

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

MAILING ADDRESS: P. O. Box 8283 • Hermitage, TN 37076 • (615) 356-4TCF(4823)

Nashville Website: www.tcfnashville.com



Chapter Leaders: Robin Hunt (615) 319-2090 rmhunt4651@att.net and Ron Henson (615) 789-3613 packerron10@gmail.com

Newsletter Editor: Melanie Bell, (615) 513-5913, email: melaniebell2210@gmail.com

Treasurer: Ed Pyle, (615) 712-3245, email: edpyletaxlaw@gmail.com

Regional Coordinators: Polly Moore, (931) 962-0458, email: lolly39@aol.com and Dana Gall (931) 581-7090

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.

*Welcome: The Nashville chapter meets at 3:00 P.M. on the second Sunday of each month at the ABC (Associated Builders and Contractors of Greater Tennessee) Building, 560 Royal Parkway, Nashville, TN 37214 (**SEE MAILING ADDRESS ABOVE**). We truly regret that we have no accommodations for young children, but teenagers and older siblings are welcome to attend.*

June 14th Meeting Program:

Balloon (take home) Release & Picnic
Location: ABC Building (our regular meeting place)



Our June gathering is a very special time—our Annual Balloon Release and Picnic! This is a very popular event between Mother's Day and Father's Day each year, and we encourage you to bring your family members. All ages are invited to come to remember and celebrate the life of your child. **The birthday table will be set up as usual.**

THIS YEAR WE WILL NOT RELEASE BALLOONS ON SITE AT THE ABC BUILDING DUE TO OUR PROXIMITY TO THE NASHVILLE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT.

At the end of the meeting as families leave,
 a balloon will be given to them.

There is a limit of 1 balloon per family.

There is a max of 25 balloons for this event.

The picnic will be inside the ABC building, our monthly meeting location. Steering Committee members will bring hot dogs and buns. The chapter will provide condiments.

Everyone else is asked to bring two items, such as side dishes, fruit or desserts. A side dish can be chips and dips, macaroni salad, potato salad, slaw, or etc.

Meeting announcements begin at 3:00. Sharing of this month's birthday children will be followed by our picnic.

It's a great day to get to know each other and our families better. Hope to see you there!

*Colorful, shimmering spheres,
 We send you in tearful devotion
 To fly with the music of always
 Into the kingdom of hope.*



*Rise gently, you glistening orbs—
 You carry a precious freight—
 All the love our hearts can command,
 All the courage and hope that we can own.*

Sascha

ALWAYS WITH LOVE, WE REMEMBER THEM--**In the month of their births**

Jaden A. Clark June 12 Son of Tricia Clark	Stephen Joseph Donlon June 16 Son of Pat and Ellen Donlon Brother of Katy, David, John, and Elizabeth	Laura Abigail Czirr (Abby) June 22 Daughter of Steve and Paige Czirr Granddaughter of Robert and Cynthia Daugherty, John and JoAnn Czirr	Larry Donell Davis, Jr. (Lil' Larry) June 17 Son of Mary K. Davis
Zackery Tyler Lewis Allen June 5 Son of Stephanie Willis	Ethan Alexander Cantrell June 3 Son of Nikkie Robinson	Charles Courtney Edwards June 14 Son of Charles and Ruth Edwards	
Jeffrey Glenn Eakes June 26 Son of Don and Sherry Eakes	Stephen Joseph Fay June 6 Son of Tommy and Pennie Fay	Kevin Zachary Ferguson June 9 Son of Andrea and Chris Landers	Chase Lee Harris June 27 Son of Kirk and Shayne Harris and Paul and Stacey Fish
Christopher Miller Harris June 19 Son of Bill Harris and Judy Harris	Tyler Ross Jeanneret June 14 Son of D.J. and Pamela Jeanneret	Lia Usman June 6 Daughter of Zafar and Sana Usman	Allen Glenn Mays June 3 Son-in-law of Roy and Carole Renfro
Camryn Makenzie Smith June 12 Daughter of Wendy Mallory	Christopher Michael Swayze June 6 Son of Michael and Carole Swayze	Ryan James Tropauer June 25 Son of David and Debbie Tropauer	
Evan Barrett Williamson June 25 Son of Beverly Williamson	Gregory Joseph Tramuta June 7 Son of Lisa Tramuta		

**Phone Friends**

We have all experienced the pain of losing a child. We understand and would like to listen. If you can't reach one of us, feel free to call another person on this list.

Accidental Death	Mike and Paula Childers 615-294-4959
Infant	Jayne Head 615-264-8184
SIDS	Kris Thompson 931-486-9088
Suicide	Ron Henson 615-789-3613
Alcohol/Drug Overdose	Ed Pyle 615-712-3245





And in the month of their deaths

Lisa Allgood June 30 Daughter of Harold and Betty Allgood	Misty Whitney Ambrose June 18 Daughter of Michael and Treva Ambrose	Eric DeWayne Brown June 8 Son of Sharon Brown	Jamison Michael Duncan (Jamie) June 13 Son of Mike and Kay Duncan Brother of Jon
Stephen Joseph Fay June 5 Son of Tommy and Pennie Fay	Ethan Alexander Cantrell June 20 Son of Nikkie Robinson	Tristan Ray Fillpot June 9 Son of Lorenzo and Floy Wilson	Cole Hansen Kilgore June 5 Son of Henry and Kathy Beeler Nephew of Kacey Gant
David Kremer, Jr. June 26 Son of David & Connie Kremer	Jennifer Lee Friedmann (Jena) June 9 Daughter of John and Mignon Friedmann Sister of Dr. John Friedmann	Briana Leigh Kulesza June 19 Daughter of Larry and Donna Kulesza	Lisa Michelle Lombardo June 14 Daughter of Frank and Stacy Lombardo
Jaxon Leasure June 8 Son of Trip and Darcy Leasure	Danny Wayne Phillips, Jr. (Red) June 8 Son of Janie Totty	Travis David Pate June 16 Son of Melanie Pate	Barron Sowell Preston June 15 Son of Dianne Preston
Cody Turner June 21 Son of Teresa Crutcher	David Brenden Spelta June 5 Son of Jeff and Lisa Spelta	Nathan Young June 22 Son of Dana Young	Matthew James Truman June 7 Son of Cathy McMorro
Ebony David Merriweather June 26 Son of Tonya Johnson		Tonya Marie Harrison Tyler June 30 Daughter of Sharon Wayman	

To My Miscarried Baby

*Out of our love you came,
Planned, wanted, welcomed.
Your announcement created excitement, joy.*

*Friends and family inquired,
Do you want a girl or boy?
Will you take Lamaze?
What colors for the nursery?
Then suddenly you're gone — and silence.*

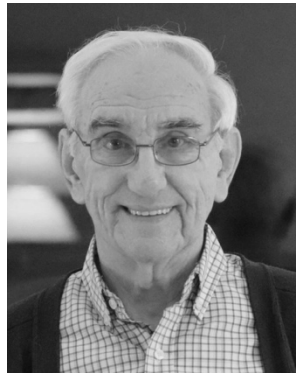
No one talks about a baby that won't be.

*Were you real or a dream?
I feel alone and empty.
Where can I put my love that was for you?
Now what does it mean?*

Betty Ruder
TCF North Shore, IL

In Loving Memory of TCF Nashville Co-Founder, John David Gibson

December 19, 1934 – April 12, 2026



A native of Winona, Mississippi, Mr. Gibson graduated from Mississippi State College and moved to Nashville in 1957 where he was a publisher's representative for Broadman Press. He has represented New York Life Insurance Company since 1964. In 1987 he and his wife co-founded the Nashville Chapter of The Compassionate Friends, a support organization for families who have suffered the death of a child. He served the organization locally and on the national board of directors.

He was preceded in death by his parents, John Buchanan Gibson and Marjorie Dorris Gibson, his daughter, Laura Paige Gibson and his niece Wanda Strawbridge Perry. He is survived by his beloved wife of 67 years, Peggy Jones Gibson; his daughters Sandra Claire Gibson and Cynthia Kay Howard (Richard); three grandchildren, Rachel Paige, Emilee Elizabeth and Samuel Forrest Howard; sister Sarah Alice Strawbridge (Joe); nephew David Strawbridge; Grandniece Ella Weiss Keeley (Adrian) and other numerous nieces and nephews.

Donations in his memory may be made to The Compassionate Friends, P.O. Box 8283, Hermitage, TN 37076.

David Gibson is remembered fondly by many members of TCF, locally and nationally. He was truly a compassionate friend as expressed by some of our members:

David was an incredible person and leader who led by example. His great passion, other than his own family, was his TCF family. He taught me how to be a Chapter Leader and was always there for advice and direction when I needed it. Beyond that, he was a true friend. He will be missed by all who were fortunate to have known him. Rest in Peace, my friend.

Lamar and Joy Bradley

Ted and I attended our first TCF meeting shortly after the death of our son Michael in April 1989. Right away we felt welcomed and safe in a strange setting. Ted joined a men's sharing table, where Dave was leading the conversation. I noticed Ted actually talking with these new friends, something that surprised me. Dave made everyone feel comfortable. Dave and Peggy dedicated themselves to outreach, creating relationships with funeral home directors to get TCF information to bereaved families. Our Nashville TCF chapter is forever indebted to Dave and Peggy for teaching us how to love on hurting families.

Robin Hunt

Anyone who has ever attended or will attend a TCF Nashville monthly meeting owes gratitude and appreciation to David and Peggy Gibson. In 1987 they co-founded the Nashville chapter. They were devoted to all who attended and to the chapter. On April 13, 2025, David and Peggy were in attendance for our monthly meeting. David was the speaker for our program. It's interesting that David would pass away on Sunday, April 12, 2026, the day of our monthly meeting. We miss you, David. Rest in peace,

Ron Henson

David and Peggy were Chapter Leaders of TCF Nashville when we attended our first meeting in 1989 after the loss of our daughter, Emily. David had a special quality of leading the meeting with invaluable information and a sincere, quiet delivery that conveyed his heartfelt compassion. It drew the newly bereaved to him and helped lead so many through their darkest days. We miss you, David. With love and prayers for Peggy and the family.

Mike and Paula Childers

GIFTS OF LOVE AND REMEMBRANCE

We are deeply grateful for the voluntary gifts of love that make it possible for The Compassionate Friends to offer comfort to those families who do not know today that they will need us tomorrow.

*John and Mignon Friedmann,
Dr. John Friedmann Jr.
in Loving Memory
of their daughter and sister,
Jennifer Lee Friedmann
(Jena)*

*Eldon and Margi Scott
in Loving Memory
of their son,
Tony Bruce Scott*

*The following individuals have made donations
in Loving Memory of David Gibson:*

*Mike & Melanie Bell
Lamar & Joy Bradley
Kris Foust
Harold Gilliland
Lawrence Hudson
Eldon & Margi Scott*

*Each month, Price Printing, 615.360.3339, donates the printing of this newsletter as a gift to the families of TCF.
Deanna Brown and her family assemble, label, sort, and mail the newsletter in loving memory of
her son, Marcus Dean Brown. We appreciate so much these people and their generosity to all of us.*

Just For Today

Just for today I will try to live through the next 24 hours and not expect to get over my child's death, but instead learn to live with it just one day at a time.

Just for today I will remember my child's life, not his death, and bask in the comfort of all those treasured days and moments we shared.

Just for today I will forgive all the family and friends who didn't help or comfort me the way I needed them to. They truly did not know how.

Just for today I will smile no matter how much I hurt on the inside, for maybe if I smile a little, my heart will soften and I will begin to heal.

Just for today I will reach out to comfort a relative or friend of my child, for they are hurting too, and perhaps we can comfort each other.

Just for today I will free myself from my self-inflicted burden of guilt, for deep in my heart I know if there was anything in this world I could have done to save my child from death, I would have done it.

Just for today I will honor my child's memory by doing something with another child because I know that would have made my own child proud.

Just for today I will offer my hand in friendship to another bereaved parent, for I do know how they feel.

Just for today when my heart feels like breaking, I will stop and remember that grief is the price we pay for loving and the only reason I hurt is because I had the privilege of loving so much.

Just for today I will not compare myself with others. I am fortunate to be who I am and to have had my child for as long as I did.

Just for today I will allow myself to be happy, for I know that I am not deserting him by living on.

Just for today I will accept that I did not die when my child did. My life did go on and I am the only one who can make that life worthwhile once more.

Vicki Tushingham

Dads Need Hugs, Too

When a child dies, everyone has such compassion for the mother. Months after the death, people still ask how she is doing. There is always a shoulder available for her to lean on to release some of her pain.

Let's not forget the father. The child was a part of him, too. That child was his son, to play ball with, coach in sports, watch sports with, or collect baseball cards. Or she was his daughter, his princess, the most beautiful girl that ever lived. Daddy's perfect angel.

Fathers hurt deeper than mothers sometimes because there is no release for their pain, no one there to listen to them say, "I feel terrible. I miss my child so much." Or "Today reminds me of when" The longer fathers keep silent, the more hurt they have to keep inside, pushing it deeper and deeper to make room for more.

The next time you see a father that has lost a child, don't forget to ask how he is today and give him a hug or just put your hand on his shoulder to let him know you see his pain. Dads need hugs, too.

Kathy Hunsicker
TCF Lehigh Valley, PA

Husband

*I saw the grief
behind your earnest eyes.
(You would give anything
to have your child again.)*

*I felt the helplessness
behind your silent anguish.
(You would give anything
to take this hurt away.)*

*I know you learned
to keep your tears in hiding.
And you were taught
few words to speak for solace,
not yours, not mine.*

*I saw the grief
behind your earnest eyes.
And I will know
to understand and trust you,
loving father.*



Sascha

A Father on Father's Day

Fatherhood is a wonderful and privileged word. I am a father, a bereaved father, who lost a son. Although it will be eight years in August of this year, I still miss him every day. Maybe I should miss him a little more on Father's Day, because someone, somewhere once decreed that Father's Day be a special day to honor your father. So, according to that mandate one might suppose that I should because I may have subconsciously (or forcibly?) calibrated the threshold of that pain, of that missing, so it is constantly within me every day of the year, but at a lower level than in the beginning, and not as devastating. In life, and with minor fluctuations, it is there. Yes, I wish my son were here on Father's Day, but so do I wish he were here every day.

However, I will celebrate Father's Day this year, because thank God, I have a remaining son whom I cherish. For you bereaved fathers who have lost your only child, more than one of your children, or all your children, there are no words that can adequately express my sorrow for the depths of your grief and anguish. There is no way that I can truly feel the pain that you feel, but as someone wisely and compassionately said to me in my despair, "I wish I could take your pain away from you."

Perhaps some of us might agree that Father's Day is a cruel day for bereaved fathers, just as Mother's Day is a cruel day for bereaved mothers. If that be so, I hope we can elicit some sweet memories of our beloved children from kinder days to treasure, to help alleviate the pain, and to enable us to pass the day with some degree of serenity.

May I repeat that which was said to me, which was of consolation to me when I desperately needed it: "I WISH I COULD TAKE YOUR PAIN AWAY FROM YOU." Bereaved fathers, may you find peace, as much as is possible, on Father's Day and on every day of the year. I hope next Father's Day will be better.

Dave Ziv
TCF, Bucks Mont Chapter, Warrington PA

Getting to Know Our Children

We are starting a new tradition for our newsletter: a Getting to Know Our Children section. Each month, you are invited to submit a small article telling a memory of your child, sibling or grandchild that will help us get to know them better through sharing an anecdote that shows their personality, talents, or gifts, etc. Please email your articles by the first of each month for publication in the next month's edition (i.e. submit by the first of April to be included in the May issue.) to the editor, Melanie Bell at melaniebell2210@gmail.com and put 'Getting to Know Our Children' in the subject line.

Enjoy getting to know Stevie in his mother's article below:

Stephen Joseph Fay 6-6-92 to 6-5-12

I'm entering my 14th death day birthday season again. It is a reminder that my beautiful boy was killed the day before his birthday. How do I mourn the death of my 19-year-old on one day, only to not celebrate his 20th the very next? It confuses my heart. And once again it has me stuck in my thoughts with blame.

Stevie-Joe was a jokester. Never a day went by where I did not laugh. He always wanted to make sad people happy and made it a point to make friends and family laugh. He was not always that way.

When he was maybe 6 or 7, Stevie was so cheap. There's no other way to describe him. Cheap fits him best. My kids loved Chuckie Cheese. We didn't go often, just birthdays whether it was theirs or others. Every child was given a set number of tokens. The kids would run off and play games, win prizes and be gone for a short time, then come back asking for money to buy more tokens. We would oblige the first ask. Then of course the birthday cake would come out, presents exchanged and opened, and party bags distributed. Then we would leave and drive home.

The kids would wash up, get into their pajamas, and tell us about the wonderful adventures they had. They'd show us their winnings and party bag surprises. But the biggest surprise we found was Stevie came home with not only his tokens, but many other kids' tokens too. He was too cheap to use his "money" as he called it, yet he came home with multiple prizes from playing games with the other kids' tokens. This happened a couple of times at different visits too. Our son was a shyster. We scolded him. We told him he cannot do that again or we will never take him back to Chuckie Cheese. Of course he didn't listen. So, we never took him again.

Fast forward to today, I was going through some things of his and I found a couple of Chuckie Cheese tokens. Instead of being mad, I smiled and said, Stevie, I love you, I miss you, Chuckie Cheese tokens and all.

Once again Stevie-Joe found a way to make me laugh... again.

Pennie Fay
TCF, Nashville, TN

Love Does not End with Death

The death of someone you love is not a wound that heals. It is a landscape you learn to live in. At first everything feels unfamiliar. You reach for them in moments where they used to be. In a voice, a habit, a memory. And the absence hurts deeply. You feel lost, not because love is gone, but because love has nowhere to go in the same way anymore. Grief is love that has changed its shape. With time, the pain does not disappear, but it softens. You begin to carry their presence differently, not beside you but within you. You learn to walk this landscape slowly. Some days are quiet; some days are heavy. And both are okay. Love does not end with death. It becomes memory, gratitude, and silent companionship. Be gentle with yourself. Healing is not forgetting, it is learning how to live while remembering.

Shen Yu

No one ever told me that grief felt so like fear.

C.S. Lewis
A Grief Observed

The Compassionate Friends

P.O. BOX 8283
Hermitage, TN
37076

Return Service
Requested



June 2026

Nonprofit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Nashville, TN
Permit No. 593



49TH TCF NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Our conference is a place for bereaved families to find community and hope, while learning and sharing with others. Lifelong friendships are often made at the conference through meeting others who truly understand the painful loss of a child, sibling, or grandchild. This eagerly anticipated event will take place in Baltimore, Maryland, during the weekend of July 2-5, 2026.

For more information and to register, go to www.compassionatefriends.org