



# The Compassionate Friends

## Marin County Chapter

### Supporting Family After a Child Dies



SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER 2016 ISSUE

Vol 37, No. 5

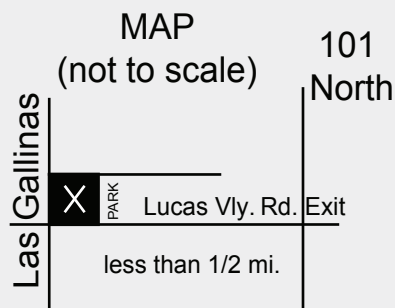
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This issue of the TCF Marin Newsletter is sponsored by love gifts from our members.

Please call the TCF Hotline (415-457-3123) if you have any questions.

**TCF Marin Email:**  
tcfmarin@gmail.com

**TCF Marin Monthly Meetings:**  
Group meetings will be held on the third Monday of the month from 7:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at the Lucas Valley Community Church conference room  
2000 Las Gallinas Avenue  
(at Lucas Valley Road)  
San Rafael, CA  
First time attendees are encouraged to arrive at 7:00 for orientation. All attendees arriving before 7:00 p.m. are asked to sign in and be seated in the lobby until the meeting room is ready. The TCF Newsletter and informational pamphlets will be displayed for attendees to browse and take as desired.



**Meeting Calendar:**  
Monday, September 19, 2016  
Monday, October 17, 2016  
Monday, November 21, 2016

## Being Public Takes Its Toll

When one is pretending, the entire body revolts.

Anais Nin

As we attempt to return to our jobs or our social life, or just to leave the house to do errands, we may feel that we must hold our heads up and keep acting brave. So we talk about things that don't interest us instead of talking about what plagues our heart and mind. We reluctantly agree to do things in which we do not have the slightest bit of interest.

All of this takes a tremendous amount of energy. But it does something else, too. Our bodies are under a great deal of stress as we work through our child's death. Trying to create and maintain an artificial front contributes to that stress. And stress, of course, manifests itself in many ways throughout the body - in headaches, rashes, insomnia, digestive disturbances, the inability to concentrate, and the impulse to fidget or be on the move. We may also have more colds and flues as well as unexplained pains in various parts of our bodies.

One of the kindest things we can do for ourselves is to behave, as much as is possible and reasonable, in accordance with our deepest needs and desires. We can greatly reduce the amount of time and effort we put into doing what only seems socially required.

I will not push myself into false situations or require myself to perform in a way that differs significantly from my truest self. I will take care of myself by not forcing certain actions or responses, regardless of the pressure put on me to do so. My self, my body comes first, and I need to remember that my body will revolt against pretending.

Carol Staudacher  
From A Time to Grieve

**Additional Support Sites**

opentohope.com  
bereavedparents.com  
bereavedparentsusa.org  
survivorsof suicide.com  
griefspeaks.com

**Other Grief Counseling Resources**

Hospice by the Bay offers individual and group grief counseling.  
Marin and SF (415) 526-5699  
Sonoma (707) 931-7299  
Email: griefsupport@hbtb.org  
Website: www.hospicebythebay.org

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention  
www.afsp.org  
(415) 751-0521

**TCF Sonoma County Chapter**

tcf.sonomacounty@gmail.com  
(707) 490-8640

**TCF RESOURCES:**

**TCF Marin County, CA Chapter**

P.O. Box 150935  
San Rafael, CA 94915  
www.tcfmarin.org

**TCF Information Line**

Eileen Rusky (415) 457-3123

**Northern CA Regional**

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Toll Free: (877) 969-0010  
Fax: (630) 990-0246  
Email: nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org

**TCF National Website:**

www.compassionatefriends.org  
(offers supportive services and chat rooms)

Dear Friends,

We are now taking names for the 6th and final "names" plaque to go on (will hold 70 names) The Compassionate Friends of Marin, Children's Memorial boulder. We estimate that the cost for this plaque and the boulder will be \$8,000.

We would appreciate a donation of \$115.00 per name, but no name will be turned down because of lack of funds. If you are able to do more to help others; please do! Any amount is appreciated.

If you decide to have your child/sibling included in the memorial, please send the following form with your donation to:

TCF-Marin  
c/o Bob Portnoy  
50 Indian Rock Ct.  
San Anselmo, CA 94960

Warm regards,  
The Compassionate Friends of Marin Children's Memorial Committee

Please Print Clearly:

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please include the following child in the TCF Marin Children's Memorial:

Child's Name (as you want it to appear on the plaque)

\_\_\_\_\_

Including birth and death dates on the plaque is optional. Please specify your preference below:

Please include \_\_\_ Do not include \_\_\_ the following information:

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Death \_\_\_\_\_

I understand that The Compassionate Friends of Marin and the Marin County Open Space District cannot guarantee against vandalism of the site and I do not hold them responsible for its prevention.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

# Carol's Corner

by Carol Kearns,

author of "Sugar Cookies and a Nightmare"



## Columns for The Compassionate Friends

I have found great solace volunteering for The Compassionate Friends, a hard-working group that supports families seeking "the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child" ([www.compassionate-friends.org](http://www.compassionate-friends.org)). My columns discuss topics of continuing concern in the Marin County CA newsletter. - Carol

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### The Dance of Life and Death

I just became a grandmother for the first time. Early Saturday morning our son called to say his wife was in the hospital with labor pains that were five minutes apart. After calling the airlines, my husband and I darted for the airport to catch the next flight to San Diego. While joyfully awaiting our flight we received a message that one of our dear friends was nearing death after a long battle with ovarian cancer. We were completely unprepared for the immediate flood of contrasting feelings: Devastation over hearing we would never see our friend again collided head on with the ecstasy we had felt only moments before.

The mysterious weaving of life and death...a tapestry none of us can fully understand. Our friend had battled cancer with a dignity and strength we all admired. She had also just become a new grandmother with a little grandson that made her world complete whenever she held him. She had set a goal to be at her daughter's wedding this summer. She was experiencing life's great joys when her life ended.

I thought about Isabel Allende's words in her beautiful book, "Paula", as she prepared her daughter's body after death, gently washing and anointing her while at the same time welcoming her new granddaughter into the world. When I first read her book, I was fascinated by her insight into these seemingly contrasting situations. She didn't see it that way. "We celebrated the gifts [Paula] had given us in life, and all of us said goodbye and prayed in our own way. As the hours went by, something solemn and sacred filled the room, just as on the occasion of Andrea's (the granddaughter's) birth. The two moments are much alike: birth and death are made of the same fabric. The air became more and more still; we moved slowly, in order not to disturb our hearts' response. We were filled with Paula's spirit, as if we were all one being and there was no separation among us: life and death were joined. For a few hours, we experienced that reality the soul knows, absent time or space."

Many of us were in a joyful time of life before our own child died. A new promotion, a son accepted into the college of his choice, a fun family vacation, new home or recent graduation - events like these were in full swing, and then our child was taken from us. I was in the midst of an exhilarating children's weekend that had been planned for two months with my friends and their children when my daughter Kristen was swept out to sea. The intensity of our joy only moments before was washed away by an intense sorrow. How could that happen?

As I look into my newborn grandson's eyes I can't help but wonder what life will ask of him. I know he will experience both pain and happiness, for that is what life is about. I know that at times, these emotions may also collide for him as they did for us. We can not always protect him. I only hope that with our love we can give him the courage and confidence not to fear but instead to grow from these holy mysteries of life.

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## *Our Children Remembered - September, 2016*

<i>Child</i>	<i>Bereaved</i>
<i>Daniel Zacharia Ashkenazy</i>	<i>Pamela &amp; Dan Ashkenazy</i>
<i>Paul Beaudoin</i>	<i>Midge Beaudoin</i>
<i>Sylvia Chantal Bingham</i>	<i>Francoise Blusseau &amp; Stephen Bingham</i>
<i>Jason Bohlke</i>	<i>Adam Bohlke &amp; Britt Rosenmayr</i>
<i>Andrew D. Bonapart</i>	<i>Helen &amp; Alan Bonapart</i>
<i>Jacob Westley Brumbaugh</i>	<i>Mark &amp; Deborah Brumbaugh</i>
<i>Robin James Crittenden</i>	<i>Susan &amp; Russ Crittenden</i>
<i>Dylan Simon Duncan Wright</i>	<i>Mara Duncan</i>
<i>Chloe Foster</i>	<i>Nilda Thompson</i>
<i>Jacob Samuel Freeman</i>	<i>Michael Freeman &amp; Lisa Klairmont</i>
<i>Peter C. F. Haldén</i>	<i>Marlene Haldén Rice</i>
<i>Anthony Helzer</i>	<i>Donna Romer</i>
<i>Danielle Jue</i>	<i>Colette Jue</i>
<i>Chris Leach</i>	<i>Marcie &amp; Don Leach</i>
<i>Yi Dan Liu</i>	<i>William Pernis &amp; Nancy Liu</i>
<i>Fernando Martinez</i>	<i>Don &amp; Maria Pazour</i>
<i>Timothy Patrick McBride</i>	<i>Lois Kortum &amp; George McBride</i>
<i>Marci Eilene Meyring</i>	<i>Gary &amp; Natalie Meyring</i>
<i>Erika Lynn Moseley</i>	<i>Helen &amp; Jim Moseley</i>
<i>Lauren Nelson</i>	<i>John &amp; Vicki Nelson</i>
<i>Diego Ruiz Palomino</i>	<i>Celia Ruiz &amp; Michael Palomino</i>
<i>Nicholas Plaskon</i>	<i>John &amp; Berit Lelas</i>
<i>Anthony Michael Polizzi</i>	<i>Jackie Polizzi</i>
<i>Joshua Adam Portnoy</i>	<i>Bob &amp; Gunilla Portnoy</i>
<i>Kareem Rafeh</i>	<i>Hafez &amp; Nada Rafeh</i>
<i>Carolyn Reichling</i>	<i>Michelle Miller</i>
<i>Justin Daniel Reynolds</i>	<i>Carole Bonnici</i>
<i>Lara Rachel Rusky</i>	<i>Edward &amp; Eileen Rusky</i>
<i>Benjamin P. Scheuenstuhl</i>	<i>Maureen &amp; Heinz Scheuenstuhl</i>
<i>Nicolas Simard</i>	<i>François Simard &amp; Julie Chabot</i>
<i>Vinnie J. Simons</i>	<i>Lori Jones</i>
<i>Nicholas Andrew Sommerfield</i>	<i>John Sommerfield</i>
<i>Malika Ziani</i>	<i>Phyllis Callahan</i>

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“Grieving is a journey that teaches us how to love in a new way now that our loved one is no longer with us. Consciously remembering those who have died is the key that opens the hearts, that allows us to love them in new ways.” - Tom Attig, *The Heart of Grief*

## *Our Children Remembered - October, 2016*

<i>Child</i>	<i>Bereaved</i>
<i>Frank Daniel Austin, Sr.</i>	<i>Rosalyn Mazzaferri</i>
<i>Matthew Buckley</i>	<i>Mark &amp; Kristina Buckley</i>
<i>Alec Edward Carnessale</i>	<i>Libby Chaney &amp; Paul Waszink</i>
<i>Joey Ciatti</i>	<i>Becky Oken</i>
<i>Adam Dietz</i>	<i>Julie &amp; Larry Dietz</i>
<i>Misty Dollwet</i>	<i>Ronald &amp; Joan Crook</i>
<i>Debra Lynn Ferrua</i>	<i>Ronald &amp; Joan Crook</i>
<i>Peter von Frenckell</i>	<i>Birgitta von Frenckell</i>
<i>Reneé Francesca Garcia</i>	<i>Bertlla, Carmen &amp; Jose Armando Garcia</i>
<i>Ellen Marian Haas</i>	<i>Harold &amp; Mary Haas</i>
<i>Pamela Dawn Heaster</i>	<i>Ila Benavidez-Heaster</i>
<i>Emma Kristen Kearns</i>	<i>Dr. Carol Kearns</i>
<i>Laura Kenward</i>	<i>Nancy Kenward-Hughes</i>
<i>Frank D. Kovach, Jr.</i>	<i>Frank &amp; Barbara Kovach</i>
<i>Ryan W. McKnight</i>	<i>Bob &amp; Leesa Tuley</i>
<i>David Meyerson</i>	<i>Deedee Meyerson</i>
<i>Emily Grace Panicacci</i>	<i>Scott &amp; Jennifer Panicacci</i>
<i>Kristi Parker</i>	<i>Pamela &amp; Larry Parker</i>
<i>Stephanie Michelle Proctor</i>	<i>Jon &amp; Sandy McGraw</i>
<i>Steven Rodriguez</i>	<i>Rafael &amp; Alex Rodriguez</i>
<i>Lonnie Roper II</i>	<i>Shirlee Roper</i>
<i>James Aaron Rosengarden</i>	<i>Mark Rosengarden</i>
<i>Bryn Marston Rowlands</i>	<i>Maradel Rowlands</i>
<i>Susan Rudolph</i>	<i>Jackie Martin</i>
<i>Casey Sandvick</i>	<i>Richard Sandvick</i>
<i>Stephen Taketa</i>	<i>Michael &amp; Teri Taketa-Graham</i>
<i>Adrian Rodolfo Valderrama</i>	<i>Rosa Sandoval &amp; Rodolfo Valderrama</i>
<i>Susan Elizabeth Wahl</i>	<i>Melinda Wallace-Collins</i>
<i>Gregory Patrick Walsh</i>	<i>Sandy Williams</i>
<i>Brittney Marie Weaver</i>	<i>Janine Schengel</i>
<i>Craig Weldon</i>	<i>Lee Weldon</i>
<i>Robert Craig Wilson</i>	<i>Mary C. Fishman</i>

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You give yourself permission to grieve by recognizing the need for grieving. Grieving is the natural way of working through the loss of a love. Grieving is not weakness nor absence of faith. Grieving is as natural as crying when you are hurt, sleeping when you are tired or sneezing when your nose itches. It is nature's way of healing a broken heart.

- Doug Manning



## The Robin's Song

It's spring once again. Our part of the world is turning back towards the sun; trees are leafing out; wildflowers are blooming. Robins are again singing to one another. And, I believe, also singing to those who are grieving.

Before my daughter Lori died in the summer of 1991, I was under the misperception that only the English robin had a glorious song. That smaller, red-breasted scalawag of a bird delights all who hear it, and I had felt that we in the United States had been short-changed when they'd mis-named its larger, boring, American cousin the same sweet name. All I'd ever heard our robins do was cheep!

Then one spring day in the year after Lori died, during one of the darkest times of my grief, my ears and heart flew open with surprise at a song I heard outside my window. I distinctly heard, in the midst of my pain, a bird singing loudly and clearly, "Cheer up! Cheer up! Cheerio! . . . Cheer up! Cheer up! Cheerio!" I went outside to see what marvelous bird might have been sent to sing to me. I could barely see the bird at the top of the neighbor's poplar tree, so, while hoping this exotic, magical bird wouldn't fly away while I was gone, I went to find our binoculars.

Rushing back, I could hear the bird from each room in the house. After adjusting the binoculars, I was truly amazed to see one of our "boring" American robins come clearly into view! As he continued singing clear as day, "Cheer up! Cheer up! Cheerio!" I marveled at this special message and wondered if my robin was the only one who sang these words. So I looked it up in my Audubon Society Field Guide to North American Birds and found that my robin was not an anomaly, but that robins are considered the true harbinger of spring, singing "Cheer-up, cheer-up, cheerily."

I stood there that day filled with wonder. I wasn't hearing things; there it was in the bird book: "Cheer-up, cheer-up, cheerily." I thought to myself, "Cheerily . . . No, that isn't what I hear." We had lived in England for a year and our family, especially Lori, who loved to put on an English accent, often said "Cheerio!" to one another when we meant, "Goodbye" or "See you later!" There was no doubt in my mind as I stood there listening. It WAS cheerio. Lori could have found no more perfect way to try to cheer me up AND say "hello"!

Nine springs have passed since then, and although I will always deeply miss Lori's physical presence in my life, those darkest of times are thankfully now mostly in the past. It is spring once again and as I hear the robin singing so hopefully in the highest branches, it takes me back to that first spring song, and I smile, remembering. And I think of all those who are now in the darkest depths of their own grief and pray they too will hear this lovely song.

Genesse Bourdeau Gentry

TCF Marin & San Francisco, CA

From, *Catching the Light – Coming Back to Life after the Death of a Child*

She is also the author of *Stars in the Deepest Night – After the Death of a Child*

In Memory of my daughter, Lori Gentry

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God has you in His keeping. I have you in my heart. - Unknown



*In Loving Memory*

**Joshua Portnoy**  
*by Bob & Gunilla Portnoy*

*In Loving Memory*

**Erika Lynn Moseley**  
*by James & Helen Moseley*

*“Always in our hearts.”*

*In Loving Memory*

**Ellen Marian Haas**  
*by Mary Haas*

*In Loving Memory*

**Matthew Lyon Buckley**  
*by Mark, Kristina, Philip, Kelly, Kathryn & nieces and nephews*

*“We miss seeing “Matt Buckley Photography” in print, attached to newspapers and art work. We miss him so much and those (these) little reminders are a great comfort.”*

### LOVE GIFT FORM

Love Gifts are “messages” published in our newsletter that honor children who have died. We are grateful to parents, grandparents and others who, by their Love Gifts donations, allow us to offer resources such as the Annual Candle Lighting Event, the newsletter, books, brochures and pamphlets at no cost to assist bereaved families. They also allow us to provide information to professionals and others who impact the lives and feelings of the bereaved. The donation amount is your choice, and Love Gifts are tax-deductible as allowed by law.

Deadlines for Love Gift information for Newsletters:

Jan/Feb issue --Dec. 15  
Mar/Apr issue – Feb. 15  
May/Jun issue – Apr. 15

Jul/Aug issue – Jun. 15  
Sep/Oct issue - Aug. 15  
Nov/Dec issue - Oct. 15

Child’s name \_\_\_\_\_ Donor’s name \_\_\_\_\_

Child’s Birthdate & Anniversary Date \_\_\_\_\_

Newsletter month \_\_\_\_\_

Message \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Include your name, address and phone # if not on check in case of questions:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mail the information above along with your donation (check) made payable to TCF/Marin to: TCF/Marin Newsletter Editor, P.O. Box 150935, San Rafael, CA 94915.



**The Compassionate Friends**  
*Marin County Chapter*  
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

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P. O. Box 150935  
San Rafael, CA 94915

**SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER 2016**

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**Dated Material - Please Deliver Promptly**



### **Who are “The Compassionate Friends”?**

The Compassionate Friends is a nonprofit self-help organization offering friendship and support to families who have experienced the death of a child.

The mission of The Compassionate Friends is to assist families in the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child and to provide information to help others be supportive.

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“The griefs that have been hardest for me were the ones I didn’t recognize as griefs, because they came in what were supposed to be the best times of my life. No one whispered in my ear that the best times, the ones that change our lives, are woven with the thread of loss.”

— Anna White, *Mended: Thoughts on Life, Love, and Leaps of Faith*

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