



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

The Compassionate Friends E-Newsletter

April, 2011

Dear karen,

We welcome you to the latest issue of The Compassionate Friends e-newsletter where we try to keep you updated on all the latest TCF news. We hope you enjoy this issue!

Always in their memory,

Pat Loder
Executive Director
The Compassionate Friends

**National Conference Details
Updated**
**Keynoters Announced; Online Registration
Available;**
**July 15-17 National Conference in Minneapolis
Rapidly Approaching!**



In just one month, a lot of details have been released regarding TCF's upcoming 34th National Conference rapidly approaching in Minneapolis, MN July 15-17, 2011.

Here's a final list of our four outstanding keynote speakers:

- David Morrell, bereaved parent and grandparent, author of the poignant *Fireflies*, but perhaps best known for creating Rambo (adapted to the big screen with Sylvester Stallone), will be the Saturday evening keynote speaker at TCF's 34th National Conference.
- Carol Kearns, author of *Sugar Cookies* and a *Nightmare* has become a noted psychologist following the death of her 7-year-old daughter who was swept out to sea by a rogue wave.
- Mary Rondeau Westra recently published her memoir *After the Murder*

Comments from those attending previous TCF National Conferences

Joan: *This will be our 5th conference--each one is different, and healing in a new way.*

Angie: *It was a very comforting thing for me at the time. I even wrote a poem to post there that weekend. It was instrumental in my grieving and healing process.*

Grace: *I attended last year, it was my first conference. My daughter passed on less than 3 months at that time, my pain soooo raw, I could barely talk . . . I hesitated going until the last minute, but made an excellent move, I felt so connected and not alone. I am sure I will be going again this year, driving all the way from Canada.*

Susan: *If you have the means to attend, I suggest you go. I went last year for the first time and can't imagine not going this year . . . I can't wait to feel this good again!*

Rhonda: *I also went for the first time last year . . . I was 11 months into my grief . . . I am so glad that I attended. It was incredible. Just being with all those people who are just like you . . . having all lost a child . . . the most compassionate and wonderful families you will ever meet . . . There are no words . . . The workshops are so helpful and the events are just breathtaking . . . If you possibly can, please attend.*

Dana: *I'm really looking forward to this year's*

of *My Son*, following the brutal and senseless death of her son Peter. She has recently presented at the Art of Recover Workshop sponsored by the Minnesota State Arts Board and the Office of Justice Programs.

- Mitch Carmody, author of *Letters to My Son*, is a bereaved parent and twice bereaved sibling whose popular workshop "Whispers of Love, Signs from Our Children" is always met with anticipation. He performs interpretive sign language and is an accomplished artist and creator of the innovative 20 Faces of Grief and the S.T.A.I.R.S. model of grief staging.

Registration is now open both online and by mail and registrations are pouring into the office. You can download a complete Registration Brochure at [Compassionate Friends 2011 National Conference](#). Hotel rooms at the host hotel, Sheraton Bloomington Hotel Minneapolis South are still available at discounted conference rates, although the room block is being filled fast. You can reserve your room online or by calling the hotel, but we recommend reserving your room soon to avoid disappointment. See details on national conference page.

Everything is proceeding on-schedule for another conference full of friendship, hope, and understanding. As well as the great keynote speakers, there will be over 100 workshops revolving around most facets of life after the death of a child, sibling, or grandchild. There's a complete sibling program and several workshops for those who have no surviving children. There will also be many sharing sessions, hospitality suites, the Butterfly Boutique, and a completely stocked bookstore courtesy of our friends at Centering Corporation. The conference will be capped off by Sunday's twelfth Compassionate Friends Walk to Remember.

Friday evening is a free time for those attending, but special arrangements have been made for a performance of "Best of How to Talk Minnesotan The Musical," the state's longest running and most successful homegrown musical comedy playing to an estimated 1 million visitors.

Don't miss this opportunity! Whether you are a first-timer or have attended many conferences, please read [Tips to Help You Have a Positive Conference Experience](#).

We look forward to seeing you in Minneapolis!

TCF Walk to Remember® Features Many Ways to Honor a Child's Memory and Support TCF!

**Sponsorships; "Friends Asking Friends" Fundraiser;
Submit A Child's Name to Be Carried in the Walk**

With the upcoming TCF Walk to Remember July 17, you have several opportunities to have a special child remembered while supporting TCF in its mission of helping bereaved families.

1. **Seek personal sponsors.** If you are going to be participating in the Walk to Remember in Minneapolis, you can ask friends, relatives, and business acquaintances to personally sponsor you for the Walk through a donation. Every dollar donated by sponsors and our walkers will be used to support TCF programs across the country. For a sponsorship form, download [I'd like to do more!](#)
2. **"Friends Asking Friends" Virtual Walk Fundraiser:** Honor the memory of a special child and support the work of The Compassionate Friends by building a remembrance website in the sixth "Friends Asking Friends" virtual Walk fundraiser. To learn how, go to [TCF "Friends Asking Friends" Fundraiser](#). Many chapters will be raising funds, as well as the national organization, and all dollars raised will be used to help bereaved families across the United States. All teams raising funds through this program by June 24 will be represented by name on a banner to be carried during the Walk to Remember in Minneapolis July 17!

conference in Minnesota . . . it's really hard to describe what it's like to attend (a) conference. Being with . . . other people who know the heart searing pain of losing a child is humbling and healing. Love and compassion permeates every part of the conference . . . I can't think of a better gift for a bereaved parent to give themselves than to attend a TCF conference and experience the healing that can be found there . . . and perhaps to lighten the load of another hurting parent or sibling.

Age Progression Photo Services Offered

When a child dies, the child remains forever in our memories but never ages. Many parents have expressed an interest in knowing what their child would have looked like had he or she lived. The Compassionate Friends has teamed up with Phojoe Photo, one of the top Age Progression specialists in the country to offer our members this service.

All orders are discounted 15% if you enter through TCF's portal and follow the instructions found on the Phojoe Photo Page. Also available are many other services including photo manipulation (such as adding a child's picture to a family portrait).

For examples and more details, visit [Phojoe Photo Age Progression Services](#).

Join TCF's Facebook Page for Additional Support!

TCF's Facebook Page is a proven support area for bereaved families to come and talk about their grief. Here are a few comments from some of our more than 20,000 Facebook members!

Sandra: I came to TCF looking for hope. I have stayed because I found much more than that.

Brenda: I was referred to a therapist, but felt like I

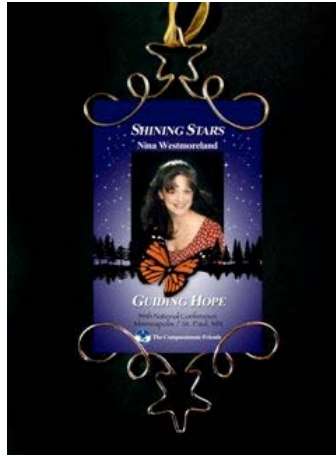
3. **Submit a Child's Name** To Be Carried in the Walk! We do not want any child to be forgotten and that's why dozens of volunteers are ready to carry the name of a special child in your life during the Walk to Remember. If you have a child's name to be carried, there is no charge (although donations are tremendously appreciated and help us in our outreach to bereaved families across the country). For more information, please visit the submission form page with a letter from our executive director Pat Loder [Submit a Child's Name Here!](#)

Order Conference Memento "Star of Hope" Online

Every year the conference committee makes available a unique memento and this year it is the "Star of Hope." A rectangular version of the conference logo is the basis for the Star of Hope and includes silhouetted pine trees, gleaming stars, and a single butterfly where the child's picture will be inserted with his or her name. That logo insert with picture will be artistically framed by a 4"X5" silver, vertical wire star-frame ornament with an attached ribbon for hanging. These will all be on display at the conference!

Minimum donation for each picture submitted remains \$10 again this year for those ordering one and picking it up at the end of the conference. If you cannot attend the conference and would like to have the picture sent to you, an additional \$5 donation is requested to cover postage and handling.

The sale of this memento helps to fund the tremendous costs involved with putting on a TCF National Conference. You may order the Star of Hope at the [Photo Upload Page](#) on TCF's national website.



Click Star of Hope to see larger image

Quote of the Month

That was and still is the great disaster of my life--that lovely, lovely little boy . . . There's no tragedy in life like the death of a child. Things never get back to the way they were before.

~ President Dwight D. Eisenhower

The Best of *We Need Not Walk Alone*

Every month, TCF's e-newsletter features a selected story from an early issue of TCF's national award winning publication *We Need Not Walk Alone*. We also include a past column from the popular *WNNWA* "Ask Dr. Paulson," which answers questions related to sibling grief and its effect on the family.

We Need Not Walk Alone is available by [subscription](#) or with any [patron level donation](#).

Closure: Is It a Reality?

By Carole Dyck

The use of the word "closure" is often heard in public circles or in the media especially after a tragedy and implies finality. The word comes with the sense that there will be a time, day, or event like a funeral that marks when a grieving person will be "healed" or "over it," as though it were a disease and you could magically take a pill to be cured. There is an expectation that when

needed to be able to express myself to someone who truly understood the horrific pain that comes from losing a child. I found The Compassionate Friends website quite by accident and am so glad that I did. I have met the most wonderful and compassionate people within this website.

Rick: *This Facebook page gives me a place to express feelings that no one else understands, and gives me opportunity to support others in this journey we all face.*

Rekha: *This is the only website you can pour your Heart out and nobody will judge you. We are not here by choice, but this is a very comforting zone!!!!*

Please join our TCF/USA Facebook family. Tell us about your child, sibling, or grandchild or other loved one and find support in the words of others. Every day we also provide thought provoking questions, grief quotes, links to grief stories, as well as TCF news, such as updates on the National Conference, Worldwide Candle Lighting, and other TCF programs.

Find us on Facebook 

Nebraska Regional Conference

You can still register for the Omaha Nebraska regional conference March 31-April 2, 2011.

For more information, visit [Regional Conferences](#).

The Open to Hope Show

The Open to Hope Show, with the same great hosts has now replaced the popular *Healing the Grieving Heart*. The web radio show features grief experts, Dr. Gloria Horsley and Dr. Heidi Horsley, who discuss the many aspects of bereavement, with a main focus on the death of a child and its effects on the family. Learn more and see details about the April shows.

[\[Learn More\]](#)

The Compassionate Friends

the eulogies are said and the casseroles are gone, the grief somehow magically goes away. *The truth is that those of us who are in TCF realize that the death of a child or sibling changes our lives forever, and we will never truly "be over it."*

Yes, we will not have the intensity of the pain and sorrow we had at the beginning of our grief. We will go on with life . . .

[\[Read More\]](#)

(The Best of) Ask Dr. Paulson

Mary A. Paulson, PhD, is a bereaved sibling as well as a child and adolescent psychologist at Harding Hospital in Worthington, Ohio. Her question and answer column, aimed at bereaved siblings and the family that loves them, has appeared in TCF's national magazine, *We Need Not Walk Alone*, for the past 15 years.

Q. My stepdaughter was killed by a drunk driver. My biological daughter, who loved her as if she were related by blood, has told me that she doesn't feel right about grieving, because that is the message she has received from others. I have tried to reassure her that her grief is natural, but my husband and his son do seem to act as if our grief is not as bad as theirs. How should we handle this?

A. An odd thing happens during the grieving process. Each person is usually so overwhelmed by his or her own grief that he or she has difficulty helping . . .

[\[Read More\]](#)

Thank you for letting us come into your homes to bring you the latest news from The Compassionate Friends National Office.

Sincerely,

E-Newsletter
The Compassionate Friends

*Do you know someone who might benefit from receiving this newsletter?
Please feel free to forward this email using the convenient forward below.*

facebook



Join TCF on Facebook, participate in grief posts and discussions and learn all the latest TCF news first!

When wishing to correspond with The Compassionate Friends, please send e-mails to nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org

recommends this show as a grief/loss resource.

Please Consider a Donation to Help Us Help Others Who Are Grieving!

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