



**Our Mission & Purpose** is to assist families toward the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child of any age by any cause and to provide information to help others be supportive.

## Huntsville Area Chapter – Update

Fall has arrived and the weather has finally gotten cooler. We now head into the busy and stressful holiday time of the year. For those of us who have experienced the ultimate loss, the holidays bring dread, apprehension, sadness and most of all reflection on the lives of our wonderful children. Thoughts on Page 4 give you some ways to cope.

On Sunday, December 12<sup>th</sup>, the Huntsville Area Chapter of The Compassionate Friends and Hospice Family Care will observe the 2010 Worldwide Candle Light Program at Mayfair Church of Christ from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm. Please mark your calendar and make plans to attend this special reflective time. It is a very touching ceremony where we join together to remember our children along with thousands of others around the world with slides, readings, candles and fellowship. Plan to spend a couple of hours with others who understand the multitude of feelings flowing through each of us every day but especially during the holidays.

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**Our Vision** is that everyone who needs us will find us and everyone who finds us will be helped.

**Our Meetings:** Monthly, every third Sunday, 2-4 pm  
Renasant Bank, Balmoral Drive, Huntsville, AL  
Information 256-883-0997

## Personal Contacts

*We have all experienced the pain of losing a child. We understand and would like to hear from you. If you can't reach a particular person, please call another and make contact.*

### We Need Not Walk Alone

Illness..... Gaylene  
(256) 325-8296 [illness@tcfhuntsville.org](mailto:illness@tcfhuntsville.org)

Accident ..... Pam  
(256) 534-1873 [accident@tcfhuntsville.org](mailto:accident@tcfhuntsville.org)

Substance Abuse..... Jane & Herb  
(256) 883-0997 [substance\\_abuse@tcfhuntsville.org](mailto:substance_abuse@tcfhuntsville.org)

Suicide ..... Ray  
(256) 650-0381 [suicide@tcfhuntsville.org](mailto:suicide@tcfhuntsville.org)

Website..... <http://www.tcfhuntsville.org>

Email ..... [tcf@tcfhuntsville.org](mailto:tcf@tcfhuntsville.org)

### Additional Resources:

Hospice Family Care HOPE..... Huntsville  
(256) 650-1212

TCF National Office ... (877) 969-0010  
<http://www.compassionatefriends.org/>

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Winter Flowers

We warmly invite you to come and join us at next month's meeting at 2:00 pm on November 21st when we will discuss "Just tell me the rules – the new normal". Finding and learning to live that "new normal" is a slow and difficult process.

Mark your calendar: It is not too early to begin making plans to attend the next TCF National Conference scheduled to be held in Minneapolis, Minnesota in July 15-17, 2011. You will find it very informative and richly rewarding in many ways. It is a place where friendship, hope and understanding are shared.

## FACES OF GRIEF



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[www.heartlightstudios.net](http://www.heartlightstudios.net)

## ANGUISH

Anguish is that emotion of extreme agony and pain that one feels in accepting the reality of the loss or news of the loss.

Anguish can produce a gut wrenching paroxysm that cripples our resolve and wracks our bodies with the very real physical pain of loss.

Anguish is our heart and soul moaning.

Anguish may bring with it despair and anxiety.

## Poetry and Prose



### AT THANKSGIVING

Though you're filled with sorrow and pain over the loss of your child, you can be thankful for:

- The memories that you hold close.
- The time you shared with your child, no matter how short it was.
- The things your child taught you.
- The friends who are there when you need them.

### And you can be thankful also:

- For the strength you have that makes you a survivor.
- For the smiles of other children. (They are not our missing children, no, but they still smile).

TCF, Portland, OR



## ...From the Heart



...a compassionate friend speaks

*"...From the Heart", is a regular feature that will give a local member the opportunity to share a tip, suggestion, or experience of what has helped or hurt in his personal grief journey.*

**Editor Note:** We hope to resume this feature with the next issue of this newsletter

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### Emily's Earthly Things

(An email message from Leeta Dover to Iris Warren – members of TCF Huntsville)

Dearest Iris:

So many times during my lifetime, I have thought, pondered, dreamed of the future. Never once did anything ever enter my mind like Friday, June 18, 2010. Two years, six months, and eleven days after my precious Emily left earth, I went through all her things that are with me.

Thank you dear God for Brenda, I could not have done this without her. We got through everything once in Emily's room, making many different piles. I cry so hard as I think of it all.

Even though I had the abiding feeling I was taking care of all these things for Emily – doing what she was not able to do, I was not comforted. It was a day that should have never been. I know first and foremost Emily would want me to do what gives me the most peace, trying to do what she would want brings me the most comfort. Yet, honestly, my pain is so great there seems no comfort at all. Each item, each article of clothing, every ornament, trinket, key chain, nail file, every word written in her own hand from the smallest sticky note to books of Sudoku puzzles, flight plans, sectional charts, and tests for students, from crib mobile to Pound Puppy to the most tiny baby dress, the memories flooded my entire being. Everything I touched broke my heart over and over again.

The big sheet on which Joe spray painted the words "It's a Girl" happily hung on the porch when we brought her home in October 1979. It is there with the box of pretty pink napkins and two hearts intertwined – "Emily and Drake, June 30, 2007." Lying next to the honored first baby named Honey, there is a Cabbage Patch doll – just the one Emily wanted – blonde pigtails and a tooth! She is still wearing the dress with the red hearts. Emily and I made that dress and made her a big girl version to match. These things Emily should be sharing with

her little ones – babies who will never be.

Dear God, how can so many, many, many wonderful memories have become such unbearable pain?

Many boxes are downstairs to sort and add a little more to the various small piles for others who I hope will value these things in a special way because they were touched by Emily. There are many board games. Drake has most of the favorites but I have our Scrabble game which will be in the storage tub in the closet when I join Emily. I held one of our last score sheets in my hand and longed to play one more game as I can almost hear her sweetest of voices proclaim, "I am the champion!" or the rare occasion when she would tell me, "I have to let you win once in a while!". There is the Aggravation game with the box held together by tape, leaf collections, Bible lessons and more.

Two huge boxes of books sat before me – books I had envisioned reading to my grandchildren. Right there are all the Clifford books with Emily Elizabeth (surely named after my Emily Elizabeth). I think back to the nights of laughter at all the antics of Ramona. We felt we were right there at the Little House on the Prairie. I remember the day we read the final word of the final book in Anne of Green Gables series. How we longed for more to know what happened after the book ended.

Among the correspondence Emily had received, I recognized my own writing and that of her dad's – words to our precious daughter. Also, there were cards she had selected for others that were never sent. Among those, one spoke to me. What address had she intended to write on the envelope? Perhaps Emily had not one in mind at the time she bought it but knowing how life on earth is, there would surely be someone who needs its encouragement, I was reminded and encouraged although not in the way I feel the designer of the card or even Emily intended. The words are written in a childlike hand and its graphics are the same - on the front, "Open this card and hold it close to you..." Inside there is a little character representing Emily with very long arms stretched wide from her sides across the whole inside of the card. Above the arms stretched wide to hug me as I hold the card close, the words read "...now Squeeze!" – underneath the little character, "It's going to be just fine." I take this to have been intended to send a big hug and remind the recipient that "this too will pass." Oddly, I do feel a sort of hug from Emily.

On earth, "this" will never pass. I cry but that little card reminds me of the greatest blessing in the universe – "It's going to be just fine." Since Emily's death I

believe more than ever today that this Bible verse is more than a promise. It is a constant reminder from Emily: God will wipe away all tears – no more death, mourning, crying, or pain. No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love Him! “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die.” John 11:25.

I love you my friend,  
Leeta

*Leeta Dover, Huntsville, AL TCF*



**Emily's Earthly Things**

### The Light of Hope

That first holiday season ... hope flickered like the flame of a distant candle – I could see the flame, yet I could not seem to get close to it. As healing came, hope became more than a distant ray of light. It changed to a glow that lighted my way.

Eloise Cole, Phoenix, AZ

## **Christmas**

### **As We Near The Special Season**

As we near the special season that stirs up feelings of heritage, patriotism, thanksgiving, and our relationship with God.

We are instantly reminded that it doesn't seem to fit together for us; our personal sense of well-being is suffering. Our hearts and spirits are undergoing the trauma of painfully fresh wounds in some cases, while other are coping with the scar tissue of older grief that refuses to heal or restore comfort to their lives. This season reminds me we are living with extra stress that must be resolved. I offer a few thoughts to each of you, along with my love, in hope that feelings of peace and purpose will return to bring you comfort.

**First**, be careful in agreeing to take on the traditional extra work that goes with holidays. You are coping with grief that will take much of your useable energy.

**Second**, be especially kind and patient with yourself. The need for physiological rest is vital at this time; regular sleep and rest hours will help.

**Third**, be aware that holidays and alcohol have become traditional companions; extra caution may be necessary to prevent the depressant effects of alcohol from further aggravating your grief anxiety.

**Fourth**, it's okay to change past practices that are especially painful reminders of what can be no more; do something different if you have to.

Finally, allow yourself private time as you need to, but also remember it's important to allow others to try to bring you comfort and give you extra help during the holidays. Loved ones need feedback that says: "I'm trying to recover, and I appreciate your help."

Peace be with you.

Ann Frost – TCF, Middle George Chapter



Note: Our Huntsville newsletters are available online at <http://www.tcfhuntsville.org/Newsletters.html>

## We Remember Them

...on their Birth Dates, on their Death Dates, and always...

October	
Ian Scott	Campbell
Emily D	Clark
Zach	Guidry
Aubrey	Livingston
Aubrey	Livingston
Stephen	Martin
Gregory L.	McKinney
Gage	Pruitt

November	
Evan	Davis
Brian	Dunham
Shelby	Hastings
Alan	Hilliard
April A	Warren Page
Cory	Woodson

December	
Emily D	Clark
William J.	Gibbons
Christopher	Richardson

## Remembering Our Children

### Candle Lighting

A small, close circle of candles,  
A larger circle of love –  
this is the scene at Christmas  
that brightens my heart and soul.  
Fathers and mothers and siblings –  
all come to this circle as one;  
each of us lights a candle or two –  
sharing our wonderful memories,  
sharing lost hopes and dreams,  
sharing our joys as well as our tears,  
sharing our faith as well as our fears,  
but most of all sharing a timeless love  
aglow and alive in the candles beams.

Shirley Ottman, BP/USA Denton, TX

TCF Annual Worldwide  
Candle Lighting is to honor  
all children who have died  
... that their light may  
always shine. Each child  
can be remembered by  
lighting a candle in memory  
at 7:00 p.m. in your time  
zone, for one hour. As each  
time zone blows out their  
candles, the next time zone  
is lighting theirs for 24  
hours of remembrance.



## Gifts of Love and Remembrance

*The following donations will help the Compassionate Friends to be here for the families who do not know today that they will need us tomorrow.*

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>In loving memory of</b> <b>Ben Larnerd</b> Herb and Jane - Parents Nancy and Robert - Grandparents</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>In loving memory of</b> <b>Cory Woodson</b> Nancy and Robert - Grandparents</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>In loving memory of</b> <b>April Warren Page</b> Murray and Iris – Parents</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>In loving memory of</b> <b>Daniel Rhoades</b> Larry and Bambi - Parents</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>In loving memory of</b> <b>Shelly Jenkins</b> Wayne - Father</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>In loving memory of</b> <b>Bryan Eidsaune</b> Roger and Gaylene – Parents</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>In loving memory of</b> <b>Anastasia Stefadouros</b> George and Becky - Parents</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>In loving memory of</b> <b>Aubrey Livingston</b> Matthew and Christina - Parents</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>In loving memory of</b> <b>Stephen Martin</b> Michael – Father</p>

Donations and Remembrance Gifts are tax deductible and may be sent to:  
TCF Huntsville Area – See the last page for mailing address

<b>November</b>	November 21 – Just tell me the rules – our new normal
<b>December</b>	December 12 – 2010 Worldwide Candlelight Service at Mayfair Church of Christ 6:30-8:30 pm December 19 <sup>th</sup> – No meeting
<b>January</b>	January 16 – To be scheduled
<b>February</b>	February 20 – To be scheduled



**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. We do understand.

**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.

TCF is here to welcome you, share your grief and encourage you.

TCF Huntsville meetings are held at 2:00PM on the third Sunday of each month except December at:  
Renasant Bank (Community Room)  
4245 Balmoral Dr (off Airport Rd)  
Huntsville, AL 35801

**Official TCF Huntsville Mailing Address**

TCF Huntsville Area  
C/O H. Larned  
5617 Woodridge St. SW  
Huntsville, AL 35802

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Mailing Address

Street Number and Name

City, State 98765-4321



This Newsletter is published by the Huntsville Area Chapter of The Compassionate Friends. Your comments and suggestions are welcome and may be sent to [newsletter@tcfhuntsville.org](mailto:newsletter@tcfhuntsville.org).