of a kiss. There is nothing "perverse" in wanting to cling to those precious memories.

If it were not for The Compassionate Friends, I might never have known that my actions, rather than strange, were perfectly normal.

Another example of the many ways The Compassionate Friends helps us through this difficult journey.

Carole Ragland, TCF Houston-West, TX

Delaware's Walk to Remember

July 17, 2011

It was a very special day.
Good Food
Good Friends
Good Weather
Good Attendance (~150)
& an Opportunity to Remember
Those Gone Too Soon.



Thanks
to our wonderful merchants
& organizations
who helped make all this possible.

Just A Buck Store
4915 Kirkwood Highway

Pathmart
4365 Kirkwood Highway

Bernie's Water Ice
1701 W. 8th Street

Season's Pizza
615 S. Maryland Ave

Party City
2101 Kirkwood Highway

Serpe's Bakery
1411 Kirkwood Highway

Casapulla's Sub Shop
1216 Old Lancaster Pike

Cab Calloway School
100 N. DuPont Rd

New Castle County Paramedics
77 Read's Way

Show
our
appreciation
by
patronizing
these
merchants



Thanks
to Patti Still
& her wonderful committee
& everyone who contributed financially



The Boy Who Wasn't There



I looked for you today, the boy who wasn't there.
I looked for you among the children going off to school.
I looked at their new and shiny shoes and watched
for untied laces.
I looked at their smiling faces,
looking for a familiar crooked grin.
I looked for you today, the boy who wasn't there.
I looked among your friends who played on a playground
memorialized for you.
I looked at those bouncy heads as they skipped and played,
looking for a cowlick that stuck up just right.

I looked at them as they traveled home,
bubbling with stories to tell about their first day at school.
As you tuck your children in bed tonight,
give them an extra hug; a thought, a smile, a prayer. for
the boy who isn't there.

By Margaret Melendez
Racine, Wisconsin
Reprinted from Bereavement Magazine,
March/April 2001



SEPTEMBER AND A NEW SCHOOL YEAR



TO MOST PEOPLE IT MEANS

Kids out from underfoot, caps on
Buying a new lunch box, new clothes and the usual school supplies
Fixing breakfast and trying to get it eaten
Getting to a school bus on time



TO A MOTHER WHO HAS LOST A CHILD IT MEANS

Watching other children filled with excitement
A little boy who should be in kindergarten
A brother who must go off to school himself
A teacher who must reach out to a class,
When her little one won't be in school this year
A mother sending two children off, when there should be three.
Many tears behind smiling faces

Patsy Hedges
TCF Fredrick County, MD



The Compassionate Friends, Inc.
Brandywine Hundred Chapter
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Joyce is Turning 50

Dear Joyce,
Oh no, the big five-O! We are getting old sister!
During your illness I often felt sad because I knew that most likely you would not be here to experience this milestone. While the three and a half years since you've been gone seems like forever, it comforts me to know that I can picture how beautiful you would have looked at age 50.
Your birthday is almost here and I would like to dream about how we would celebrate. I propose a spa trip to The Hotel Hershey! I would invite mom and a few of our special girls on a limo ride to "the sweetest place on earth". I can just see us talking and laughing the whole way. At the spa we would indulge ourselves with services like a Whipped Cocoa Bath, Chocolate Fondue Wrap and a Cocoa Massage. We would have lunch in the elegant dining room, complete with a chocolate martini and an array of chocolate desserts. Our wonderful day of fun would end with our bodies and minds revitalized and relaxed. How is that for a special day?

September 15th is the big day and you and I won't get to do any of these things. On your birthday mom, dad, our brother Greg and your husband Marc will attend Mass and celebrate you and the beautiful life you lived. We will feel your presence and share your pride that you would have had for your boys, Drew and Dean, now both at Syracuse University and doing so well.

Happy Birthday to a darling sister.
You are loved and missed so much.
Love, Marlene
Sister to Joyce Adamo Seidman

**The
Sibling
Page**