

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS
Post Office Box 583 Taylors, South Carolina 29687
www.tcfogreenvillesc.org

May, 2004



May's Meeting

The Greenville Chapter of *The Compassionate Friends* will hold its monthly meeting on Thursday, May 13, 2004 from 7:30 to 9:00 pm at Pelham Rd. Baptist Church, 1108 Pelham Rd., Greenville. This month's meeting will feature a special Balloon Release along with a slide show presentation of "Our Children Remembered". Balloons will be provided. After the release we will have a sharing time. Also we will have a place to display any items that you would like to share with the group showing ways you honor your child's memory.

If you would like to have your child's picture(s) included in the slide show, please submit them to me either by e-mail at: Janisgow@msn.com, or mail to: Janis Gow, 520 Dean Rd., Greer, SC 29651. I will need to receive the photos no later than May 10th. Limit up to 6 photos. All photos will be returned. Please include written consent giving us permission to use them.

After I've Gone

After I've gone I will still be with you.
You will see me in all the sunrises,
Saying, "Good Morning" to you.

You will hear me when the birds sing,
Singing, "Hello" to you,
And cheering you through the day.

You will feel me during the
cold winter months,
When the snow falls quietly,
I will be saying, "Isn't it beautiful?"

I will be with you during Autumn,
As the leaves change colors and fall,
I will be with you watching silently.

I will be with you when the moon is full,
I will place the stars for you,
So you can reach up and touch them.

When a soft breeze blows across you,
It will be me touching you,
And kissing away your tears.

As the rain falls and lightning flashes,
It will be me playing a song for you,
A song of courage and of strength.

And you will see me in the sunsets,
Saying "Goodnight my love."
After I've gone, I will still be with you.

Author Unknown

Missing and Valuing on Mother's Day

Mother's Day is a special day, and special days are hard after the death of a child. It is a normal and natural thing for either parent for the first few years after the death to zero in on who is missing, rather than who is left – and I was no different. Fortunately for me, not long after the Atlanta Chapter formed, a local psychiatrist, Dr. Victor Gonzales, spoke one evening shortly before Mother's Day. He told of his parents' loss of their first two children. His story, of how his life had been influenced and molded by his mother's reaction, touched me. He spoke of how he and his siblings who came later, were forever denied his mother's happiness and joy. She was unable to value what she had left as much as what she had lost. Dr. Gonzales said he spent a great deal of his childhood trying to make his mother happy, always failing and always feeling there must be something lacking in him that caused him to fail. The picture in my mind of him and his siblings always trying and always failing, through no fault of their own, made a great impact on me. I determined from

that day forward that my daughter would not have to lament later in life that she had been denied my happiness and joy because her brother died.

On Mother's Day now, I make room for both missing, and valuing, for they are not, I have discovered, mutually exclusive. Now when I go to the cemetery with my rosebud on my day, my daughter has not part in my needs while I am there. When I come home, my son doesn't interfere with my acceptance and appreciation of my daughter's expression of love. She give me a gift on my day, and I give her one in return. It's probably the best gift I could possibly give her – my happiness and joy for life. She is as important as what I have lost and I know her worth.

If you are fortunate enough to have surviving children, I hope you, too are able to value as well as miss. There's room for both, you know.

Mary Cleckley, TCF – Atlanta, GA

Mother's Day

Since Mother's Day is approaching there is a lot of talk about, MOTHER'S Day. This is a hard time for bereaved parents. So many ask the question if your only child died, are you still a mother? YES! You are a mother and a very special one. You will always be the mother of your child. You may no longer enjoy their laughter or the dirty finger prints on the walls, but that mother's love is still there and will always be deep in your heart and soul. Because we loved our children the pain we have now is the price we pay. As bereaved parents we can share our children's love with others. The love our children gave us will live in our hearts forever. So, yes indeed you are a mother.

Linda Delk - TCF Tampa

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**OUR CHILDREN LOVED, MISSED,
 AND REMEMBERED**

“As long as we live, they too shall
 live...for they are a part of us as we
 remember them”

Our Children Remembered:

- Melissa Atkinson – 8/30/75 ~ 5/6/03
- Steve Bell – 3/30/55 ~ 5/6/78
- Charlie Bellinger – 1/21/79 ~ 5/22/93
- Jeremy Davis – 12/30/82 ~ 5/14/03
- Michael Dorsey – 9/22/81 ~ 5/6/03
- Randall Eller – 5/4/84 ~ 6/19/02
- Timothy Gilbert – 5/30/64 ~ 9/5/87
- James Howard II – 5/15/70 ~ 12/19/97
- Victor Lawson – 5/13/91 ~ 7/21/02
- Patrick Lay – 5/31/85 ~ 11/02/00
- Josh Nichols – 11/15/78 ~ 5/3/01
- Susan Oglesby – 3/31/76 ~ 5/31/91
- Jeremy Owens – 5/15/75 ~ 11/12/98
- Kim Patterson – 9/17/57 ~ 5/10/99
- Amy Beth Pieszchala – 9/2/76~5/22/01
- Schuyler Raiford – 6/15/97 ~ 5/8/99
- Matthew Roper – 10/7/86 ~ 5/21/02
- Tommy Runion – 5/19/80 ~ 1/17/99
- Travis Smith – 5/6/72 ~ 3/5/93
- Clayton Spencer – 5/24/90 ~ 6/13/02
- Mickey Tinsley – 5/2/48 ~ 11/8/78
- Cam Turner – 5/16/85 ~ 10/4/02
- Arlene Waters – 2/20/82 ~ 5/7/99
- Lucia White – 5/4/79 ~ 1/29/95

We acknowledge the following love gift
 with deep appreciation in Memory of:

- **Schuyler Raiford** ~ by Norm and
 Alice Raiford

A Tribute To My Child

When a new morning awakes with the
 rising sun, or the evening settles when day
 is done. When I’m doing the things that
 take up my day, working, talking, with
 family at play. Please treat me with care,
 have a soft heart, since mine is broken;
 I’ve lost a precious part.

When I’m doing the things that life
 requires, I’ll do more for others, and give
 with a smile. It’s important to me, for
 myself, for my part, to accomplish my
 deeds with good will and kind heart. I’ll
 do things better, do more, go the extra
 mile, always living my life as a tribute to
 my child.

My child, loved so dearly on earth, is
 missed, but always alive in my heart, the
 person he was continues through me I’m
 his Mom; Now I’m his legacy.
 “Love one another”

Nona Walser - TCF-Greenville, SC



Little Silver Spoon

Recently I came across a baby spoon,
 engraved “Kirby Lee Walser”. I held it
 in my palm, running my fingers over the
 engraving. Fondly remembering the
 hungry little boy, taking in every bite he
 was offered. Always smiling while
 eating, as squishy food drooled down his
 chin. My heart ached with the memory,
 even as I smiled.

I now use this little silver spoon as my
 special sugar spoon. As I slowly stir
 coffee in the morning, I remember my
 child named Kirby Lee Walser. I breathe
 in the warm aroma of the first cup of
 coffee, smile, and treasure my memories.

Nona Walser - TCF-Greenville, SC



A Butterfly

Some say a butterfly is a member of the
 insect world...I say that a butterfly's story
 has yet been untold... For I believe a little
 butterfly is a lovely gift from Heaven
 above...A beautiful symbol of our
 children's spirit coming to earth,
 reminding us of their never ending love.

~Frances Conner Strasburg, VA

Greenville TCF Steering Committee Members:

- Chapter Leader.....Julia Muirhead
- Newsletter Editor.....Janis Gow
- Program/Facilitator Coordinator.....Norm Raiford
- Treasurer.....Julia Muirhead
- Webmaster.....Johnny Williams
- Follow-up Coordinator.....Jill Schmidt
- Hospitality Coordinator.....Debbie Etherington

Ad hoc members: Nona Walser, Dick and Margaret
 Renner, Alice Raiford and Judy Lackey.

Contact us at: <http://www.tcfogreenvillesc.org/>