

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

Post Office Box 25573 Greenville, South Carolina 29616

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Monthly Meeting

December 13, 2007

Always the second Thursday of the month

Topic:

Slide Show Presentation

By Janis Gow

Meeting Time & Location

7:30 P.M.

Pelham Rd. Baptist Church,
Family Life Center
1108 Pelham Rd., Greenville, SC

Mark Your Calendars Dec. 13th

Our December 13th Chapter Meeting will include a **Slide Show Presentation** honoring our children. We've had these in the past during different times of the year and it's always been a beautiful and moving experience for all who attend. If your child's picture has already been included in our presentation, there is no need to re-submit, however if you are new to Compassionate Friends and would like to have your child's picture included in the slide show, please submit them by e-mail to:

Janisgow@msn.com. Please put "TCF Pictures" in the subject line. You can also mail to: Janis Gow, 520 Dean Rd., Greer, SC 29651. All pictures must be received no later than **Nov 30th** in order to be included.

There is love in our pain,
Memories in our grief,
And hope in our sharing.

Darcie Sims

My hope for all bereaved families,
especially those still grieving those
first holiday seasons; that our

memories of our children's love will
bring light into the darkness of our
souls.

Lois Coptland, TCP Arlington, VA

How Many Stockings Shall I Hang?

What a torment! Funny how you
worry what your friends will think. For
days I worried..and finally hung three
stockings on the fireplace and laid one
gently on the mantle.

But that was last year. This year
I shall hang all four above the fireplace.
For this year, the confusion of my mind
has found new answers with conviction.
Whether my oldest daughter live in
Tucson, or my youngest son is dead -
these are my children - our family - and
as long as we hang the Christmas
stockings, we shall hang them all - with
love.

*Shirley Melin
TCF Hinsdale, IL*

The Compassionate Friends Worldwide Candle Lighting

Held annually the second Sunday in
December, this year December 9, The
Compassionate Friends Worldwide
Candle Lighting unites family and friends
around the globe in lighting candles for
one hour to honor and remember children
who have died at any age from any cause.
As candles are lit at 7 p.m. local time,
hundreds of thousands of persons
commemorate and honor children in a
way that transcends all ethnic, cultural,
religious, and political boundaries. The
Worldwide Candle Lighting is a gift from
The Compassionate Friends to the
bereavement community allowing us all
to join together in unity to remember and
honor the memories of all children so they
may never be forgotten. Believed to be
the largest mass candle lighting on the

globe, the Worldwide Candle Lighting
creates a virtual 24-hour wave of light as
it moves from time zone to time zone.
Hundreds of formal candle lighting events
are held and thousands of informal candle
lightings are conducted in homes as
families gather in quiet remembrance of
special children to always be
remembered.

This is the 11th World Wide Candle Lighting



**...that their
light may
always shine.**

Light a candle for all children who have died.

**Sunday, December 9, 2007
7 PM Around the Globe**

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS WORLDWIDE CANDLE LIGHTING

*We do this . . . that their
light may always shine!*

We should not try to cover up our
sadness in front of people, for we
have a lesson to teach them. But the
holidays have a lesson for us too.
Yes, there is a darkness. But there is
hope. There is birth. There is light.

In a society that works so hard to
deny death, perhaps only bereaved
parents and a few others can truly
understand the depths of these
holidays.

*- Dennis Klass
TCF St. Louis, MO*

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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

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

Our Children Remembered:

Tina Collins ~ 4/10/64~12/16/01
Clifford Gammons IV ~ 02/04/68 ~ 12/21/04
Kyle German ~ 11/21/84 ~ 12/14/06
Karen Hayden ~ 10/17/69 ~ 12/22/99
James L. Howard II ~ 05/15/70 ~ 12/19/97
Christopher A. Howard ~ 06/15/73 ~ 12/19/97
Jennifer Hower ~ 06/23/75 ~ 12/27/04
Deborah Jolley ~ 12/27/61 ~ 09/24/99
Bobby Jones ~ 10/16/86 ~ 12/22/03
Kelly Kimbrell ~ 12/24/89 ~ 10/17/07
Corry King ~ 12/14/83 ~ 01/02/94
Allison Leslie ~ 11/24/80 ~ 12/18/98
Elijah "Eli" James Labbe ~ 12/31/85 ~ 04/14/02
Greg Lackey ~ 02/08/76 ~ 12/04/00
Brian T. Martin ~ 12/13/78 ~ 06/26/01
Mindy Massey ~ 12/14/53 ~ 05/30/80
Sam McCall Jr. ~ 12/16/71 ~ 06/23/05
Christopher Parker ~ 12/29/66 ~ 01/25/04
Randall Rainey ~ 06/29/59 ~ 12/07/03
Jason Smith ~ 12/16/89 ~ 05/25/06
Scott Taylor ~ 12/20/67 ~ 05/04/07
Travis ~ 12/8/68 ~ 02/28/79
John Turner II ~ 12/19/76 ~ 09/05/02
Amy Wilkinson ~ 12/3/67 ~ 11/05/00
Terri Thomas ~ 10/22/79 ~ 11/22/04
Lynn C. Watson ~ 9/8/71 ~ 9/9/95
Amy Wilkinson ~ 12/3/67 ~ 11/5/00
Amanda Williams ~ 12/04/79 ~ 07/25/99
Chad Withered ~ 04/13/79 ~ 12/30/94

Christmas Thoughts

Beyond the Christmas Trees, the angels and stars and beloved carols Beyond the presents, the shopping, the baking and cooking Beyond all of these sights and sounds of Christmas Beyond all of these there is hope.

Hope for the bereaved parent, even at Christmas, one of the most, if not the most painful times of the year, there is an essence of hope. Hope It is hope that sustains us through the days of grief and anger and frustration and loneliness.

The hope is that someday the pain of the deaths of our children will be eased. The hope is that someday our smiles will be real. The hope is that once again we will laugh and love and also cry completely without fear and hollowness. It is the hope that someday we can remember our children with a tenderness merely tinged with sorrow and not overwhelmed with it.

So it is that for each of you, I would hope: peace, love, sympathy, understanding, sharing, and listening. In the sharing of our grief with one another, and in the emotional support we give to one another, we receive and understand all f these gifts.

*Carole Ragland
TCF, Houston/West TX*

Coming Unwrapped

We wrap ourselves for the holidays much like the presents we give. The brightly colored paper hides what's within. When people look at us they only see the outside.

We promise ourselves we will not come unwrapped. We'll make it through the family celebrations, the church services, and the big occasions. The paper and the ribbon will remain intact.

But, it is the small thing that manages to untie the bow. The little insignificant moment, the Christmas parade, the search for the tree, the discovered ornament, the special carol, the memory, and the paper gets wrenched off. The true Christmas presence shows itself.

The inevitable tide of feelings burst out of the artificially decorated façade. The emotions pour out. The intense anger wells up. The tears are shed and the holidays come. These are as sure as the tides of the sea and the march of time.

Only a compassionate friend, a bereaved parent, knows of what I speak. Yet the answer isn't in fighting or in denying these feelings. We have paid the price. We have the right to grieve. The resolution of our grief is in grieving.

Our hope for all who read this letter is that you will make it through the holidays. We cannot make the pain go away. But know there are others who suffer with you. We have made it and together will continue on.

*Hank Hewett
TCF, Scranton, PA*