

JULY / AUGUST

# EUGENE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

**Welcome to The Compassionate Friends**

Especially to those newly bereaved mothers and fathers

## DEATH OF A SON

One of the most tragic and traumatic losses life can deal out to a person is the death of a son. The death of a son means the loss of more than just a precious life. It represents the loss of future experiences and future hopes. No parent is prepared for the loss of a child, and when it happens, their world is changed forever. The grief, guilt, and anguish felt are acute and lasting. Parents can find comfort in knowing that their grief and mourning are normal and that many other parents have lived through similar tragedies.

<http://www.familyfriendpoems.com>



**The Compassionate Friends**

*Eugene OR Chapter*

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

Meetings

1st Wednesday of the month @ 7:00pm

Location

Lane Co. Mental Health Bldg

2411 MLK Jr. Blvd.

(across from Autzen Stadium  
turn on Scout Access Road)

No religious affiliation • 18 & older

Facilitators

Jenny Collet 541-554-9029

Tori Thornton 541-912-5322

Gayle Nelson 541-255-6027

Louie had one of those souls that was so buoyant, so alive, so present that I don't feel he is ever going to be gone from my life."

*Laura Hillenbrand*

## Angel By Your Side



I can't say that everything's okay  
'Cause I can see the tears you're crying  
And I can't promise to take the pain away  
But you can know I won't stop trying

### *[Chorus]*

I'll be the angel by your side  
I will get you through the night  
I'll be the strength you can't provide on your own  
'Cause when you're down and out of time  
And you think you've lost the fight  
Let me be the angel  
The angel by side

I know it feels like you're running out of faith  
'Cause it's so hard to keep believing  
But if I can bring a smile back to your face  
If for a moment, you'll forget all about it

### *[Chorus]*

I'll be the angel by your side  
I will get you through the night  
I'll be the strength you can't provide on your own  
'Cause when you're down and out of time  
And you think you've lost the fight  
Let me be the angel  
The angel by your side

'Cause this won't be the last time  
You'll need a little hope  
But I want to be the first to let you know

### *[Chorus]*

I'll be the angel by your side  
I will get you through the night  
I'll be the strength you can't provide on your own  
'Cause when you're down and out of time  
And you think you've lost the fight  
Let me be the angel  
The angel by your side

*Francesca Battistelli.*

### Eugene Compassionate Friends

Facilitators Jenny, Tori, Gayle  
Library Sarah & Cedar  
Email Tori  
Treasurer Gayle  
Member List Tori  
Website Leeann  
Newsletter Leeann  
Proof Reader Ruth Anne

Public Relations [volunteer needed](#)

#### website

[eugenecompassionatefriends.org](http://eugenecompassionatefriends.org)  
newsletters are under: Resources

#### email

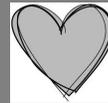
[eugenecompassionatefriends@gmail.com](mailto:eugenecompassionatefriends@gmail.com)

#### 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

Contributions welcome  
articles and photos  
email: [leeannagost@yahoo.com](mailto:leeannagost@yahoo.com)



### Welcome to The Compassionate Friends

#### 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.

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.

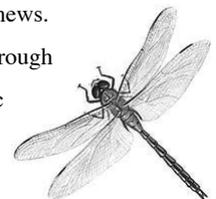
We are other parents who have experienced the death of a child and offer understanding and support through our monthly meetings, a lending library, support material and a listening ear. We have learned the key to survival for bereaved families is communication.

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.

## Twelve Ways to Help the Bereaved

- By being there
- By tolerating silences
- By listening in an accepting and non-judgmental way
- Avoid the use of clichés such as "Think of all the good times", "You can always have another child"
- By encouraging them to talk about the deceased
- Be practical in your offer of support by minding children or cooking
- By mentioning the dead persons name
- Accept that tears are normal and healthy
- Don't try to fill in conversations with a lot of outside news.
- Remember that grief may take many years to work through
- Acknowledge birthdays, death dates, anniversaries etc
- By accepting that you cannot make them feel better

<http://www.bpusacromwellct.org>



## July Angel Days

**Brodee Charles Crabb**

**James Jacobsen Gutierrez**

**Roger Ted Clausel**

**T.J. Reed Zibelli**

**Gary Daniel Clausel**

**Lee Hubbard Guzman-Dillon**

**Brittney Nicole Knouf**

**Shahzad Shahkeel Sheikh**

**Letti's Brother**

**Gunnar Halsey Wool**



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

## August Angel Days

**Jeffrey Daniel Garcia**

**Gina Marie Belisle-Stalone**

**Cody Patrick Neilan (Ybanez)**

**Vaclav Hajek**

**Rhonda Lynn Jensen**

**Stuart James Haslip**

**Shaylinn Pearl Manchester**

**Clay Weil Agost**

# SIBLINGS SPEAK OUT

Having a brother or sister die creates a family crisis. Some of us have extreme reactions while others react as if we've never heard the news. Many things affect the way we behave, what we think, and how we feel. Some of us may know all the facts of what caused our sibling's death, while some of us may be confused by what we overheard.

We may believe we were not included in what happened, or feel overlooked by the adults.

We may wonder why this had to happen. We may even think we are to blame, even when others say we were not. All of us have thoughts and feelings we are afraid to share.

Other siblings have probably felt very much the same way we do at times. Reading the thoughts below of other siblings may encourage us to talk with adults we trust, to attend a sibling support group meeting or write our feelings in a diary. Siblings see if you relate to any of the following statements.

- Children grieve too, in our own way, in our own time. We grieve differently from adults. Sometimes we appear not to be grieving at all.

- We do not want to be forgotten while our parents grieve. Parents often seem to emphasize the child that died instead of those of us who are living.

- We need to know we are loved as much as our brother or sister who died. Sometimes we wonder if we would be missed as much.

- We are afraid someone else will die. We want to be reassured but don't know what questions to ask.

- Our relationship with our dead brother or sister was different from the relationship we had with our parents. We will not grieve the same as our parents will.

- We know our sibling was not perfect. We know that he/she did things that were wrong. Please do not make an "angel" out of her or place him on a pedestal.

- Just because siblings are not grieving or speaking openly doesn't mean that they aren't grieving in private. Often we talk with our friends or other adults.

- We will grieve when we are ready. Please do not rush us or tell us we aren't doing it right. When we are not willing to talk about our dead brother or sister, it may be because we are trying to protect our parents. We do not want to make our parents cry or hurt more.

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

# VACATIONS

By: Betty Ewart • Bereaved Mother

There is not a lot written about vacation time even though this can be a very difficult time. I remember so well the first July vacation we took after Ruthie's death in April. I could not face going and "leaving her" and going to all the places we had



been in the past with her. That is one of the "firsts." Here are some hints that may help if you are dreading vacation time. By the way, there is never a time that you don't think of vacations past but the memories get less painful and you begin to forge new memories.

*Where do we go?*

There is no good answer to that. Yes, if you go where you have always gone on vacations, memories will flood in. But if you choose a totally new place, we found that you just wonder how he/she would have liked it here, what would she have done, etc. So, you take your choice and expect the feelings and plan for them.

*What do we do if we visit relatives?*

Talk to them. Tell them that it is hard and that it is alright to talk about your child – when they see that you welcome hearing the name and having them share memories they have, everyone can relax

*Will I forget her/him?*

Don't fear! You can never forget just because you are away from home memories. Don't be afraid to talk about her/him and let them be a part of things.

*Traveling companion?*

Remember that you can not really leave your grief at home when you go on vacation. It will go with you. Plan for it and pack for it. Don't over-schedule the days and activities. You won't feel like doing as much, perhaps, as usual, and you may tire more easily. Take along some reading material – perhaps on grief but some light reading too.

Just remember that bereaved families and people need a respite from the daily stresses of work and of life and grief. Also know that often the anticipation is worse than the actual event. If you have been through Christmas, a birthday or a death anniversary, etc., you may remember that the weeks or days before may be worrisome and you may not be sure how you will get through it, but suddenly the day is there and over and it wasn't as bad as you expected, even if it was bad. So just decide when and where the vacation will be, plan ahead, and go. Allow yourself to enjoy it. Often we feel guilty if we have a good time. Remember how much your child enjoyed trips and life and know that she or he would want you to do the same.

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

## Sigh

Years ago, I took a course about leading adult grief support groups. In the handouts was a list of ways that grief is expressed emotionally, cognitively, physically, etc. In the list for physical aspects of grief, "sighing" was listed, and it stood out to me as, at that time, I would not have thought of increased "sighing" as part of our natural grieving response....

## Sigh

What is this all about—this sighing as part of grief? We sigh for lots of different reasons and in many different situations. There is the contented sigh at the end of the day or when relaxing. The "life is good" sigh. There is the sigh of relief that can come in a few varieties such as "thank goodness that is over" and "thank goodness that (bad thing) didn't happen." There is also the sigh that comes with disappointment, frustration or exasperation. The kind of situation where in emails we may actually write, "Heavy sigh," in response to a particular or general wrongness in the world. Connected to this kind of sigh is the sigh of resignation—this is all there is, the best we're gonna get, no need asking for more as no more will be provided.... Sighs of sadness, of sorrow, sighs "too deep for words."

## Sigh

There is a part of us that resists in life. ... We're not going gentle into that good night, we're not going down without swinging, we have not yet begun to fight. This fight response is often a good one and we need it. It's adaptive and helps us to not just survive a crisis but perhaps even thrive afterwards. Advice sometimes given to people with cancer is to not let the cancer take anything that it doesn't have to take—don't give it one thing more, unless you choose to let go of something that in the end is not worth the effort. ...

## Sigh

There is a point to protest, pushback and resist. Without it, we don't know our limits and we may live an unnecessarily small life when there is potential for more, sometimes much more. Yet some realities are just that, and with only so much energy at our disposal to go around, there are some fights that do us no good in the end. Singer/songwriter Lucinda Williams has a whole song devoted to the idea, "It's over, but I can't let it go." Part of us knows that it's over, and that part of us sighs....

## Sigh

And if we ever start to forget it...or doubt...or wish...

## Sigh

Sighing has been recently studied, and the idea found is that sighing works as a reset to our respiration. Sighing keeps us from getting stuck in a fixed pattern of breathing. It makes us, in an unexpected, perhaps paradoxical way, feel better.

## Sigh

Perhaps this is true. Doesn't matter in some way because the body has its own wisdom and a mind, so to speak, of its own. We grieve and we sigh. We hope for more, wish for better, settle for what we have...and sigh. Sighing is part of getting used to what we'd rather not. Part of the wisdom of accepting what we can't change. Part of living into a new world not of our own choosing. Part of life, especially in grief world.

**Heavy, heavy sigh.**

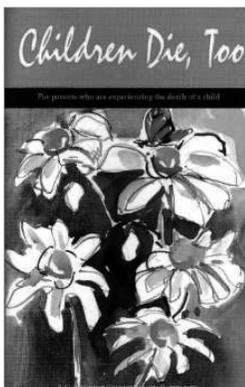


**38<sup>TH</sup> NATIONAL CONFERENCE** |  **The Compassionate Friends**  
Supporting Family After a Child Dies  
 DALLAS, TEXAS JULY 10-12, 2015

“The Compassionate Friends is pleased to announce that Dallas, Texas, will be the site of the 38th TCF National Conference on July 10-12, 2015. “Hope Shines Bright ... Deep in the Heart” is the theme of this year’s event, which promises more of this year’s great national Conference experience. The 2015 Conference will be held at the Hyatt Regency Downtown Dallas. Plan to come and be a part of this heartwarming experience.”

## Children Die Too

*By Joy and Merv Johnson*



Living after the death of a child is not done according to a fixed pattern of emotions. The various feelings and experiences are more like changes in weather. About the time you believe the storm has passed, you find it returning to stir you again. Some parents have described their grief as coming in waves. Just when you least expect it, you are struck by the wave and carried along with it. Grief is something you integrate into your life. You don’t “get through it” or “get over it.” You make it a part of you, just as your child will always be a part of you and never forgotten. Children Die Too is also available in Spanish.

Children Die Too is also available in Spanish.

## Hospice of Sacred Heart Bereavement Group 8-week Support Groups

All support groups are time-limited and 8 weeks in duration, not drop-in. All groups are open to those grieving the death of a loved one. Pre-registration closes 48 hours prior to each new group. Individuals who haven’t participated in our Hospice service will need to speak/meet with a Bereavement Coordinator prior to attending a group. If you live outside of Lane County, please contact your local hospice for group information.

### 2015

**Wed Evening 6:00-7:30pm**  
 August 5 - September 23  
 November 4 - December 23

**Tues Days 10:30 - 12:00**  
 July 7 - August 25  
 October 6 - November 24

- No fees for these services
- pre-register **541.461.7550**
- *contribution by Ruth Anne*

## Survivors of Homicide Victims

Each year approximately 15,000 men, women, and children are victims of criminal homicide in the United States.

As staggering as that figure is, it does not begin to indicate the toll of suffering that homicide extracts. If one estimates that each of its victims is survived by a minimum of three loved ones for whom the violent death will produce deep and bitter grief, the annual casualty rate escalates to over 45,000 individuals. And if one appreciates the intensity and duration of the trauma suffered by these survivors, we can conservatively estimate that we have in our midst APPROXIMATELY A HALF million wounded and scarred Americans, all victims of the murders of just the past decade.

<http://www.pomc.com/>

## YOUTUBE Grief Relief TV

*Our loss may define our lives, it doesn't destroy our lives*

1. GOTO [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)
2. search the name of the episode

**Episode #12 Families Coping with suicide with author Pamela Prime - When the Moon is Dark, We Can See the Stars**

**Episode #17 The Emotions of Grief with Darcie Sims and Dr. Baugher**

... VOLUNTEER ...

**Would you like to volunteer to continue the newsletter for 2016. Please email [leeannagost@yahoo.com](mailto:leeannagost@yahoo.com)**



**“I am not alone and you are not alone. For as surely as the intangible things you left behind are with me, so a part of me stepped quietly with you, across the threshold of tomorrow.**

- By Sandra Totterdell.  
<http://drowningsupportnetwork.wordpress.com>