

The COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

Northern Lake County Illinois Chapter

November 2024 Newsletter



A self-help organization offering friendship and understanding to bereaved parents



Chapter Leader Notes from Susan

The holidays will soon be here, they are approaching and are just around the corner. Already the stores are full of decorations and display all the seasonal items that you might need. But it's not always that easy to be around and view all the displays and suggestions of food, celebration, and decorating ideas. Sometimes it's just too much. I offer this to you, take it all in tiny doses, don't let yourself become overwhelmed with all the visual and auditory stimulus. Pace yourself when you are in the stores, be gentle with yourself and it's ok to take a break. We need to be gentle with ourselves and our family members as we acclimate to the approaching holidays. I wanted to share a few words of wisdom that was shared to me. It's for those of us many years in, a few years and for those who have a very recent loss of a loved one.

Focus on what you can control ~ do what is right for you during the holidays. Plan for family gatherings, have an A plan and a B plan. Communicate, Listen, and pause for understanding ~ it's ok to take a breath and sit for minute. Find a way to honor your memories ~ Embrace your

treasure of memories. Continue with traditions, create a new tradition, or make slight changes. Express your faith. Do something kind for others. Set healthy boundaries. Be with supportive comforting family and friends. Allow yourself a range of emotions ~ It's ok to be sad, it's ok to share tears, it's ok to feel joy and it's ok to celebrate.

Thinking of you and your families during the holidays,

Your Friend, Susan ~ Westley's mom

Living without them is a road we never planned to walk, a journey without a map. But along the way, we discover that we don't have to 'get used to' their absence. Instead, we learn to see the world through the love they left behind. It's a love that inspires hope, a promise that even in the darkest nights, their light continues to shine in our lives, guiding us toward moments of peace and remembrance.



Chapter Meetings

Northern Illinois Chapter TCF #1511

<http://www.iltcf.org/index.html>

Zoom meeting

First Thursday of the month

7p.m. to 8:30pm

Susan Banks will email the link to the meeting

Third Thursday of the month meets at

Millburn Congregational Church

19073 West Old Town Court

Lake Villa, IL 60046.

Park in the parking lot behind the church, enter through the double glass doors.

Open discussion

It's also ok to sit and listen and when you feel comfortable sharing, please share with us.



We have a very special event coming in December, The Annual Candle lighting Ceremony. December 8, 2024. This year we will come together; family and friends, in-person at the Millburn Congregational Church to light a candle in memory of our loved ones who have gone too soon. We will remember our loved ones with music, readings, the candle lighting, and a photo montage presentation. We will have refreshments and conversation after the ceremony.

Thursday December 5, 2024

The first Thursday of the month meeting on December 5, 2024, is our Zoom meeting. At this meeting you will be invited to light a candle for your loved one and share a picture with those joining the meeting. This will not be a formal Candle Lighting Ceremony, but we will honor the

memories of our loved one with readings, lighting a candle and showing a picture. I will send an email and the Zoom link for the meeting the week of November 25, 2024.

Sunday December 8, 2024,

The Candle Lighting Ceremony is Sunday December 8, 2024. The Ceremony begins at 6:30 pm. The candles are provided at the ceremony. We do invite you to purchase a luminary in memory of your loved one. A luminary is an opaque bag with a weighted base that holds a flameless candle. We will place a name label "In loving Memory" with your loved one's name on the outside of the bag. The luminaries will line the hallway to the sanctuary, the location of the Ceremony. After the Ceremony, please take the luminary in memory of your loved one. You may purchase as many luminaries as you would like. We are asking for a donation of \$5.00 for a luminary, but no one will be refused.

The photo montage is a slideshow presentation of our members' loved ones who have gone too soon. We are inviting our new members to send a picture of your child, sibling or grandchild to Susan Banks and the photo will be included in our Chapter's photo montage, presented at the conclusion of the Candle Lighting ceremony.

If you have any questions about the Candle Lighting Ceremony, the Luminary or the Photo request please call, email, or text Susan at 847.366.9375 or Lanwesmar@comcast.net

Please see the following pages.

Page 7, Photo slideshow information

Page 8, Candle Lighting Ceremony

Page 9, Luminary order form



***OUR CHILDREN, GRANDCHILDREN, AND SIBLINGS LOVED,
MISSED AND REMEMBERED IN NOVEMBER***

Each month we remember the children who are sadly missed. Please take a few moments, place them in your thoughts, and remember them on their day together with their parents. None of us ever forget our special days and messages that say "I care" help us to get through them. Our children's lives will go on, if we remember them and celebrate their lives.

BIRTHDAYS

<i>Selene Martinez</i>	<i>November 1</i>	<i>Daughter of Manuel & Linda Martinez</i>
<i>Heidi Anne Hermann</i>	<i>November 2</i>	<i>Daughter of Bonnie Brackus</i>
<i>Gina Marie Almas</i>	<i>November 9</i>	<i>Daughter of Mary Severin</i>
<i>Lisa Rosemann</i>	<i>November 16</i>	<i>Daughter of Pat & Craig Rosemann</i>
<i>Stephanie Andrea Zamarron</i>	<i>November 16</i>	<i>Daughter of Vicky Zamarron & Juan Mungula</i> <i>Granddaughter of Alejandra Rodriquez</i> <i>& César Rojas</i>
<i>Nathan Clyde</i>	<i>November 21</i>	<i>Son of Valerie Clyde</i> <i>Sister of Michaela Clyde</i>
<i>Douglas Ramsay</i>	<i>November 17</i>	<i>Son of Carlene Ramsay</i>
<i>James McClintock</i>	<i>November 18</i>	<i>Son of Charles "Chip" & Louise Knoll</i>
<i>Marcia Castillo-Stone</i>	<i>November 19</i>	<i>Daughter of Sissy Castillo</i>
<i>Luke D. Laskowski</i>	<i>November 20</i>	<i>Son of Pam & Mark Laskowski</i>
<i>Javier Ramirez</i>	<i>November 21</i>	<i>Son of Julie Ojeda</i>
<i>Mitchell Rodefer</i>	<i>November 24</i>	<i>Son of Dennis & Susan Rodefer</i>
<i>Sharon Beth Gray</i>	<i>November 25</i>	<i>Daughter of Pam Gray</i>
<i>Amanda Lauren Cecchi</i>	<i>November 27</i>	<i>Daughter of Kim & Steve Cecchi</i>
<i>Zachary Taylor</i>	<i>November 30</i>	<i>Son of Mike Taylor & Karen Adams-Taylor</i>
<i>Zachary Maslanich</i>	<i>November 30</i>	<i>Son of Karen Zimmerman</i>

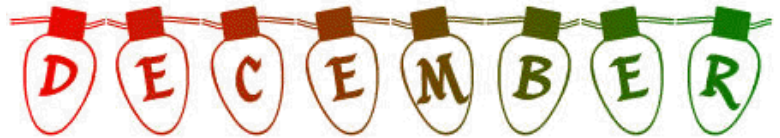
ANNIVERSARIES

<i>Lila Ruffolo</i>	<i>November 1</i>	<i>Daughter of Jenny Selle</i>
<i>Andrew C Perkins</i>	<i>November 3</i>	<i>Son of Richard & Thelma Perkin</i>
<i>Rachel Salomonson</i>	<i>November 15</i>	<i>Daughter of Toni Nesheim & Denny Salomonson</i>
<i>Erin Dinklenburg</i>	<i>November 16</i>	<i>Daughter of Kelli Brooks</i>
<i>Kyle Glueck</i>	<i>November 17</i>	<i>Dolores Krason</i>
<i>Aaron Barrera</i>	<i>November 18</i>	<i>Son of Tammie & Ernie Barrera</i>
<i>Megan Candice Grace</i>	<i>November 18</i>	<i>Daughter of Tim & Marilyn Grace</i>
<i>Nicole Parfitt</i>	<i>November 19</i>	<i>Daughter of Robin Parfitt</i>
<i>Paulene Welch</i>	<i>November 20</i>	<i>Daughter of Grace & Merrel Parsons</i>
<i>Keegan Cray</i>	<i>November 22</i>	<i>Son of Kristin & Ken Willis</i>
<i>Sven Christian Reinhard</i>	<i>November 22</i>	<i>Son of Astrid Reinhard</i>
<i>Kevin Lopez</i>	<i>November 22</i>	<i>Son of Diahnn Estes Lopez</i>
<i>Camden Frisby</i>	<i>November 23</i>	<i>Son of Kris Frisby</i>
<i>Rachel Robertson</i>	<i>November 23</i>	<i>Daughter of Regan Robertson</i>
<i>Mickey T. Lesniak</i>	<i>November 26</i>	<i>Son of Isabelia Lugo</i>
<i>Zachary Maslanich</i>	<i>November 30</i>	<i>Son of Karen Zimmerman</i>

Please let me know if I have omitted a child, misspelled a name or have published an incorrect date. I know how important it is to bereaved families to have their children remembered.
Susan Banks, lanwesmar@comcast.net

Happy Holidays or Not

By Alan Pedersen



As I am writing this on Halloween, it is fitting that the subject matter is one that confronts every bereaved parent each year at this time. We know it is coming, we brace for how we might handle it “this year” as the holiday season waltzes into our lives as the “gift that just keeps on giving” us challenges. Not only must we contemplate our own strategy for handling the season, we must also prepare ourselves for offering the additional support needed by those we serve.

As I have written many times, working with those in grief is very challenging, but even more so when you are grieving yourself. Because many of you are new in leadership, let me offer just a few suggestions that may help you navigate the season while also offering helpful information to your Chapter members who may be very new to this not so joyful, merry-go-round of lights, sound and festivities we refer to as the holiday season.

- **Define your own strategy first** – Just as the airlines tell you in the event of an emergency to put your own oxygen mask on first before trying to help others, you will be more effective at supporting others when you have made your own plan for how you will handle the season. This may mean that you ask veteran members of your Chapter or steering committee to take on additional tasks to help you. Having a discussion with your leadership team about the potential need for additional support for new members this time of year will help your Chapter be more prepared and will lessen the load for any one individual.
- **Practice What You Preach** – There are some basic rules of thumb for handling the holidays which have proven to be of great benefit. In addition to suggesting them to your members, make sure you apply them to your own journey.
- **No rules on rituals and traditions** – Give yourself the freedom to try completely new rituals, alter your rituals or follow all the traditional things you have done in the past. No two people grieve alike; some find comfort in what they have always done and others find what they have done in the past to be excruciating. Give yourself permission to tinker with tradition in whatever manner necessary to help you survive the season.
- **Insist on flexibility** – Don’t let others dictate how you celebrate or don’t celebrate the season. Only participate in what you feel you can handle and leave open the option of canceling events you may have committed to. If those inviting you need an RSVP, let them know you need flexibility, as you may not know in advance how you will feel on any particular day.
- **Always have an exit plan** – If you do attend holiday events, if possible drive yourself or have a ready exit plan. Most seasoned grievers have learned this lesson the hard way, where we were stuck at somebody’s event when we were hit with a massive grief wave in the middle of the party and had no way out. Oftentimes you can tell the host that you may be overcome with emotion and, if so, to please allow you to step outside, into another room or to leave. You do not want to ruin the party but you also need the space to roll with whatever you are feeling.
- **Ask others for help** – Especially for those early in grief, going to the mall or other stores can be overwhelming. Tell those around you what you need. Maybe they can shop for you, wrap gifts for you, or escort your children or others in your family who may need to shop or attend holiday events. People do want to help; they just sometimes need us to let them know how best to support us.
- **Help others** – One of the most suggested tips I hear about the holidays is from those who reached out to others even in their earliest years of grief; that there is something healing about a parent who has no child giving a gift to a child who may have no parent to receive a gift from. Helping others can give us a purpose and make us feel needed and this can be especially helpful during the holidays.

(Continued on page 5)

(Happy Holidays or Not continued from page 4)

- **Always offer hope** – As difficult as the holiday season is, it is especially critical that we offer hope to all we serve. Most of us look back at our first couple of years and wonder how on earth we survived; however, the fact is we did survive. Many of us have found our footing and discovered what works for us. It is so important that those new in grief share in our hope; that we convey to them that as difficult as it seems there can still be good moments. There is also the hope that we can even find joy in the memories of the past and the experiences of the future, if we continue to share their life and honor the love that still remains planted firmly in our hearts.

Thanks for all you do in honor of your children, grandchildren and siblings,

Alan

Borrowed from The Chapter Leadership
Newsletter from The Compassionate Friends
11/1/2016

**BOOK REVIEW****Permission To Mourn:****A New Way To Do Grief**

By Tom Zuba

The death of someone we love cracks us open inviting us to become the person we were born to be. This is the book Tom Zuba wishes he had read after his daughter Erin died. And after his wife Trici died. It's the book he wishes he'd been handed following his son Rory's death. But Tom had to live it. First. Before he could write it. For you. In the beginning, Tom did grief the old way. Repressing, denying, pretending, numbing and stuffing every feeling and every emotion that arose. He created pain on top of pain until he began searching for a new way. A new way to do grief. Once he gave himself permission to mourn, healing began. Along the way, Tom discovered

that: * Grief is not the enemy. Grief can be one of our greatest teachers. * It's the stories we tell that determine whether or not we will heal. * We will always have a relationship with the people we love that have died. * We were not born to suffer. We were born to be radiant. There is a new way to do grief. Let Tom Zuba teach you how.

Borrowed from A JOURNEY TOGETHER
NATIONAL NEWSLETTER OF THE BEREAVED
PARENTS OF THE USA, Fall 2016

**GIFTS OF LOVE**

A love gift is a gift of money or of time given to the Northern Lake County Illinois Chapter of the passionate Friends. It is usually in memory of a child who has died, but donations can also be from individuals who want to honor a relative or friend who has died, a gift of thanksgiving that their own children are alive and well, or simply a gift from someone who wants to help in the work of your chapters. Love gifts are acknowledged each month in the newsletter.

GRIEF

is the love story we keep
telling through tears,
laughter and everything
in between.
The way we tell it has
no bearing on the depth
of our pain

—Francesca Cox



THE RIVER OF GRIEF AND HOW TO KEEP BEING

By Jini Maxwell

When I think about grief, words don't really come to mind. What I do get is the visceral feeling of being too deep underwater. When I think of grief, I imagine the sudden stab of fear that accompanies a realization that you've dived deeper than you first thought: your trapped breath like a weight in your chest, the glimmer of oxygen perpetually too many arm lengths away.

Grief is more than a feeling. It's really an environment, a new condition to your life that you have to meet with your whole self. No amount of swimming against the current, or scrambling up the banks, will make it easier to navigate. Most importantly, it is not a puzzle you can think your way out of. It's something more bodily than that, like the mammalian diving instinct. At first contact with water, an infant's heart rate slows, oxygen moves more slowly, and the glottis spontaneously blocks access to the lungs, all before the conscious mind can react at all. Living with grief is an animal experience, and surviving it requires the action of a body that knows how to keep being when the mind couldn't possibly go on. Your body knows how to keep you safe, not just before your conscious mind, but instead of it. You just have to be in it, and it has to be processed as a part of you.

The bad news is, no amount of time in rivers of grief will prepare you for a new one. The good news is, you didn't drown then and you're not drowning now. Your body is carrying you through the experience on instinct. Take a deep breath and listen to yourself from the toes up. Feelings are hard, inconvenient and unpredictable, but the less time you spend fighting your body's messages, the more you can learn from them.

Survival is, in the end, a game of trust, and not of thought. You have to trust that you can survive your own emotions. You have to feel, even if it's overwhelming. The most important thing to remember about the river of grief is you're not surviving it wrong. It's not taking too long. You're not moving too quickly. The river you are in is just the river you are in, without moral resonance. Trust that you can cope with doing what you need.

It's easier to think of grief as something of a redemption arc, starting with pain and ending with the well-being you knew before. But mourning exists without narrative; it's not something you can itemize in a eulogy. The river's current will stick with you for longer than you expect, and you'll emerge and re-emerge from the worst parts of it feeling as shocked by the ways you've stayed the same as you are by the way you've changed. Like a newborn in a swimming pool, trying to analyze your progress is only going to make the water feel heavier around you. Your body knows what it's doing.

In the moments that you feel yourself entirely submerged, trust that your heart rate may slow, your throat may close, and the pressure may build, but your body knows how to navigate this space, even if your mind does not. Every fiber of you is already working slowly and carefully to navigate this new emotional landscape, if you let it. That's how survival happens—by gentle instinct, not by achievement or analysis. Take the time to be in your body, listen to every soft and hurting part of yourself whenever you feel the urge: beat to beat, without scrutiny, until you can resurface.

However, you're going, you're going okay

Borrowed from A JOURNEY TOGETHER NATIONAL NEWSLETTER OF THE BEREAVED PARENTS OF THE USA, Fall 2016



*"I don't believe we ever actually
recover from grief. We simply
learn how to live our lives the best
way we can around the missing
piece of our heart."*

Pat Siboney, Beautifully Broken, Finding Hope During Loss

**REQUEST FOR PHOTO FOR
POWER POINT/SLIDE PRESENTATION
OF LOVED ONES**

We Remember Them

ANNUAL WORLDWIDE CANDLE LIGHTING CEREMONY

Sunday December 8, 2024, 6:30 pm

Zoom ceremony is Thursday December 5, 2024

Millburn Congregational Church
19073 W Grass Lake Road, Lake Villa, IL 60046

Please consider including a photograph of your loved one in the candle lighting ceremony through a Power-Point presentation. It is very touching to see the faces of the children and brothers and sisters and grandchildren of our fellow members of The Compassionate Friends.

If you have a photo that you would like to include in the presentation, please include your loved one's name, age at time of death, your relationship (son, daughter etc.) as well as your phone number and email address. Attach 1 photo to the email or text. If you are not able to send the photos electronically, you can mail them to me, and I will scan them for the presentation and mail the originals back to you.

If your loved one was included in last year's presentation, we will use the same photographs in the Power-Point presentation.

Please send photo and information by November 30, 2024.

Attach it to an email or send it in a text message or mail your photo to:

Susan Banks 1427 Clavey Lane Gurnee, IL 60031/email; Lanwesmar@comcast.net
/847.366.9375



The Compassionate Friends
Northern Lake County Chapter
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

We Remember Them

*The Compassionate Friends of Northern Lake County
invites you and your family and friends
to the Worldwide Children's Candle Lighting Ceremony*

*"We come together in memory of a precious child whose light burnt so
brightly, yet so briefly. These children, who have died from so many
causes and at all ages, are forever a part of our lives.*

Sunday, December 8, 2024 ~ 6:30 p.m.

Millburn Congregational United Church of Christ

** Note that road construction has created a new Grass Lake Rd & changed
the access to the building which is now on Old Town Court.*

Candles are provided for everyone at no cost.

You are invited to stay for refreshments after the ceremony.

You are welcome to bring a dessert or snack to share if you like.

Coffee and water will be provided.

*A table & display board will be provided for families who would like
to post photos
and/or share mementos of their children and siblings and
grandchildren.*

Questions? Please call Susan 847.366.9375/email Lanwesmar@comcast.net



IN LOVING MEMORY LUMINARIES – order form



The Northern Lake Co IL Chapter of The Compassionate Friends is offering an additional opportunity for bereaved families to remember their loved ones during the annual Candle Lighting Ceremony on Sunday December 8, 2024. The ceremony will be at the Millburn Congregational Church, 19073 W. Old Grass Lake Rd, Lake Villa, IL 60046 at 6:30 p.m.

The luminary is an opaque bag that has a weight and a flameless, battery-operated candle inside of it. The label on the outside will read “In Loving Memory” and your child’s or sibling’s name will be printed on it. The luminaries will be used to line the hallway of the Millburn church that leads to the sanctuary where the candle lighting ceremony is held. The soft light will provide a touching and welcoming entrance to the ceremony. The luminaries will be placed in alphabetical order by last name so that you can easily find your luminary and take it home with you.

We are asking a donation of \$5. for each luminary but no one will be refused. The donations pay for the materials for the luminaries and the remainder will go toward chapter activities and materials.

If you have questions, please call Susan at 847.366.9375. **Please mail in by November 30, 2024.**

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I/we would like to order _____ (total no.) luminaries in memory of the following:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Ordered by (your name): _____

Phone number: _____ Email address: _____

Enclosed Amount: \$ _____ Check #: _____

Please make checks to: “NO LAKE CO TCF”
Mail to: No Lake Co TCF – 1427 Clavey Lane Gurnee, IL 60031

LOVE GIFTS

Enclosed in a check in the amount of _____ to be used as follows (check all that apply):

In loving memory of _____

In honor of _____

Sponsor the newsletter for _____ month) (\$25 pays ½ monthly cost)

Pay for a book for the chapter's Lending Library _____

Check here to keep receiving the newsletter _____

It is important for our children to be remembered. Please understand that for your child to be included in the "special days" list each month in the newsletter, you must fill out this form that gives us permission to list this information. If you are making a donation, please make the check payable to **The Compassionate Friends**. Return to **Rosita Hernandez 3016 16th Place, North Chicago, IL 60064. rosehernandez@juno.com**

We welcome your comments and/or items submitted for use in the newsletter. Short articles, poems, or book reviews are always appreciated. Please include the author of any written works. Send your items for the newsletter to Susan Banks Lanwesmar@comcast.net 1427 Clavey Lane Gurnee, IL 60031.

The Compassionate Friends is a non-profit, self-help organization offering friendship and understanding to bereaved families. Its' mission is to assist them in the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child and to provide information and education to help others to be supportive

TCF National Office - 48660 Pontiac Trail, #930808, Wixom, MI - 48393 PH 877-969-0010 - Fax: 630-990-0246. The Compassionate Friends home page can be found at www.compassionatefriends.org

Steering Committee 2023 – 2024

CHAPTER LEADERSHIP Susan Banks 847-366-9375 lanwesmar@comcast.net – Son, Westley Banks Age 21 of suicide

TREASURER Rosita Hernandez 847-602-0698 rosehernandez@juno.com Daughter, Victoria Pickett Age 26 of suicide

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

HOSPITALITY Kris Frisby 847-366-3170 Kefrisby88@comcast.net Son, Camden Frisby Age 15 of suicide.

SECRETARY / LIBRARIAN

REMEMBRANCE SECRETARY Shannon Seay 224-456-2891 Seayseven1@comcast.net Daughter, Ashley Seay Age 17 Auto accident.

NEWSLETTER EDITOR Susan Banks 847-366-9375 lanwesmar@comcast.net – Son, Westley Banks Age 21 of suicide

NEWSLETTER PRINTING & MAILING Toni Nesheim 847-204-7585 tnesheim@sbcglobal.net & Denny Salomonson, 847-223-7353 drdeno@sbcglobal.net - Daughter, Rachel Salomonson, 19 Auto accident

WOODLAND WALK COORDINATORS Christine Pado 847-455-6642 chpado@gmail.com - Daughter Lindsay Wilcynski Age 29 Pulmonary Embolism

FACILITATORS AT HOLY FAMILY CATHOLIC CHURCH WAUKEGAN, IL. SPANISH AND ENGLISH. Mirtha Vidal 847-293-1658 mirthavidal1213@yahoo.com & Raphael Vidal rvidal1027@yahoo.com, Son Raphael Vidal age 17 of suicide. Mirtha is available by phone call or email.

FACILITADORES EN HOLY FAMILY CATHOLIC CHURCH WAUKEGAN, IL. Española e inglés. Mirtha Vidal 847-293-1658 mirthavidal1213@yahoo.com & Raphael Vidal rvidal1027@yahoo.com, Hijo Raphael Vidal de 17 años de suicidio. Mirtha está disponible por teléfono o correo electrónico.

Northern Lake County IL Chapter #1511 <http://www.iltcf.org/index.html>

NORTHERN LAKE COUNTY COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS FACEBOOK

Facebook Pages for Siblings - The Sounds of the Siblings: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/21358475781/>

TCF SIBS: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/tcfsibs/>