

The Primrose

TCF Broome County Chapter Newsletter

Fall 2026

VOL.46 Issue 3

And the Rocket's Red Glare

I watched the spectacular bursts of colors. It was always such a treat. The star bursts, the swirls, the straight ones, making their noisy banging trajectories into the night time sky. Throughout these exciting displays, tears ran down my face. Inconceivable that I am here to enjoy this and you, my beautiful Cheryl, are not. Then new thoughts rolled through my mind. Perhaps you are viewing the fireworks and many more from a higher vantage point, where the colors and designs shine more vividly. Perhaps you are seeing and understanding things that I can neither see nor understand. Perhaps your world is filled with rainbows and flowers and butterflies. Perhaps you are surrounded by love, music, beauty and unbounded joy. Perhaps my love. I can only hope...

-- Carol Silverman, Elkins Park, PA

I lost my child

I lost my child. My loss is not a wound that
time, rest, prayer, therapy, or a pill can heal.
My loss is like my heart was opened and
ripped apart. My soul was torn, the light
extinguished forever, dark, damaged, in.
complete lost.
I will go on living. Look normal. Even smile.
But the truth is,
I will not heal until my last tear falls.
My last breath is taken.
The last beat of my heart.
My soul flies from the darkness.
To find my child in the light.

Author Unknown

The Compassionate Friends, Inc.
National Office Information

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Parents Resource Corner

Please feel free to call the following people if you wish to speak to someone whose child's death was caused in a manner similar to your child's

Accidental - Pam Kroft - Ph:607-427-4043

Illness - Open position

Adult Child - Karen Yeager - Ph:607-757-1852

Suicide - Sherry Bailey - Ph:607-797-8990

Substance - Shelley Levchak - Ph:607-759-0852

The Compassionate Friends of Broome County

1250 Front Street, # 147 Binghamton, NY 13901

Web Address:

<https://www.stny.info/tcfbroome/>

**For information pertaining to the
The Compassionate Friends of Broome County,
call: Donna Cunningham (607) 725-8574**

Monthly Meetings

First Monday of each month 6:00 - 8:00 PM

Third or fourth Saturday 10 AM – 12 PM

Nimmonsburg United Methodist Church

918 Upper Front Street Binghamton, NY 13901

(across from BCC)

Steering Committee

Chapter Leader & Delegate -

Donna Cunningham **607 725-8574**

Assistant Chapter Leader - Shelley Levchak

Outreach - Jody Pangburn

Library - Liz & Brian Leonard

Hospitality – Jean Scolaro

Treasurer – Dianne Cappiello

Newsletter Editor – Jim Pratt

Social Media -

FB - Pam Kroft & others

Website—Jim Pratt

Secretary- Barbara Paugh

**Please join our
Steering Committee**

We need Volunteers!

---MARK YOUR CALENDAR---

Meetings:

First Monday 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Third or fourth Saturday 10:00 A.M.

NIMMONSBURG UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

918 Front Street, Binghamton

(Across from BCC, next to the Credit Union.

Parking in the rear, enter through rear door.)

CALENDAR FALL 2026

September 14th Monday 6:00 pm "Come Share Your Story"

September 19th Saturday 10:00 am "Open Sharing"

October 5th Monday 6:00 pm "Setting Boundaries"

October 17th Saturday 10:00 am "Open Sharing"

October 22nd Thursday 5:30pm "Steering Committee Mtg"

November 2nd Monday 6:00 pm "Finding Joy Again"

November 21st Saturday 10:00 am "Open Sharing"

December 7th Monday 6:00 pm "Perfect Holiday?"

December 13th Sunday 6:00 pm "Candlelight Service"

December 19th Saturday 10:00 am "Open Sharing"

NOTICE

If you receive this newsletter,
forwarded from a Funeral Home
Please e-mail Dianne Cappiello
tcfbroome@gmail.com
with Your correct address so
new issues can be mailed to you directly

The Primrose is published quarterly

Deadline for newsletter materials:

February 1st: May 1st: August 1st: November 1st

Please send material to Jim

jpratt483@aol.com

-The Chapter Letter-

Hello Everyone,

As our hot steamy summer is soon to be out the back door, we all look towards the autumn ahead, giving us the burst of color (ambers, reds, yellows and oranges). But before we rush into a new season let us slow down, sit and remember one old and one new memory that we can take with us as we move through the days on the calendar. Memories are the backbone of our lives; for that reason, we often mourn the old ones as the new ones are always in the making. The annual summer family picnic was filled with friends, good food and bubbles galore! Now that's a memory that takes us back to our youth and to the younger years of our children, grandchildren and siblings gone too soon. This summer we took our grandchildren to a water park and they had a bubble party every evening. The bubble wands of today are much more sophisticated than the old fashion bottles of bubbles and a wand that was sticky from the first dip. No one has ever said that bubbles won't bring a smile to your face and stickiness to everything they touch.

Our Angel of Hope has finally been blessed with the new pavers, engraved with our loved one's names, giving many peace of mind that have waited for a very long time. I am anxious to see the new garden and the names of many of our beloved children, grands and siblings. There are still many pavers available for anyone interested. Send inquiries to pdangelofhope@gmail.com. As a member of the charter group that brought the angel to the park, it's been difficult not being a part of the expansion, but I have made peace with it. Sunday October 4th at Otsiningo Park in Binghamton the annual Out of Darkness Community Walk will be held, in memory of all those that have lost their battle. We have too many lives that have been lost to suicide and families that are struggling to overcome the stigma attached to it. Cindy Freita, Melissa's mom has formed a team to walk and is currently raising funds for the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention which sponsors this event. If you are interested in donating you can go to asfpwalks.donordrive.com, Cindy's team name is Angel Melissa. Also, if you can attend the walk it will be insightful and much appreciated by the families and friends that are surviving their loss. Cindy is not the only parent in our TCF family that has experienced this tragedy, our hearts go out to each and every one that asks the dreaded question, why? Also, Shelley will be selling her bracelets for CJ at the event and all profits will be given to team, Angel Melissa.

How are we already planning our annual candle light service to be held the second Sunday of December(13th) at the church? If anyone is interested in helping that evening whether it be greeting, speaking, working in the kitchen and any task feel free to reach out to Donna Cunningham, Shelley or myself and we will put you on the list. If you have never attended, you can sign up for a task, it will get you there, where you will feel the love and hope that abounds as we light candles in memory of those gone too soon. Don't feel obligated to volunteer, sometimes just attending is enough. Gathering in the fellowship hall is like a family reunion, with old and new TCF family members uniting to break bread and share stories. A dish to pass is always welcome on our buffet table. If not able to attend reach out and we will make sure a candle is lit and the name of your loved one I read. The second Sunday in December is my night and yours to be with our child, grandchild, niece, nephew, cousin, sibling and friend gone too soon. Greg Deemie will be accepting photos of our loved ones to be added to the slideshow during our service. Include the name as well in your email. If you have already done this in the past no need to resubmit, your photo will still be there. Please get them to Greg before mid-November, his email is gregdeemie@gmail.com.

As we travel into the cooler months of fall, I hope we gain the skills and have the tools necessary to help us cope, ease our pain and soften our survival. Find people, your people that will sit and listen while you tell your story.



The Chapter Letter Continued.....

Always remember that we should never walk alone, reassuring ourselves there is no timeline, doing it at your own pace. No one can fix this for us, be patient with yourself and one day try to conjure up some of that happiness, don't feel guilty, let it come slow and naturally, giving you a feeling of peace. We hope to see you at a TCF meeting or our annual candle light service but if not surround yourself with your people. We grieve because we love. The hope element of grieving is to find a way to keep loving, despite the sadness.

Hugs for all,
Pam Kroft
(Sean's mom)

Treasurer

Dianne Cappiello is our treasurer
Love Gift donations can be sent to her
at this address:
2221 Glenwood Rd. Vestal, NY 13850
e-mail:
tcfbroome@gmail.com
Make Checks out to:

Newsletter Editor and Publisher

Jim Pratt
tcfbroome@gmail.com

Email Jim with any poems or articles
you would like to be included in the newsletter.
Please provide proper credits to the author.

Dear Holiday grief,

Grief on any day is difficult... but there's something about grieving during the holidays that always gets to us. The holidays are supposed to be cheerful, warm, and welcoming times. Times you share making memories with family and friends. And I wanted that, I WANT that. And I'll still try for that feeling this holiday... but my holiday grief is always looming around. It looks like an empty seat at the table, like a phone call or visit that never comes. Simply put the holidays just aren't the same when you're missing your child. Instead.... I spend the days reminiscing on holidays that once were. If only I knew that was our last holiday together as a whole family... Holiday grief is a mixture of wanting what was once, but trying not to miss out on what is....

Author Unknown

I have to believe that the truth is that
there was nothing I could've done to
change the way your story ended because
I'd drive myself to my own grave if I knew
any different.

So as much as it is easy to consider how
Your story might've been different with a
simple could've, would've, or should've, I
decided to give myself enough grace to
know that there is nothing I could have
done to change your story.

You were never meant to be here any
longer than you were. Maybe the universe
needed you more: Someday; I will
understand why.

Author Unknown

What's in it for you?

Compassionate Friends is here to help—to listen, to suggest, to understand.
If you handle your grief well, you do not need Compassionate Friends. But we need you.
Your approach or method of dealing with grief could help one or more of us.
Please come share it.

Bob Watts TCF Stamford, CT

“Compassion is not a relationship between the healer and the wounded. It's a relationship between equals. Only when we know our own darkness well can we be present with the darkness of others. What gets me up and going each day is knowing that how I live my life and treat others will be the only reflection and definition of my son that people who never met him will ever get to see.”

-Tanya Pearce

“Grief over the death of a child is the hardest work that most of us will ever do. While we all wish for the pain to stop, we need to remember that we grieve intensely because we loved intensely. It is unrealistic to expect the grief to ever totally go away because the love we have for our child will never go away. Our grief is an act of love and is nothing for which we should be ashamed.”

--Elaine Grier TCF, Atlanta, GA

We were put on the earth to love them for as long as We live...
Not for as long as They lived.

Alan Pederson

Our Children Remembered



As long as we live, our children too shall live, for they are part of us in our memories.
We lovingly remember the following children on their Anniversary.

09/01 Kathleen daughter of Jeannine Wells Endicott, NY
09/01 Cindy daughter of Bonnie Blair Binghamton, NY
09/06 Jason son of Nuria Bronson Conklin, NY
09/09 David son of Renny Zanker Lisle, NY
09/11 Cheryl daughter of M/M Frank Lockwood Binghamton, NY
09/11 Scott son of Karen Yeager Binghamton, NY
09/13 Kaitlin daughter of Maureen Mosher Endicott, NY
09/14 Rebecca daughter of M/M Harold F. Weitsman Sunny Isle Beach, FL
09/15 Jonathan son of James Pratt Binghamton, NY
09/15 William brother of Robin McCall Binghamton, NY
09/18 Todd son of Carol Selby Cantonsville, MD
09/20 Shawn son of Carol Ferraro Mechanicsville, VA
09/24 Maura daughter of Joseph & Maureen Johnson Binghamton, NY
09/25 Karen daughter of Sandy Iannuzzi Vestal, NY
09/26 Stephen son of Shirley Mehal Endwell, NY
09/26 Julie daughter of Bonnie Blair Binghamton, NY
09/29 Susan daughter of Helen Kachmarik Binghamton, NY
09/30 Richard son of John & Michelle Lupo Endicott, NY
10/03 Traci daughter of Gordon & Mary Shiner Vestal, NY
10/11 Jerry son of Sylvia Behal Johnson City, NY
10/15 William son of Delores Bentley Binghamton, NY
10/16 Sean son of Pam Kroft Frederick, MD
10/16 David son of Shirley Rigo Binghamton, NY
10/23 Micha son of Marvin & Donna Conover Binghamton, NY
10/26 Joel son of Renee Radicchi Spicer & Steve Spicer Owego, NY
11/07 Jenna daughter of Maureen Mosher Endicott, NY
11/15 Gail daughter of Ray & Lori Benjamin Binghamton, NY
11/15 Matthew son of Martin & Carol Porcino Johnson City, NY
11/16 Ryan Alexander son of Donald & Suzanne Carr Binghamton, NY
11/18 Patrick son of Dale Murray Binghamton, NY
11/26 Phelan son of Kelly Smith Barton, NY
11/26 Thomas son of Margaret Isaminger Johnson City, NY
11/30 Cynthia daughter of Marilyn Eck Endwell, NY

I thought of You today

I thought of you today, but that is nothing new.
I thought about you yesterday and days before that too.
I think of you in silence, I often speak your name.
All I have are memories and your picture in a frame,
Your memory is a keepsake from which I'll never part.
God has you in his arms, I have you in my heart.

Author Unknown

YOU. MY FAMILY. MY FRIENDS

There is a hole in my heart. Yet it still beats. How can that be?

This hole is a problem to me even though you can't see. You say I look good.

I say: "How do you want me to look?" Come closer. Things are not as they appear. I tell you my heart is in bad shape. It needs fixing. Is there some surgery I can have? Oh, to have something truly physically wrong! Then I could put a name to this pain. Doctors could fix it. YOU could understand better.

There is a hole in my heart. Yet it still beats. No doubt it is God's handy work.

Quietly, patiently, gently, and lovingly He holds my heart in His hands.

With His special thread-GRACE He stitches my heart together. It does not go smoothly. Many of the stitches are ripping out already. YOU see this hole makes me susceptible to all the suffering in the world. It is no longer just: "Isn't it sad and how does a family walk this walk." Rather, I am in the waiting room again.

I am beside the bed again. I am at the funeral home and the grave site again.

Oh, how I remember those raw days. I try to continue my journey of grief again.

I am only a few steps ahead of them. God will have to start again tomorrow.

So, The sun sets, The sun rises. A new day is here. Unbelievable.

Today my eyes are not so blurry from my tears. I see some of the beauty; feel some of the joy that surrounds me. I even can smile and laugh a little.

I walk by Mary's picture and say: HI not WHY. Amazing.

What a difference a day can make! He resumes His work of stitching my heart together. There is a hole in my heart. Yet it still beats. Do not wounds that refuse to heal cause serious problems? How many times can my heart be ripped?

I am much too fragile. When will I completely heal? Wait. Heal is the wrong word.

Heal implies a cure, a wholeness again. There is no cure with the death of a child.

Mend is a better word. Mend means to advance to a better state, to recondition. This is what I will expect and so should YOU.

There is a hole in my heart. Yet it still beats. YOU say: "Time heals all things."

Time just keeps reminding me of how things should have been, Perhaps with God's thread over the hours, days, weeks, months, and years Time will come to remind me of the GIFT I had. How lucky I was for Mary's brief presence in my life!

How grateful I am for the new vision I have been given. I am learning to relinquish control. After all, I never had control or Mary's death would never have occurred.

Does this mean there is some acceptance taking place?

There is a hole in my heart. Yet it still beats. Come closer still. What you see with your eyes is not what it appears. Things are not back to normal. The "old" me is not back. I am just trying to survive. I am going through motions. Sometimes I even think I am watching someone else go through this. It takes a lot of energy but I will plod forward. So greet me with a; "Good to see you, Liv." Not a: "How are you?"

Just be present to me. Let me see the compassion in your eyes. No words need ever be spoken.

However, if I need to talk Be willing to share in my pain by listening and learning. It will take great patience and stamina not to give advice.

But "there is nothing so strong as gentleness; Nothing so gentle as strength." Remember God holds my heart in His hands. His thread is sufficient.

By: Livy Curtin In memory of my daughter, Mary Eileen 10/21/79 - 3/15/97

What Goes On At A Compassionate Friends Meeting?

A question that is asked frequently by newly bereaved parents who have never attended a meeting is, "What do you do?" or rather, "What will you expect me to do?" In answer to the last question, we expect and require nothing more than your name. Our meetings are informal. We open the meeting with introductions by mentioning our name and child's name, but if you feel that you can not do this, it is okay, also. We have all, at one time or another, choked up on the mention of our child's name or the circumstances of his or her death.

Some people attend meetings several times and do not enter any discussion or voice their feelings. They absorb some ideas and discard others that do not meet their immediate needs. But, inevitably, someone around the table will say something that is tuned to the exact way you feel. Then the realization comes that one is among friends, people who really understand and care about them and their sensitive feelings. Some parents are more vocal from the start, and they find willing listeners who neither criticize or pass judgment on them. We most likely have the same feelings of anger, despair, longing, pains, and a multitude of others.

Now a word about crying. PLEASE don't stay away because you are afraid you will cry! We have all cried many times. Perhaps we've attended several months and didn't shed a tear. Then something is said or a memory comes back that brings tears to our eyes. Compassionate Friends can accept the gamut of feelings from tears to laughter. Laughter? Of course! We are, after all, human and our emotions are many and varied. If we can accept each other's feelings, this must include all ranges of emotions.

In the course of discussion, you may hear the answer to a question or problem that has been plaguing you. Several parents may tell you how they handled the question of what to do with their child's possessions - clothes, toys, books, etc., or how they have gotten through holidays, birth- days, and other difficult days. Maybe you will pick up something that will be helpful in dealing with your surviving children's problems; how to deal with a seemingly uncaring relative or friends— to hurtful remarks, or how to answer the question "How many children do you have?" Sometimes what has helped one may not have worked for another, but what is important is the open and honest discussion and the chance to decide for yourself.

Please don't let the word meeting intimidate you. Perhaps we should call it a gathering. Whether our gathering consists of a program featuring a film, a speaker, a tape, or general discussion, please don't hesitate to join us! A parent who has "survived" the loss of their child will always be there to greet you and understand.

--Verdugo Hills, CA newsletter

The rules for surviving holiday grief:

Do what You need to do to Survive.

Honor your loved one how you need to, and do what feels best for your fragile, aching heart. You are missing a huge piece of you, so do whatever you need to do to find a sliver of peace.

Author Unknown

If You were Wondering

If you're wondering where to find me,
Wondering where my soul has wandered to,
Just know I'm right beside you
In everything you do,
I'm somewhere in the distance,
Between the land and Sea,
So when you look up to the clouds,
I hope you look for me.
I'll be popping up in planters,
When winter turns to spring,
I'll be the song on the radio,
Just so I can hear you sing,
I'll be the brightest rainbow,
When the sunlight meets the rain,
and sometimes I'll be the raindrops,
sent to wash away the pain.
I'll be the trickles of sunlight,
as the warmth kisses your skin,
Forever in your heart,
So look For me within,
I'll be the brightest star
So I know you will see my light,
Just know, I'll never leave you,
Even though I'm gone from sight.

Author Unknown

Gifts of Love

Our chapter is a self-help group with no required dues. We rely solely on contributions. Your donations help us pay for the cost of this newsletter, the postage, all the books in our library, meeting and event supplies which are a great help to bereaved parents.

Your contributions are tax deductible and very sincerely appreciated. The following donations were received since the last Primrose deadline:

Sam & Shelley Allegrino – in Memory of their Son Allan
Carol Radice - In Memory of her son Jason
Joanne Brockway- In Memory of her daughter Amber
Diane Ellis - In Memory of her son Matthew
Carlo & Samantha Carlini - In Memory of their daughter Samantha
Kathy Beers - In Memory of her son Jason
Beth & Stephen McKeown - In Memory of their daughter Sarah
Toni Sherling - In Memory of her children Cory, Jamie and Grandson Dillion
Kathleen & Frank Rumpel - In memory of their daughter Christina
Jo-Anne & Michael Oliver - In memory of their son Michael
Barbara Lewis & Nancy Arnold - In memory of their son Michael
Mary & James View - In memory of their son James
Liz & Brian Leonard - In memory of their son Brian
Colleen & David Hanzes - In memory of their son David
Kimbery & Paul Reger - In memory of their daughter Alicia
Sylvia Behal - In memory of her Children Ronald, Teresa, Jerry
Maureen & Joe Johnson - In memory of their Daughter Maura

Today, I am thankful for the tears
Though an ocean I have cried
They speak of our connection
Reminding me that love has not died
Today I am thankful for the memories
They brighten the road of grief
They remind me of love shared
And provide a small relief
Today, I'm thankful for love
Felt strongly in my soul
Love continues living forever
Keeping us together in hole
Today I am thankful for
Those who didn't walk away
They saw my broken heart
And chose to sit and stay
Today I am thankful for time
For the moments that were too few
Through the tears that are shed
Today, I am thankful for you
- Author Unknown -

A Mothers Wail

There are no words
In which to describe, the wail of a
mother
Who's child has died?
It hovers near the heart,
And penetrates the bones,
It's Chord's unmatched to any song
The sound lingers.
Ringing in my head at night.
Guilt and thankfulness surface,
long throughout the night.
A Mothers Wail,
A sound best described,
Is breathing only to live,
But no longer alive

Author Unknown

**** NOTICE ****

There are no monetary dues or fees to receive The Primrose, the TCF Broome County's newsletter. Our largest expense is the printing and mailing of newsletters to our members.

Your tax deductible Love Gift donation enables the chapter to continue our mission of reaching out to the newly bereaved and providing ongoing support to all our members.

Send donations to: Dianne Cappiello 2221 Glenwood Rd. Vestal, NY 13850 - tcfbroome@gmail.com
Make checks payable to: The Compassionate Friends Broome

Name _____o Please check if new
address

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (____) _____ Child's name _____ Date of death ____ \ ____ \ ____

Newsletter\$ _____ Supplies\$ _____ Postage\$ _____ Other (Specify)\$ _____

Please specify the fund you want to donate to

Please specify if there is a specific fund you want the money used for (Newsletter, Postage, Supplies, Etc)

A Letter From Heaven

Perhaps you weren't ready yet to have to say
goodbye, perhaps you thought of things you
wish you had of said.... Well so have I. For one
thing I have told you not to worry about me. I am
in heaven now, you knew that's where I'd be. I'm
sorry if you're feeling sad but I'm so happy now,
I've asked Lord to heal the hurt and comfort you
somehow. It's hard at the beginning. I know
you'll make it through, I hope it helps to know,
I'll be waiting here for you.

Author Unknown

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Broome County Chapter
Supporting Family After a Child Dies
1250 Front St., PMB 147
Binghamton, NY 13901-1043
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