

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS
 Post Office Box 583 Taylors, South Carolina 29687
 (864) 288-8342
www.tcfogreenville.org

February, 2005



The following "Love Gifts" were received in memory of special loved ones at our Dec. 9th Candlelight Service, but were inadvertently left out of last months Newsletter. Please accept our apology!

- **Schuyler Doyle Raiford** ~ by her grandparents, Norm and Alice Raiford
- **Stephanie Penland** ~ by her mother, Elle Capps
- **Robert and Buck Capps** ~ by Theresa Capps
- **EJ Gonzalez** ~ by his family, Denise, Willie and Selina Gonzalez
- **Cindy Esterl** ~ by her mother, Rhoda Crosby
- **Rachel Marie Schmidt** ~ by relatives, Sara and Harvey Berman
- **Kelly Anne Bennett** ~ by her parents, John and Pat Bennett

We also acknowledge this months "Love Gifts" with sincere gratitude and deep appreciation in Memory of:



- **Mikey Hummel** ~ by his parents, Dewy and Phyllis Hummel
- **Jennifer Leigh Smith** ~ by her parents, Michael and Marianna Smith
- **Rachel Marie Schmidt** ~ by her Aunt and Uncle, Hilari and Paul Pugliese
- **Charlie Guthrie** ~ by his parents, Randy and Lisa Guthrie
- **Daniel Upton** ~ by his parents, Richard and Donna Upton
- **Lucia Edwards White** ~ by her parents, Roger and Linda White
- **Pamela Michelle Askew** ~ by her parents, Eddie and Wanda Askew



Driving

You know how it is when you are driving; suddenly you realize you've driven several miles, but you don't remember getting there? With grief the miles are years. Driving is habit. The destination changes; you are to turn left, but you still turn right. When the child in the store calls, "Mom!" I turn the way I always did. We detour to avoid obstacles. I drive blocks out of my way to bypass his playground. If you are old enough, you will see a car like one you owned when you were young, and you will travel back through time. Yesterday, I saw my child in the passenger seat of a small car approaching a red light. I changed lanes to get a better look. His head was the same, his blue eyes familiar. He was close, but his mother drove him away. I should have driven forward, but I couldn't. Wiping my eyes, I could see in my rear-view mirror the driver behind me honking his horn, screaming, "What's the matter with you?" The question I was asking myself.

*Shelly Wagner,
The Andrew Poems, 1994*

Adjusted

"It's been several years since your son died," they say, "Surely, you must have adjusted by now."

Yes, I am adjusted
 ~ Adjusted to feeling pain and sadness and grief and guilt and loss.
 ~ Adjusted to hurting and unexpected tears.
 ~ Adjusted to seeing people made uncomfortable upon hearing me say "My son died."
 ~ Adjusted to losing my best friend because I'm not always "up."
 ~ Adjusted to people acting as if grief is contagious and TCF meeting are morbid. Adjusted? Oh, yes, to many things.
 ~ Knowing I won't hear his voice, but still listening for it.
 ~ Knowing I won't see him drive his Toronado, but staring at every one I see.
 ~ Adjusted to feeling empty on his birthday and wishing for just one more time with him.
 ~Adjusted: As life goes on – to realizing I cannot expect everyone I meet to wear a bandage – just because I am still bleeding.

~by Shirley Blakely Curle

February's Meeting

The Greenville Chapter of *The Compassionate Friends* will hold its monthly meeting on Thursday, February 10, 2005 from 7:30 to 8:30 pm at Pelham Rd. Baptist Church, 1108 Pelham Rd., Greenville.

Nona Walser will lead this month's meeting. The topic will be validating our many feelings - discussing various statements taken from the book "Tear Soup" by Pat Schwiebert & Chuck DeKlyen.

Remembering

Friends may think we have forgotten
 When at times they see us smile.
 Little do they know the heartache
 That our smile hides all the while.

Beautiful memories are wonderful
 They last till the longest day.
 They never wear out, they never
 get lost and can never be given away.

To some you may be forgotten,
 To others a part of the past.
 But to those who loved and lost you,
 Your memory will always last.

Author unknown

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS
Post Office Box 583 Taylors, South Carolina 29687
(864) 288-8342
www.tcfogreenvillesc.org

**The February newsletter is lovingly
dedicated to the memory of all our
Children . . . gone too soon.**

Our Children Remembered:

Pamela Askew – 2/18/82 ~ 1/21/00
Stacey Bannister – 7/5/67 ~ 2/15/03
Jon Carpenter – 1/31/76 ~ 2/9/02
Carey Corder – 3/15/59 ~ 2/27/03
Candy Cota – 6/4/87 ~ 2/24/04
James Cox – 2/15/77 ~ 11/21/92
Lisa Etherington – 10/9/80 ~ 2/11/00
Alex Haigler – 10/1/99 ~ 2/6/04
Mikey Hummel – 2/24/52 ~ 5/1/56
Greg Lackey – 2/8/76 ~ 12/4/00
Tim Malone – 9/18/60 ~ 2/16/04
Melissa Rowland – 7/11/81 ~ 2/10/99
Jantzen Satterfield – 2/8/88 ~ 10/17/97
Austin Shealy – 2/1/93 ~ 4/10/02
Billy Smith – 2/26/61 ~ 2/27/83
Ashley Staudinger – 2/12/82 ~ 9/13/96
Roger Strange – 2/6/61 ~ 3/13/88
Daniel Upton – 2/13/86 ~ 4/8/03
Michael VanGieson – 8/16/80 ~ 2/9/04
Arlene Walters – 2/20/82 ~ 5/7/99
Tracy Whaley – 1/9/63 ~ 2/27/70
Eric White – 8/11/57 ~ 2/5/97

*The following was written by Linda White on
the 10 year anniversary of the death of her
daughter, Lucia*

“It has been 10 years since Lucia’s death
and I am amazed at how my life has
changed. I also have changed and learned
these truths about myself.”

1. I am a stronger person than I every
realized... In the past I would say that I
didn’t want to live without my

precious daughter. I loved her more than
life itself; she was my heart and soul. But
now, here I am, 10 years later, alive and
kicking.

2. Time has no relevance to me... 10 days
become one day, years pass and it seems
like yesterday. I feel as if I am caught in a
time warp, floating effortlessly between
days, months, and years. Time is now
distinguished as before Lucia died and
after Lucia died.

3. My faith is stronger, more secure...
None of my questions have been
answered and I still do not understand
why she died. However, the realization
that I do not need answers to be able to
accept her death now brings me peace.

4. People are still uncomfortable when I
speak her name... Even friends and
people in the community who know me
and my situation look uncomfortable
when I say “Lucia.” They do not want to
be reminded of a painful event and
secretly wish that I would never speak of
her because death remains a difficult word
to deal with.

5. I now belong to an exclusive group
“parents who have buried a child”... I can
easily spot other members by the look of
sadness deep in their eyes... it cannot be
disguised.

6. Grief never ends... This journey has no
conclusion. I appreciate the 5 stages of
grief espoused by psychologists, but
hasten to add that even though you never
get over losing a child, you do learn to
live in a new
way and carve out a different way of life
for yourself.

7. Joy is not real joy, sorrow not real
sorrow... Because you put up a protective
wall to avoid intense

emotions, you do not let yourself really
feel things anymore. This is a defense
mechanism to keep you from falling into
that pit that once swallowed you.

8. I have been held up and strengthened
by my community ...
People have been messengers of hope by
their encouragement, understanding, and
kindness. I am convinced that God uses
people as vessels of love and He has
revealed Himself to me in countless ways
through the actions of others.

9. Grief is hard work... Each year around
the anniversary, the birthday and the
holidays, I move into the survival mode. I
begin to prepare myself mentally and
emotionally to relive the reality of her
death. I am forgetful, lose things, break
things, cry for no apparent reason, and
experience anxiety – my heart races and
my mouth is dry. Grief is not just an
intense emotion, it remains a physical
reaction.

10. Finally, gratitude is the key... I can
honestly say that I am thankful that I was
able to experience the love of a precious
daughter. My life is richer because of her
life AND death. My mission in life now is
to honor her legacy by reaching out to
others in need, working to make my
community a better place, and searching
for the good in every person and situation
I encounter.



Grief never ends, but it changes.
It’s a passage, not a place to stay.
The sense of loss must give way if we’re to value the
life that was lived