



The Compassionate Friend
Eugene OR Chapter
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

January / February 2014
eugenecompassionatefriends.org
eugenecompassionatefriends@gmail.com

Welcome to Compassionate Friends

Meetings

1st Wednesday of the month
@ 7:00pm.

Location

St. Mary's Catholic Church
1062 Charnelton Street
No religious affiliation
18 & older.

Parking 10th • between
Charnelton Street and Lincon Street
Entrance - West end of the
parking lot.

Especially to those newly bereaved who have joined us for the first time. The Compassionate Friends is a voluntary self help organization offering support, understanding and hope for the future. All bereaved parents are welcome.

We are sorry we had to meet under such circumstances, but we are glad you found us. We would like to do all we can to help you through these times. We cannot hurry you through it or take away the pain, but we can help you understand more about what you are going through. Sometimes just knowing what you are feeling is normal can be helpful.

We are other parents who have experienced the death of a child and offer understanding and support through our monthly meetings, a lending library, support material and a listening ear. We have learned the key to survival for bereaved families is communication.

We ask that you give us more than one meeting to decide if the Compassionate Friends is for you. It takes courage to attend your first meeting, but those who do come find an atmosphere of understanding from other parents and siblings who are having or have experienced the feelings of grief that you are now feeling.



Facilitators

Jenny Collet 541-554-9029

Tori Thornton 541-912-5322

Gayle Nelson 541-255-6027

January Angel Days

Vincent Mack	January 1
Maven Williston	January 4
Matthew David Bartling	January 7
Jason Eric Petchell Waterman	January 10
Elari Louise	January 11
Marcus Adam Pelta	January 13
Jesse Daniel Nelson	January 14
Jonathon Lee Schive	January 17
Nima Salis Gibha	January 21
Casey Michael Carroll	January 21
Cassandra Ann Chapman	January 23
Nickolas (Nick) James Gillespie	January 27
Rebecca Huffman	January 27
Landen David	January 29

*please email for any changes or additions
leeannagost@yahoo.com*

“The Compassionate Friends is about transforming the pain of grief into the elixir of hope. It takes people out of the isolation society imposes on the bereaved and lets them express their grief naturally. With the shedding of tears, healing comes. And the newly bereaved get to see people who have survived and are learning to live and love again.”

~ Simon Stephens, founder of The Compassionate Friends



“To Where You Are”

Who can say for certain
Maybe you're still here
I feel you all around me
Your memory's so clear

Deep in the stillness
I can hear you speak
You're still an inspiration
Can it be
That you are mine
Forever love
And you are watching over me from up above

Fly me up to where you are
Beyond the distant star
I wish upon tonight
To see you smile
If only for awhile to know you're there
A breath away's not far
To where you are

Are you gently sleeping
Here inside my dream
And isn't faith believing
All power can't be seen

As my heart holds you
Just one beat away
I cherish all you gave me everyday
'Cause you are my
Forever love
Watching me from up above

And I believe
That angels breathe
And that love will live on and never leave

Fly me up
To where you are
Beyond the distant star
I wish upon tonight
To see you smile
If only for awhile
To know you're there
A breath away's not far
To where you are

I know you're there
A breath away's not far
To where you are

ARTISTS:

music & lyrics by Richard Marx & Linda Thompson



Personal Story contributed by Dustin's mom & dad

DUSTIN'S LIVING WILL

Both tears and smiles come easily to Ray and Kathy Westmoreland when they talk about their only child Dustin Blues Westmoreland. He died in July of 2006 at age 26, just five years after his heart transplant. Dustin brought such incredible joy to their lives, which is locked in their eyes as they talk of the memories of their son. The child whose memories are in those tears and smiles.

When Dustin's heart was failing, he was put on a transplant list to receive a donor heart. Kathy recalls that after a compatible heart donor was found, Dustin questioned the doctor, "If I accept this heart, will I still be able to donate my organs after I die"? Only when he was assured that he would be able to donate his own organs did Dustin agree to the surgery.

That wonderful, life-saving heart gave Dustin five more years and his parents five more years of time with their loving son.

Dustin was a very active young man. His parents say he had a passion for "cars, wheels, tires, mudding, and jacked up trucks".

A few months before he died, he special ordered a set of tires and wheels through Les Schwab. He never got to use them. His donated heart was beginning to fail, as his own had," said Kathy.

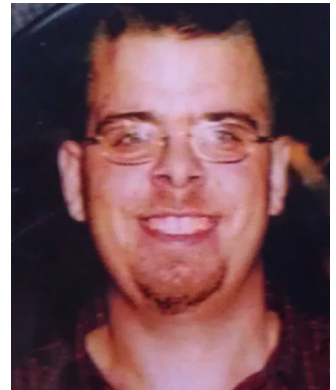
To honor Dustin's memory and help others in need of donated organs, Kathy and Ray initiated a partnership between Les Schwab Tires and 'Donate Life Northwest'- a transplant organization for Oregon and southwestern Washington.

Now, all Les Schwab stores in Eugene/Springfield area and 40 stores across western US provide 'Donate Life' brochures at the counter. Ray and Kathy restock the

brochures at the local stores.

When Dustin died, his wish was granted: His corneas were harvested and given to two women with blurry vision who now have clear vision. Dustin's bones, skin, soft tissue, veins, cartilage, and hips were the other gifts he gave to assist over 50 people.

"That is just the kind of guy Dustin was, always thinking of others before himself," Kathy and Ray say proudly."



PERSONAL STORY

YOU ARE INVITED to submit an original writing about your *grief journey* experiences. Writing can be healing for ourselves and sharing our experience is often helpful for other people on this *journey*.

Include your name, child's name, your story and how your child/grandchild/sibling died

*submit writing & attached photo (optional)
to leeannagost@yahoo.com*



WHEN YOU WRITE FROM THE HEART, you not only light the dark path of your readers, you light your own way as well.

~ Marjorie Holmes

Grief: Coping with reminders after a loss

Grief doesn't magically end at a certain point after a loved one's death. Reminders often bring back the pain of loss. Here's help coping — and healing.

When a loved one dies, you might be faced with grief over your loss again and again — sometimes even years later. Feelings of grief might return on the anniversary of your loved one's death, birthday or other special days throughout the year.

These feelings, sometimes called an anniversary reaction, aren't necessarily a setback in the grieving process. They're a reflection that your loved one's life was important to you.

To continue on the path toward healing, know what to expect — and how to cope with reminders of your loss.

Reminders can be anywhere

Certain reminders of your loved one might be inevitable, especially on holidays, birthdays, anniversaries and other special days that follow your loved one's death.

Reminders aren't just tied to the calendar, though. They can be tied to sights, sounds and smells — and they can ambush you. You might suddenly be flooded with emotions when you drive by the restaurant your partner loved or when you hear your child's favorite song. Even memorial celebrations for others can trigger the pain of your own loss.



What to expect when grief returns

Anniversary reactions can last for days at a time or — in more extreme cases — much longer. During an anniversary reaction you might experience:

- Sadness
- Loneliness
- Anger
- Anxiety
- Trouble sleeping
- Fatigue
- Pain

Anniversary reactions can also evoke powerful memories of the feelings and events surrounding your loved one's death. For example, you might remember in great detail where you were and what you were doing when your loved one died.

source: By Mayo Clinic staff
<http://www.griefnet.org/>



QUOTES

When someone you love becomes a memory, the memory becomes a treasure. ~Author Unknown

Although it's difficult today to see beyond the sorrow, May looking back in memory help comfort you tomorrow. ~Author Unknown

AN UGLY PAIR OF SHOES

I am wearing a pair of shoes.

They are ugly shoes,
uncomfortable shoes,
I hate my shoes.



Each day I wear them, and each day
I wish I had another pair.

Some days my shoes hurt so bad that I do not think
I can take another step.

Yet, I continue to wear them.

I get funny looks wearing these shoes; they are
looks of sympathy.

I can tell in others' eyes that they are glad they are
my shoes and not theirs.

They **never** talk about my shoes.

To learn how awful my shoes are might make them
uncomfortable.

To truly understand these shoes you must walk in
them. But, once you put them on, you can never
take them off.

I now realize that I am not the only one who wears
these shoes. There are many pairs in this world.

Some women are like me and ache daily as they try
to walk in them.

Some have learned how to walk in them so they
don't hurt quite as much.

Some have worn these shoes so long that days will
go by before they think about how much they hurt.

No woman deserves to wear these shoes. Yet, be-
cause of these shoes, I am a stronger woman. These
shoes have given me strength to face anything.

They have made me who I am.

I will forever walk in the shoes of a woman who
has lost a child.

Source: BKTH website, submitted by Elaine

February Angel Days

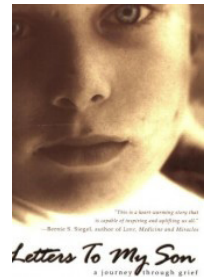
Daryl Steven Stanford	February 5
Jack Harnsongkram	February 5
Lawrence Korte	February 7
Nathan Paul Buck	February 9
Steven Paul Reymundo	February 11
Starling	February 12
Keegan	February 16
Dominic Shaun Rusk	February 16
Cory Christopher	February 16
Nathan Daniel McBryde	February 17
Hailey Grace Cooper	February 20
Laurel Jeanne Gieber Waterhouse	February 24
January Suzanne Storm	February 25

*please email for any changes or additions
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Book Review

Letters to My Son
a journey through grief
-by Mitch Carmody

Authored by a grieving father whose 9-year-old son died following a two-year battle with a recurring malignant brain tumor. During the months that followed his son's death, the author wrote letters and poems to him posthumously as a catharsis for his grief. The book also describes a trip to Mexico where a spiritual healing occurred as well as compelling evidence of life after death and the reality of miracles. A very unique book that documents an incredible journey of faith and the power of love.



This book is available in the Eugene TCF Library.

Need to talk? We welcome your calls.

Eugene Chapter members are available to talk:

- Danelle Piercey • 541-525-4857
- Karen Hazelwood-Dantone • 541-991-0834
- Kathy Westmoreland • 541-746-5749
- Kathleen Ybanez • 541-689-0824
- Jenny Collet • 541-554-9029
- Tori Thornton • 541-912-5322
- Gayle Nelson • 541-255-6027





Steering Committee Meeting

For all Members . . .

Are you curious about how our support group is organized and planned? Do you have ideas or suggestions for us? Our monthly meetings are open to all support group members. You are always welcome. For location, date, time, and info, please call

Tori Thornton 541-912-5322
 Gayle Nelson 541-255-6027
 Jenny Collet 541-554-9029

Volunteers needed

1. Library
2. Public Relations

Eugene Compassionate Friends

Facilitators Gayle, Jenny, Tori
 Library *Kathy, Ray, _____*
 Email Tori
 Treasurer Gayle
 Member List Tori
 Website Leeann
 Newsletter Leeann
 Public Relations _____

website

eugenecompassionatefriends.org
 newsletters under: Resources

email

eugenecompassionatefriends@gmail.com



A GOOD MEMORY

YOU ARE INVITED to submit a short original writing about "a good memory".

Include:

1. your name
2. child's name
3. your relationship (exp: mother)
4. A good memory with your child/grandchild/sibling
5. Angel date - optional
6. Age @ angel date - optional
7. photo optional

submit to
 leeannagost@yahoo.com

37th TCF NATIONAL CONFERENCE

July 11-13, 2014 * Chicago, IL



"Miles of Compassion through The Winds of Hope" is the theme of next year's event which promises more of this year's great national conference experience, which ended in Boston to a standing ovation at the Sunday closing. The 2014 conference will be held at the Hyatt Regency O'Hare right near the airport. We'll keep you updated with details here, on the national website as well as on our TCF/USA Facebook Page and elsewhere as they become available. Plan to come and be a part of this heartwarming experience!

2014 Regional Annual Retreat

Seabeck, WA Spring (2014)
 Check back for 2014 dates

Seabeck Conference Center on Hood Canal

2013-Cost was \$210 per person (shared room) 2nights lodging & 6 meals Seattle King County TCF 206.241.1139

* There are workshops, candlelighting ceremony, sharing groups, reflection room, children's memorial garden, burden basket and a children's grief support program for ages 6-16. tcfmarge@aol.com

Hospice of Sacred Heart Bereavement Group

pre-registration class required
 541.461.7550

Tues 10:30-12pm

Jan 21 - March 4 - **FULL**
 April 22 - June 3
 July 15 - Aug 26
 Oct 14 - Nov 25

Wed 5:30-7pm

Feb 12 - Mar 26
 May 14 - June 25
 Aug 13 - Sept 24
 Nov 12 - Dec 17

contribution by Ruth Anne

Online Links . . .

Bereaved parents
<http://www.bereavedparentsusa.org>

Support for parents who have no surviving children
alivealone.org

Parents of Murdered Children
pomc.com

Pregnancy & Infant Loss Support
nationalshare.org

Parents of veterans
iava.org/

KIDS - courageouskidsoregon.org