



# The Compassionate Friends

## North Shore-Boston Chapter

### Supporting Family After a Child Dies

Newsletter

February 2024

To all those newly bereaved, who are receiving this newsletter for the first time and to all our Compassionate Friends, we wish you were not eligible to belong to this group, but we want you to know that you and your family have many friends. We, who received love and compassion from others in our time of deep sorrow, now wish to offer the same support and understanding to you. Please know we understand, we care, and we want to help. You are not alone in your grief.

**Meetings are held the 1<sup>st</sup> Monday and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of each month via Zoom Online at 7:00PM. We also hold an in-person meeting on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of each month at the Aldersgate Methodist Church, 235 Park Street, North Reading at 7:00 P.M.** We are a self-sustaining organization with no funds except what we receive through donations from members and newsletter recipients. Please join us at a meeting.

#### Grief support after the death of a child

The Compassionate Friends is a national nonprofit, self-help support organization that offers friendship, understanding, and hope to bereaved parents, grandparents and siblings. There is no religious affiliation and there are no membership dues or fees.

The secret of TCF's success is simple: As seasoned grievers reach out to the newly bereaved, energy that has been directed inward begins to flow outward and both are helped to heal.

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

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[www.thecompassionatefriends.org](http://www.thecompassionatefriends.org)

#### Upcoming Meetings



Wednesday, 2/28/24  
 7:00 PM

##### In-Person Meeting

Please contact [tcfnoshoreconnect@gmail.com](mailto:tcfnoshoreconnect@gmail.com) if you would like to attend  
 Topic: Coping With Everyday Life

Monday, 3/4/24  
 7:00 PM

##### Online Video Meeting

Please contact [tcfnoshoreconnect@gmail.com](mailto:tcfnoshoreconnect@gmail.com) if you would like to participate  
 Topic: Open Sharing Session

Wednesday, 3/20/24

##### Online Video Meeting - 7:00 PM

Please contact [tcfnoshoreconnect@gmail.com](mailto:tcfnoshoreconnect@gmail.com) if you would like to participate

Topic: Open Sharing Session

-and-

##### Sibling Group Online Video Meeting - 7:30 PM

Please contact [Aimeeb15@gmail.com](mailto:Aimeeb15@gmail.com) if you would like to participate  
 Topic: Navigating Other Relationships Our Siblings Had

Chapter Leader: David Paul  
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GALE McLAUGHLIN

February 24 th you would have been 55 in 2024.

I still look at that picture of you  
at 17 months and guess I will  
always wonder what our life  
would have been like had you lived!

We look at your picture,  
though not with sadness,  
but with the joy of knowing  
that you would be happy  
how our life has gone on these years.

We have three wonderful  
sons and their wives  
and five beautiful granddaughters!

We are truly blessed!  
So yes, we are joyful,  
but will always miss you, Gale,  
and always wonder if you were here,  
what life would be like,  
one of those unanswered questions for sure!

Love, Mom and Dad

-and-

JASON M. DIXEY

There are some who bring  
a light so great to the world,  
that even after they have gone,  
the light remains.

You are so loved  
and missed every day.  
Keep sending rainbows.

Love, Mom, Dad,  
Adam, Peyton and Riley







Helpful Insights to Self Care in Grief By Linda Triplett  
*Posted on The Compassionate Friends website October 25th, 2023*

I have just passed the 26th year of missing my son, Adam. He was a pilot and died while giving a lesson to a student. He had an engine problem and could not survive when they landed. Adam was only 23 and married just three short months. He was the kind of kid that everyone loved the moment they met him.

I would like to share some insights that I have learned over the past years and hope there is something that helps you on your grief journey.

First, I learned that I wasn't crazy when I couldn't remember the smallest things that first year, and beyond. I called it "cotton brain." What helped me was to start writing in a journal. When sleep wouldn't come, I would write to Adam. I poured out my heart about how much I missed him, how angry I was that the plane failed to perform to keep him safe. I told him about my day, all the insignificant things that I would have told him if he were sitting next to me. And most of all, I told him over and over that I loved him and missed him.

Another thing was to acknowledge my grief, give myself grace to grieve my huge loss. I could not worry about what others thought if I showed my sorrow. I had to let go of the "advice" I received from others. I also found that some of my friends were not able to handle being around someone so sad, so they left. I needed to find new friends that "got it." The Compassionate Friends was a particularly valuable resource.

A friend that had a couple of years into grieving the death of her daughter gave us invaluable advice. She told me, "You can't lean on a broken fence when you and Mark (my husband) are broken." That is when we began looking for a grief counselor to help us navigate through our grief rather than expect help from each other. I highly recommend doing the same. It is a huge relief to be able to share anything in your heart with someone and not be judged, but instead just be listened to. Not everyone finds the one that will work for them right away. I think that if the first one does not work out, keep looking until you find one that does, like trying on a pair of shoes! You rarely find the right ones that fit with the first pair you try on.

Soon I realized how important it was to take care of myself, not only mentally but physically too. In those first months I could have cared less about my well-being. But I knew from resources that I read that if I did not, I could become a statistic that affects so many because of the impaired immune system. Illness can be one, also accidents increase causing some nasty physical consequences, sometimes for a lifetime. Did you know that when we experience a death of a loved one, it is a brain injury? Because of this, we do not think rationally when it comes to taking care of ourselves; however, our traumatized brain needs us to. Going for a walk is a great stress reliever or take some "me" time to just sit outside and listen to the birds. It can give a much-needed break for your mind and body. And sometimes we just need to have a good cry. It releases the tension that builds up.

Another significant help is to laugh. It is natural to feel like we should not because we are somehow not missing our kids if we do, but it is not at all the truth. Nothing could make us miss them any less. Try tuning in to a classic Carol Burnett show. It's so good for the soul to laugh even for a moment. I learned I needed laughter as much as feeling the grief of missing Adam to have healthy healing.

And my final insight and the most important one for me was to not only look at my loss, but also count the blessings that our beautiful children left us. The most wonderful way to honor them is to go on living. To say their names and to share our stories. If we do that, we could be helping another hurting heart because we "get it." I look back at those first entries in my journal and see how far I have come and know that although I did not believe I would survive, I did! I miss my son and always will, but I have found joy in life again. I can talk about Adam now and smile at the precious memories that we shared.

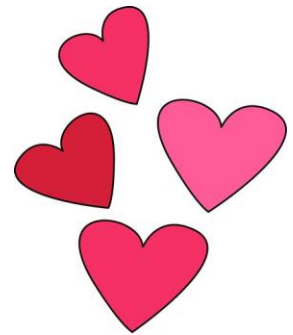
 **February Birthdays**


Andrew Adams Wilder son of Mark and Betty Wilder  
Alfonso Daniel Sisneros son of Bob & Laura Reich  
Shane Patrick Murphy son of Karen and Kevin Murphy  
Scott Ronald Nagel son of Fiona Nagel  
Catherine Cann daughter of Anna Bourque  
Lorin Beth Bennett daughter of Judith Bennett  
Ryan Covino son of Linda and Bill Covino  
Christopher Taatjes son of Patricia Taatjes  
Talia Rose Ronga daughter of Debra Ronga  
Brendan Burgess son of Catherine and Bill Burgess  
Christopher Genna son of Joseph & Leslie Genna  
Paul A. Nestor son of Geri & Bob Gatchell  
Eliot Lee Bennett son of Eric and Elizabeth Bennett  
Lisa Marie Norco daughter of Roberta Deputat  
Gale McLaughlin daughter of Joan & Frank McLaughlin  
Daniel Noah (Danny) Fine son of Gail and Stephen Fine  
Julia Ciampa daughter of Julie Brachanow  
Virgilio Dejesus son of Sara Dejesus  
Diane Buckley daughter of Anna Bourque  
Sean Michael Reynolds son of LouAnne Reynolds  
Julianna Edel sister of Katharine Edel  
Christopher Burnett son of Annmarie Conway  
Ty Moughan son of Liz Moughan



 **February Angel Dates**

Christopher Burke son of Dotty and David Burke  
Christopher Michael Rollins son of Nancy & Rick Rollins  
Olivia Mary Marchand daughter of Jody Marchand  
Ryan James Gilligan son of Paula Gilligan  
Cadyn Nathaniel Douglas son of Cheryl Coss and Andre Douglas  
Lorin Beth Bennett daughter of Judith & Michael Bennett, sibling of Allison and Pamelyn  
John Queenan son of Margie Queenan  
Christopher Warner Fennelly son of Laurie Malonson  
Christopher Taatjes son of Patricia Taatjes  
Patrick Barry son of Joanne Barry  
Julia Ciampa daughter of Julie Brachanow  
Zachary Doyle Hilton son of Patricia Doyle  
Robert Hale Tavares son of Lorraine Snow  
Robert Kagacha son of Sarah Kagacha  
Jaxton Donais nephew of Kayla Welch  
Anthony Travalini son of Anne Travalini  
Mario Miller son of Maria Sallese  
Christopher Fennelly son of Laurie Malonson & George Fennelly  
Eric Kronk son of Kathy and Walter Kronk  
Andrea Martocchia son of Diana and Paul Martocchia  
Ella Rose Biggio daughter of William and Allison Biggio  
Jason Dixey son of Sandy & Barry Dixey  
Kyra Grace Koman daughter of Kathy and Stu Koman  
Renee Mithen daughter of Kathleen Ravagno  
Sheryl Kelley daughter of Donna and Paul Maloney  
Madeleine Elise Fox daughter of Elizabeth Fox  
Kevin Gannon and Raymond Moyette siblings of Alice and Gil Costa  
Daniel Harriman son of Cindy Collin  
Tyler Fountain son of Kimberly Chandler  
Tina Lee Ducharme daughter of Deb Linnehan  
Calvin Gil son of Julie Sheaves  
Justin Pappas-Kirk son of Lauri Pappas-Kirk and Peter Kirk  
Kevin Gannon Sibling of Alice Costa  
Teagan Carey Jennings Daughter of Ryan and Angela Jennings



	Our telephone friends are here to help you if you feel the need to connect with someone outside of our usual meeting night. We are not professionals – we are all bereaved parents seeking to find a way through our grief. <b>Please be considerate in the timing of your calls to these volunteers.</b>	
Beverly	Carmen Pope, son, 3 days, anencephaly; son, 11, boating accident	978-998-4087
Reading	Sheila Thabet, son, 19, Pedestrian accident, Son 20, accidental overdose	781-670-0335
Gloucester	Melinda & David Paul, daughter, 20, sudden cardiac arrest	978-771-6345
Haverhill	Crystal Chambers, sibling, 28, cause unknown	508-523-2810
North Andover	Catherine Olson, daughter, 27, pedestrian accident	978-681-8341
Salem, NH	Regan Burke, son, 8, pneumonia/cardiac arrest	603-264-9391
Winchester	Reenie McCormack, son, 20, drowning	781-729-1878
Woburn	Nancy Whipple, son, 22 months, cancer	781-938-5840

### TCF North Shore-Boston Chapter Website Sponsorship

In order to help cover our chapter website fees, we invite our members to sponsor our chapter website for 1 month in memory of their children, grandchildren or siblings. The monthly website sponsor donation is \$25 per member and the maximum number of sponsors per month is 2. Sponsors may post a message to their children, grandchildren or siblings; this message will be displayed in the Website Sponsor column on the Home page of our website and will also appear in our chapter newsletter.

If you would like to sponsor our chapter website, please contact our Website Manager via email: [tcfnoshoreweb@gmail.com](mailto:tcfnoshoreweb@gmail.com)

Website sponsor sign-up sheets are also available at our monthly in-person meetings.

no one told me  
how scared i'd be  
after my person died.  
to know i'd have to take on  
so much life without them here.  
the thought of decades passing by  
and they won't appear for one second.  
that terrifies me more than it makes me sad.  
how do i make it to old age. to my last breath.  
how will i carry this fear until i am no longer.  
when the weight of forever never gets lighter.  
and the wait of forever does not end until i do.

sara rian





## Love Notes



In loving memory of my daughter Lorin Beth Bennett

(Born 2/27)

(Died 2/27)



*This section is reserved for personal messages in memory of our children, grandchildren, and siblings. Donations received help to cover the operating costs of the chapter; monthly meetings, refreshments, newsletter mailing, etc. While not expected, any donations are always appreciated.*

**Thank you to all who continue to leave donations in the box at every meeting**

Love Notes are a way to share a message in memory of your child/grandchild/sibling. Donations received with Love notes help with the cost of publication of this newsletter.

Please send your Love Notes with donation by mail to

**Bob Boulanger, 42 Chatham Rd. Billerica, MA 01821**, or give them to the leader at the monthly meetings.

Please use the form below to assure notes are posted exactly as you want them. Love Notes for the next newsletter must be received by the **15th of the previous month**.

**Love Gifts for future dates may be sent at any time; month to be published:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Love Gift from** \_\_\_\_\_ **In memory of**

**Message:**

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## TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Coming to your first meeting is the hardest thing to do. Try not to judge your first meeting as to whether or not TCF will work for you. The second, third, or fourth meeting might be the time you will find the right person or just the right words that will help you in your grief or comfort you. Remember we have all been there and even though circumstances may be different, we really do understand. You are not alone.

## TO OUR SEASONED MEMBERS

We need your encouragement and support. You are the string that ties our group together. Each meeting we have new parents. Think back.... remember hearing from others farther along than you...“your pain will not always be this bad it really does get better” Come to the meetings and share your wisdom. Show others that there is hope, from someone who has found it.

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS  
c/o Bob Boulanger  
42 Chatham Road  
Billerica, MA 01821

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

DATED MATERIALS  
PLEASE FORWARD



*The Compassionate Friends*  
North Shore-Boston Chapter  
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

## NEWSLETTER – February 2024



National Website: [www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org)

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.

\*\*\*\*\* CHAPTER WEBSITE: [www.TCFNoShore-Boston.org](http://www.TCFNoShore-Boston.org) \*\*\*\*\*

**Help us save money and paper.....**

To receive these newsletters via email please send an email to the editor

[tcfnoshorenews@gmail.com](mailto:tcfnoshorenews@gmail.com)