



MAY—JUNE 2011

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

PORTLAND, OREGON

"A Nonprofit Self-Help Organization for Families Who Have Experienced the Death of a Child"



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Meeting Schedule

WE LOOK FORWARD TO MEETING YOU!

**May 17, 2011
June 21, 2011**

Meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month from 7-9 p.m.

Sunnyside Seventh Day Adventist Church
10501 SE Market St.
Portland, OR 97216
(near Mall 205)

SATURDAY MORNING GROUP

May 7, 2011
June 4, 2011

These meetings are held on the first Saturday at 10:30 a.m.

First United Methodist Church
1838 SW Jefferson, Rm. 130
Portland, OR 97205
(Corner of SW 18th / Jefferson)

It's never too soon to mark the date ...

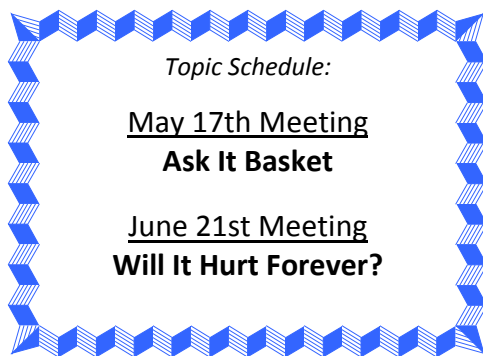
Once again, the annual balloon launch will take place at the July TCF meeting (July 19th). This is our time to write special love notes and messages to our loved ones and attached to the balloons, release them to the heavens above! It is a spectacular site as these balloons take off and group together! We encourage you to bring your family and friends. Refreshments and ice cream will be provided for that hot summer evening! Watch for further details in the next newsletter!



34th National Conference Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN July 15—17, 2011

Plan now to attend: TCF's 34th National Conference will be held in Minneapolis/St. Paul July 15-17, 2011 at the Sheraton Bloomington Hotel. You will find it to be another great conference with around 100 workshops, sharing sessions, special keynote speakers at the Opening, Closing and Friday Afternoon and Saturday Evening banquets, Hospitality Room, Butterfly Boutique, Reflection Room, a completely stocked bookstore, special Friday evening entertainment and a Remembrance Candle Lighting. TCF's Walk to Remember will be held Sunday morning.

Continue to follow the National TCF website for up-to-date information.
www.compassionatefriends.org



Topic Schedule:

May 17th Meeting
Ask It Basket

June 21st Meeting
Will It Hurt Forever?

**Portland Chapter
TCF**

has it's own website!
Check it out for additional information and resources.
Check it



~ ~ www.tcfportland.org ~ ~

The Portland Chapter of The Compassionate Friends operates solely with voluntary donations. Monetary gifts in any amount are appreciated.

WE NEED NOT WALK ALONE. WE ARE THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS.

The Compassionate Friends is a non-profit, self-help organization composed of bereaved parents/siblings. We offer friendship and understanding. Anyone who has experienced the death of a child of any age, from any cause, is welcome. Our meetings give parents an opportunity to talk about their child/sibling and about the feelings they experience through the grieving process.

There is no religious affiliation. There are no membership dues. The purpose of this support group is not to focus on the cause of death or the age of the child/sibling, as it is to focus on being a bereaved parent, along with the feelings and issues that evolve around the death experience of a child.

The vision of The Compassionate Friends is that everyone who needs us will find us and everyone who finds us will be helped.



**Gardening
is great
therapy for
the broken**

A Warm Welcome to New Members.... We're Glad You Found Us!

To our newest members—we offer our warmest welcome! If you have walked through the door to a TCF meeting, we understand how traumatic and difficult that is to do...we have all taken that step and reach out to you in friendship and support.

As our TCF Credo says, “We come from different walks of life...”, but the common bond we now share is the death of a beloved child or sibling. Others cannot understand the terrifying and debilitating emotional issues that occur in our daily lives once this event happens; a TCF member can and does!

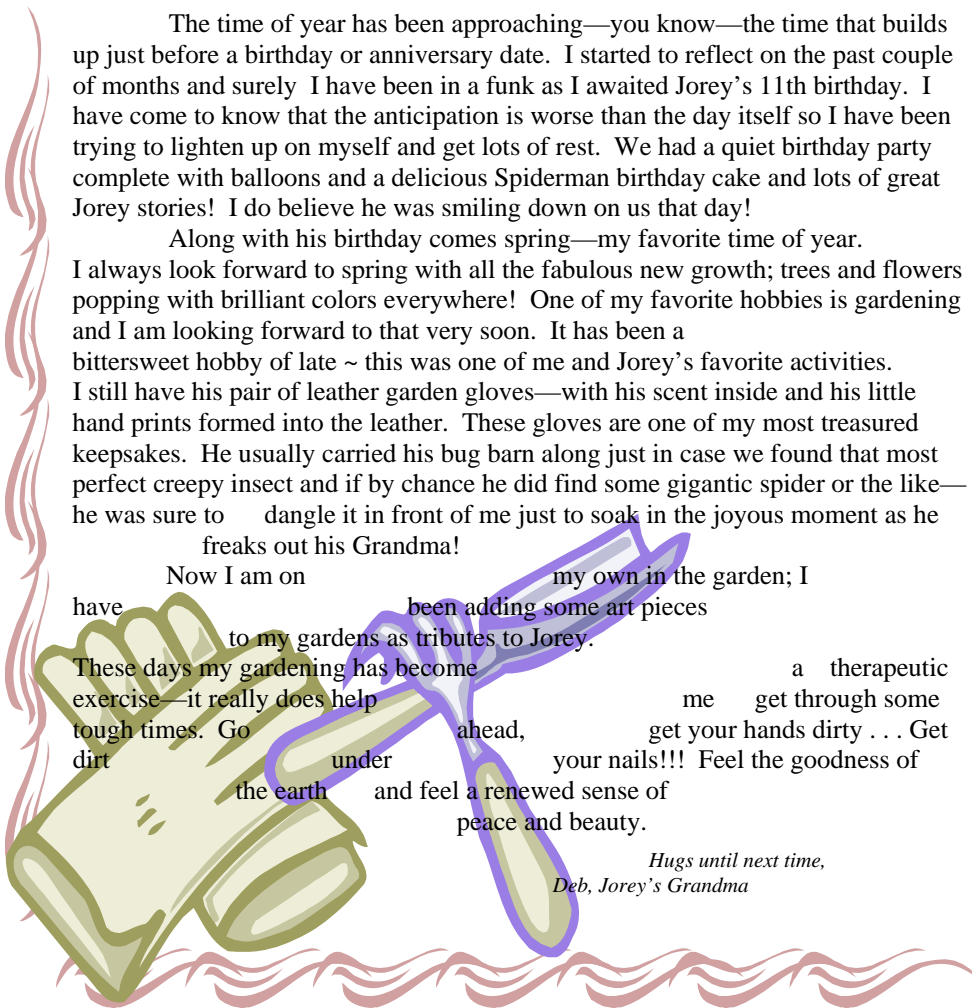
We hope you will find our meetings and newsletters to be a comfort, a place where tears are allowed, no judgments are made and the hope that through this trauma, we can once again find hope and meaning in our lives.

The time of year has been approaching—you know—the time that builds up just before a birthday or anniversary date. I started to reflect on the past couple of months and surely I have been in a funk as I awaited Jorey’s 11th birthday. I have come to know that the anticipation is worse than the day itself so I have been trying to lighten up on myself and get lots of rest. We had a quiet birthday party complete with balloons and a delicious Spiderman birthday cake and lots of great Jorey stories! I do believe he was smiling down on us that day!

Along with his birthday comes spring—my favorite time of year. I always look forward to spring with all the fabulous new growth; trees and flowers popping with brilliant colors everywhere! One of my favorite hobbies is gardening and I am looking forward to that very soon. It has been a bittersweet hobby of late ~ this was one of me and Jorey’s favorite activities. I still have his pair of leather garden gloves—with his scent inside and his little hand prints formed into the leather. These gloves are one of my most treasured keepsakes. He usually carried his bug barn along just in case we found that most perfect creepy insect and if by chance he did find some gigantic spider or the like—he was sure to dangle it in front of me just to soak in the joyous moment as he freaks out his Grandma!

Now I am on my own in the garden; I have been adding some art pieces to my gardens as tributes to Jorey. These days my gardening has become a therapeutic exercise—it really does help me get through some tough times. Go ahead, get your hands dirty . . . Get dirt under your nails!!! Feel the goodness of the earth and feel a renewed sense of peace and beauty.

*Hugs until next time,
Deb, Jorey's Grandma*



Thank You

Portland Adventist Medical Center
Debbie Esmond, Graphics Dept. &
Staff

- ♥ Patricia Scoggins (In memory of Kenton)
- ♥ Carolyn Harrington (In memory of Kelsey)
- ♥ Deb Moon (In memory of Jorey)
- ♥ Terri Prison (In memory of Brandon)

For folding, labeling, and mailing the March/April newsletter!
Your time & commitment is appreciated by all!

*We have a gift that no one can take from us . . .
Our child was born and we became a parent forever . . .*



Father's Day

Warm and sunny day in June
Father's day,
children, small and grown
give gifts to father
say thanks to father
say I love you.

But there are fathers
whose children are not here
to give gifts and say thanks
and say I love you.

Remember the fathers
whose children are gone,
because they will always be
fathers at heart.

*Sascha Wagner
From Wintersun*

*Memories
will bring you love
from the past
courage in the present
hope for the future.*

BENT BUT NOT BROKEN

To the Mother who has lost her only child, or has no surviving children, the thought of Mother's Day sends a stabbing pain that only the ones of us who are in this situation can understand. We begin to notice Mother's Day cards slipped in right after Valentine's day along with the Easter cards. Even before Easter the TV advertising starts. We try to blot this all out but our subconscious keeps reminding us, the day is coming closer.

For the first two years we celebrated Mother's Day for my mother and sister very quietly. The third year after my daughter Shawna's death, we decided to go to a local restaurant featuring a nice buffet. We arrived early hoping to avoid the crowd. A very flustered hostess greeted us and found a table for us. The tables had been pushed close together to accommodate more people. It was already becoming very crowded. She asked the question, "How many Mothers?" It was then we noticed the flowers she was carrying. Someone managed to stammer out, three—three Mothers. She handed us each a flower, while glancing around to find a table for the next group of people. She didn't notice the one she handed me was pretty battered. My sister wanted to give me hers or get another. "No, it's ok," I said. The stem was bent but not broken completely. A wilted, tired flower was hanging from the stem. I brought it home and propped it up in a glass of water to revive it. You see, I could identify with that flower.

As a Mother without a child, I have felt so bruised and battered. Somehow through all the pain, tears, and loneliness, like the flower, I have been bent but never quite broken.

*Donna Frechec
TCF Enid Chapter*



VOLUNTEER AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

If you are looking for something to do with other members of the Portland TCF ~ we want you! This is a great way to socialize with other members and build long-lasting friendships! There are a variety of needs that are on a regular basis and others for special events—jobs large and small. Please contact one of the steering committee members on Page 1 to discuss how best to fit your talents and needs!

Our Children Lovingly Remembered

**CONFIDENTIAL
NOT AVAILABLE ONLINE**

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**CONFIDENTIAL
NOT AVAILABLE ONLINE**



A **Love Gift** is a special note to your child that is printed in the newsletter—it is a wonderful way to remember and honor their memory! Families often submit these either on the birthday or anniversary date of their child, but it can be done at any time!

There is no charge for printing a **Love Gift**, but many families choose to donate a tax deductible contribution to help with the expenses of our chapter that include:

- ♥ Church meeting place
- ♥ Newsletter mailing
- ♥ Information & brochures sent to new families
- ♥ Telephone message line
- ♥ Stocking our Lending Library

**In Loving Memory of
RANDY ALLEN
8/30/03**

*Loving you forever...
Missing you everyday.
Happy 53rd Birthday!*

Love, Mom & Dad

Bob & Carol

**In Loving Memory of
MICHAEL EDWARD
9/7/07**

*We miss you just as much as the day
you "flew away". How we long to see
you, touch you, hold you, ...
Until then stay joyful & keep smiling.*

*Love Forever,
Thomason 5*

Michelle

**In Loving Memory of
CASEY DEVIN
6/11/99**

*Always on my mind.
Always in my heart.*

Love, Mom

Johanna

**In Loving Memory of
ZACHARY RYAN
12/28/10**

*Your 3rd birthday.
Happy Birthday Boobaloo!*

*Love,
Mom, Papa & Grandma*

LeeAnne

*The children who were with us in the rush of life,
Let them now be with us in the peace of spirit.*

Sascha



**Thank you to all the families that send in Love Gifts to honor their child!
Your tender thoughts and expressions of love are testimony to the fact that "Love
Never Dies"! Your generous donations are also greatly appreciated—thank you!**

If you wish to make a tax-deductible LOVE GIFT donation, fill in the information below, send with a check for any amount to:
Portland TCF , PO Box 3065 Portland, OR 97208-3065.

Month you would like it printed in newsletter: _____ Donation Amount: _____

Child's Name: _____

Date of Birth: ____/____/____ Date of Death: ____/____/____

Special Message (*please include how you would like your message to be signed*) :

Your name: _____ Telephone or email: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ Zip _____

In Loving Memory of
JEREMY DUANE
5/1/07

*My heart is broken and another
milestone birthday is here.*

*Happy 21st birthday
Rebel Boy!*

*Love you forever,
Mom*

Joyce

BIRTHDAYS REMEMBERED

If it is your child's birthday month, we invite you to come to our monthly meeting and share their story! (Even if you don't come to meetings regularly, we would love to meet you and honor your child.)

Birthdays hold treasured memories and are especially difficult for surviving parents and siblings; TCF offers a wonderful venue to honor and celebrate the precious life-story of your loved one. Taking a few minutes to share a picture, memento, award or even their favorite toy is a gentle reminder to all that *love continues and grows* with each passing year.

A special Birthday Table is available to display your pictures and special keepsakes. If you wish, you may also bring in your child's favorite snack to share...or even a birthday



TCF Portland Chapter
P.O. Box 3065
Portland, OR 97208-3065
Ph. 503-248-0102
Meets: 10501 SE Market St., Portland
3rd Tuesday @ 7 pm
Email: linerharrington@yahoo.com

TCF Portland Satellite Chapter
Ph. 503-524-0957
Meets: First United Methodist Church
Rm 210
SW 18th & Jefferson, Portland
1st Saturday @ 10:30 am

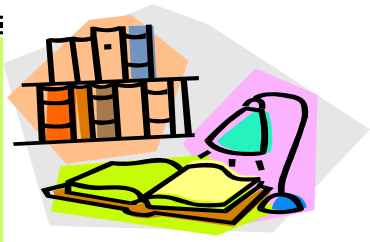
TCF Clackamas County Chapter
Ph. 503-772-4485
Meets: Community Health Education Ctr
519 15th St. (15th & Washington)
Oregon City, OR
4th Tuesday @ 7 pm

TCF McMinnville Chapter
Ph. 503-434-5917
Meets: Lafayette Community Church
365 3rd St.
Lafayette, OR
1st Thursday @ 7:30 pm

TCF Washington County Chapter
Ph. 503-324-2504
Meets: Elsie J. Stuhr Adult Leisure Cen-
ter
5550 SW Hall Blvd. (Oak Room)
Beaverton, OR
2nd Tuesday @ 6:30 pm

TCF Salem Chapter
Ph. 503-743-3930
Meets: First Congregational Church
700 Marion St.
Salem, OR
1st Monday

Lending Library is back!



REMINDER:

**Love Gifts for July/August
must be received by June 10th**

My son, a perfect little boy of five years and three months, had ended his earthly life. You can never sympathize with me; you can never know how much of me such a young child can take away. A few weeks ago I accounted myself a very rich man, and now the poorest of them all.

*Ralph Waldo Emerson
In a letter to Thomas Carlyle*

Touch of Love

*I would straighten your tie,
smooth your collar,
pick a bit of lint from your sleeve
before you left for your day's affairs
and I turned my attention to mine...*

*Today I brushed off a leaf
That had fallen on your name.*

Doris Alsup, TCF, Burleson, TX



***** THE LIBRARY IS OPEN ***** We now have gained some storage for our library materials therefore they will be at the Tuesday meetings for check out and returns. If you have any questions, contact Librarian: Delilah Brazil (Jason's Mom) delilah2000@yahoo.com.

Day of Healing & Recognition

***Grief is Universal
Grief is Also Unique to the Individual***

**Saturday May 14, 2011
Providence Willamette Falls Community Center
519 15th St., Oregon City, OR 97045
1 to 3 p.m.**

A Day of Healing and Recognition is a special program honoring families who have lost a child. We invite you to join us in compassion, support and hope!
You will not always hurt like this.

Speakers will address grief and the grieving process.

Guests are invited to bring a photograph or other remembrance of their child to share on the Memory Wall.



Go to www.tcfportland.org
for more information about the program and speakers.



Follow
Alan Pedersen
& his Angel
Tour Online . . .

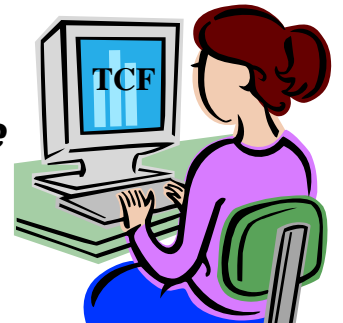
www.everashleymusic.com
www.angelsacrosstheusa.com
YouTube—Alan Pedersen

Facebook—Angelsacross Theusa

**CDs can be purchased on his website
and available at Portland chapter TCF.*

**For the most up-to-date information, visit
www.tcfportland.org
www.compassionatefriends.org**

***or on Facebook @
The Compassionate
Friends/USA***



Hold on to what is good even if it is a handful of earth. Hold on to what you believe even if it is a tree which stands by itself. Hold on to what you must do even if it is a long way from here. Hold on to life even when it is easier letting go. Hold on to my hand even when I have gone away from you.

An Indian Writing ~ Lovingly lifted from Bereaved Parents of the USA, Coeur d'Alene Chapter

THAT FIRST SUMMER VACATION



Summertime is here and along with it you may be planning a vacation. If you have recently suffered the death of your child, that first vacation can be very difficult. Here are some suggestions to help you through your first vacation and to help you plan around your grief:

- ♥ Be gentle with yourself. Don't expect too much on your first vacation. Remember, as bereaved parents, the first time we do anything without our kids is tough whether it be going to the movies, shopping or on a vacation.
- ♥ Plan to do some grief work because you will, planned or not. Give yourself time enough on the trip if you have a bad day so that you can just do what you feel like doing.
- ♥ Know that your child will be on your mind day and night, just as he or she is at home. Our grief goes with us.
- ♥ Plan to do something your child would have loved to do, but did not get a chance to. Plan this in his or her memory.
- ♥ If you plan to visit relatives for the first time since your child's death, remember they mean well, even if they seem insensitive with their remarks. They have not lost a child and can't see through your eyes.
- ♥ If you have other children, remember them. They are also having a hard time coping on this vacation. Plan some activity that will be especially for them.
- ♥ Be especially careful to communicate with your spouse. Plan a vacation that is suitable for both of your needs. Remember you are both grieving for the same child, but we all grieve differently and in our own way.
- ♥ If you have been maintaining your child's gravesite and feel guilty about leaving it unattended, let a family member or friend see to it while you are away. You need not feel guilty and it could fill a need for one of your family members or friends, allowing them to help.

~excerpts from an article by Dianna Hammock, Central Coast, CA

Graduation Time

It's June and graduation time again. Your child would have been among those wearing the cap and gown, walking down the aisle to the ever stirring "Pomp and Circumstance". Now there will be a vacant spot in the line. Should you attend? Can you stand the pain? Will people think you're strange?

As always, you must follow your heart. So, go if you'd like to, and don't hide your tears. It's quite all right to miss your own child while celebrating the achievements of others.

Just remember that your instincts are the most important ones; that no one else can make this decision for you, and that it doesn't really matter what other people think of you.

It was your child that died. This is your pain, and you have the right to feel it and deal with it in your own way and may a bit more healing take place in the doing.

*Peggy Gibson
TCF, Nashville, TN*



PICTURE BOARD

Add your child's photo to our display of pictures! At each monthly meeting and all our special events, we display our Picture Boards ...

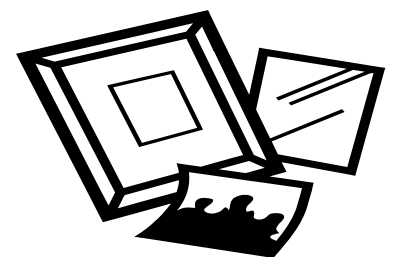
Our Children Always Remembered!

Becky Sheehy (Justin's Mom) has volunteered to be in charge of this project—so bring in your photo, please be sure names and dates are correct, and Becky will add it to our collection.

You may contact Becky at
bsheehy2@aol.com

or

503-625-0316



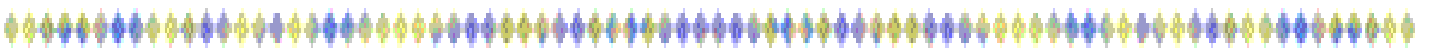
Father's Day...not a big holiday like Christmas or Thanksgiving, but one that holds a lot of meaning for those to whom it applies. For first-time fathers, that Sunday in June brings a feeling of joy and pride. For a long time Dad, it's a reminder of the richness children may have brought to his life.

For those men who have lost a child, it can be a painful time. For those you must endure their pain in secret and in silence, either through their own desire for that approach or through society's expectations that they must be strong and controlled, it can become a horror.

But we in TCF wish to acknowledge the day because the death of a child does not negate the parenthood of the mom and dad who loved him or her. Love for one's offspring does not die when the body dies, and death does not succeed in robbing us of our parental identity.

We wish all our bereaved fathers a day of peace. In the midst of the grief and loss, may you experience a taste of good memories and remembered love for your child.

Lovingly lifted from TCF/Elgin, IL



Special Note to Siblings and Fathers:

An emotional and sentimental day is Mother's Day. It can be a very lonely day for Moms. Even if there are other children in the family, that one child is not there to wish her "Happy Mother's Day".

Siblings, if Mom does not respond as you would like her to on that day, give her a big hug and tell her you love her. Be gentle with her. She loves you. She is your mother, but she is also a mother who is lonely for the absent child.

Dad, hold your wife close and tenderly on that day. She may do a lot of daydreaming and crying and her mind may wander back to when ... if the child that dies was an 'only child', Dad, be extra kind and loving—maybe take her to lunch or dinner because even though that child cannot be here with her, she is still a mother and mother forever she will be.

Taken from TCF, Victoria TX

Memorial Day

For each grave where a soldier
lies at his rest

For each prayer that is said today
out of love

For each sign of remembering
someone who died

Let us also give thought to the
mothers and fathers,

The brothers and sisters

The friends and lovers

whom death left behind.

Sasha

"No matter how dark things seem to be, or actually are, raise your sights and see the possibilities—always see them, for they're always there."

Norman Vincent Peale

Footprints

How very softly
you tiptoed into my world,
almost silently.
Only a moment you stayed.
But what an imprint
your footsteps have left
upon the heart.

Thanks.

*D. Ferguson
TCF, Pacatello, ID*

Memorial Garden or Tree in Memory of Your Child

Spring and fall are planting times. Have you thought about planting a garden or tree or a combination of both, designed just for your child or children? It can be a small flower bed or even a pot of flowers as a start. Make it as big as the space or time that you have available. Working in a garden is one of the best ways to relieve stress and to get fresh air. Many of us nurture flowers that we have planted at our child's grave site.

Some of us have plants to attract butterflies. We bereaved parents have come to look upon the butterfly as the symbol of eternal life and rebirth, as well as the logo for TCF. Some familiar flowers that attract butterflies include petunias, lilac, dahlia, goldenrod, sweet William, zinnia, valerian, marigolds, daisies, black-eyed susan and daylilies to name a few. The butterfly bush is a favorite for North American butterflies. It blooms in late summer and will continue to bloom until the frost if dead blossoms are re-

moved regularly. Butterfly bushes are also valuable as a deer-proof plant in deer territory.

Or you could select flowers that were your child's favorite flower or color that remind you of him/her in some way. We planted a pink flowering weeping crabapple tree that my children bought for Len and me on our anniversary in September, which also coincided with Karianne's birthday. (Karianne's favorite color was pink, as were her wedding colors shortly before she had the auto accident.) We planted the tree in the middle of our front lawn with a flower bed in a circle around it. We planted pink tulip bulbs which have come up every year since. Every year we watch and guard the tulips as they peek their heads above the ground, while we anxiously wait for the pink blossoms of the tree to open up.

Our daughter Lisa bought us Malibu lights, and we have added four spotlights around the circumference of the tree. At Christmas we use a big red bow on the tree and silk red poinsettia bushes around the flower bed. At Easter time we put on a big pink bow to go with the tulips and tree blossoms. As the season progresses

we will be looking for some miniature pink rose bushes to plant after the tulips die. Recently we have added small white lights to the branches, and it makes a beautiful welcome when we return home after being out. What a beautiful sight! It has even become a landmark for anyone looking for our house.

We have found it very helpful therapy to plant, talk, tend and take care—touching and seeing and smelling the tree and flowers. If you have other children it can become a family project and, therefore, a family tree or garden. When I look out the living room window, I think of the four children I had, not just the one who died or the three I have left. We call it "The Baklarz Family Tree".

*Ann Baklarz
TCF, Pittsburgh, PA*



OTHER SUPPORT GROUPS:

SUICIDE BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT (SBS)
Ph. 503-236-7524

NE Portland 3rd Monday @ 7pm
SW Portland 1st & 3rd Thursday @ 7pm
Vancouver 4th Tuesday @ 7pm
Gresham 1st Thursday @ 7pm

St. Helens 2nd & 4th Wed—503-397-7841

The Dalles call 541-296-8850 for information
Hood River call 541-386-4997 for information

PARENTS OF MURDERED CHILDREN

Ph. 503-761-1304 or 503-656-8039
2116 NE 18th Portland, OR
1st Mon @ 7 pm

BRIEF ENCOUNTERS

Ph. 503-699-8006
2116 NE 18th St. Portland, OR
Support groups for parents who have experienced infant or pregnancy loss or who are considering or experiencing a subsequent pregnancy/adoption.

BRIEF MOMENTS

Ph. 360-969-5100
SW Washington Medical Center
Vancouver, WA
Support group for parents who have experienced infant or pregnancy loss.

SIDS Resources of Oregon

Ph. 503-287-8265
Last Tuesday, call for location & time

CHILDREN'S GRIEF SUPPORT (Family intake is required for these groups)

Me, Too & Company

Ages 5 - 18 & their parents
Ph. 503-499-5307

The Dougy Center

Ages 3—19 & their parents
Young adults 18—29
Ph. 503-775-5683
Website: www.dougy.org

Stepping Stones

Ph. 360-696-5120
SW Washington Medical Center
Vancouver, WA
Support groups for children, adolescents, and their parents who have experienced the death of a loved one.

The journey from grief to hope
does not happen swiftly.
But it happens,
if you will let your heart ride along.



The Compassionate Friends
 Portland Chapter
 P.O. Box 3065
 Portland, OR 97208-3065

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

MAY—JUNE
 2011



Those we love don't go away—They walk beside us every day.

NEW TCF CHAPTER
 BATTLE GROUND, WA
 Battle Ground Community Center
 Last Wednesday of the month
7:30 p.m.

For more information contact
 Ott (360) 991-3249
 or
 Smith (360)904-2827

TCF NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

PO Box 3696
 Oak Brook, IL 60522-3696
 1-877-969-0010 (Toll free)
 Email:

nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org



Online Support Community

(Topics Available)

- ♥ Parents/Grandparents Share
- ♥ Pregnancy/Infant Loss
- ♥ Bereaved 2 years & less
- ♥ Bereaved 2 years & more
- ♥ Men Only Sharing Session
- ♥ No Surviving Children
- ♥ Siblings Share
- ♥ Survivors of Suicide

For more information or to participate, visit the website:

➔ www.compassionatefriends.org
RESOURCES—ONLINE SUPPORT