

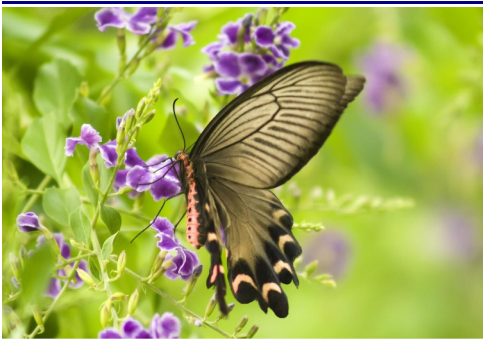


VOLUME 2, ISSUE 2 JUNE 4TH, 2015

Chapter Leader: Debbie Rivera * Email: TampaCompassionateFriends@gmail.com * Phone: 813 690-4448

Newsletter Editor: Marilyn Andreatta * Email: mjandreatta@gmail.com * Phone: 813 758-7935

SEASONS



For some reason a thought popped into my head. Maggie was born in the winter and died in the winter. Justin was born in the summer and died in the summer. There were many years between life and death for which I am eternally grateful. So many happy memories that spanned all the seasons.

Whether your child lived for hours, days, weeks, months or years you will find happy memories. They may be locked up in your grief if you are newly bereaved but mine surfaced rapidly. I truly

hope yours do too.

I was thinking that our grief has its seasons. Denial, Anger, Depression and Hope. Denial comes when you get the phone call or knock on the door. I think grief begins here. Anger – you want to blame someone or something for the loss of your child. Depression is as though we're in a fog and don't know if we can go on. We either can't sleep or want to sleep all the time. We've lost interest in what we used to enjoy. We gain weight or lose weight. Hope is when we've accepted our loss and we're going to be OK in our new normal a step at a time. Grief, unfortunately, hasn't gone away for me and I don't expect it will. It's like a computer program running in the background, just as seasons do. It's always there; always in our minds whether we realize it or not. Some days we're aware of the weather, other days we're not. I don't deal well with rainy days and those are the days my grief program pops up. I'm fatigued and sad. Others love the rain and their program stays in the background. It's been 12 years since Maggie died and I haven't dwelled on it for several years. But there are triggers, like birthdays or holidays that cause a storm of emotions in me.

MONTHLY MEETING

Meeting Place:

*International Independent
Showmen's Museum*

Address:

*6938 Riverview Dr.
Riverview, FL 33578*

Meeting time: 7 – 9 pm

UPCOMING EVENTS

*• Walk to Remember -
July 12, 2015*

Regional Coordinators

Bob and Mary Lane

Bob (407) 761-8591

Mary (321) 442-3540

Like the seasons associated with weather they dovetail; one turning slowly into the next. There is nothing we can do to hurry Spring, just as we can't hurry Hope. We have to ride it out. Everyone grieves differently and at their own pace. We can look to the weather to see that's true. As each season turns we sometimes don't know how to dress. As parents, grandparents or siblings in grief we are sometimes at a loss for how we should feel. Is it alright to laugh, for example? I think it's time to laugh when you are ready to laugh.

Unlike the earth's seasons our seasons of grief (above) may not come in that order. Let them happen. Treat yourself as if you're in emotional intensive care. In a few days it will be 2 years since Justin left us. I feel I'm in the Hope season but others still surface. It will be a while yet.

Use the seasons of denial, anger and depression as your least favorite seasons. Hope is like Spring when flowers bloom and the rain cleanses the earth. We start anew. Wishing you a happy Hopeful Spring.

By: Marilyn Andreatta

"You may see me struggle but you will never see me quit." Author Unknown

NATIONAL OFFICE

The Compassionate Friends

PO Box 3696

Oak Brook, IL 60522-3696

(877) 969-0010

nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org

www.compassionatefriends.org

THOSE WE LOVE

Those we love don't go away,
They walk beside us every day.
Unseen, unheard, but always near,
Still loved, still missed and very dear.

Author Unknown

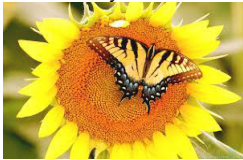
The only
people who
think there's a
time limit for
grief, have
never lost a
piece of their
heart.



Take all the
time you need.



Perhaps the Butterfly is proof that you can go through a great deal of
darkness, yet become something beautiful.



Author Unknown

Father's Day Is Still a Time for Celebrating

A long time has passed since I've enjoyed a holiday—or for that matter any special occasion.

With Father's Day coming up shortly, I've decided that this year I'm celebrating.

The kids used to love when special occasions came along. I can still remember Stef's eighth birthday, only three months before her death, and how proud she was when we told her she could invite her best friends over for a birthday party. She wore her prettiest blue trimmed party dress with the lace ruffles.

The games they played still stick in my mind. There was "pin the tail on the donkey" and then "Simon Says." I remember clothes flying everywhere in a contest to see which child could put on a complete set of clothes fastest over her party clothes. I remember the hotdogs, punch and cake, the party favors. I remember Stef's giggles.

The memories also wander back to the party our family threw for Stephen's fifth birthday, only three days before the accident which also claimed his life. I still have the picture in my mind of that goofy orange cap someone had given Steve. He loved it, but it was at least two sizes too small. When he tried to put it on, the bill of the cap was up and Stephen flashed us one of those impish grins that reminds you of Spanky and Our Gang.

As I'm writing this, the tears are flowing down my cheeks remembering the good times we had together.

A lot of things changed when the kids died. Christmas, Easter, birthdays all became days other people celebrated. But not us.

I've done a lot of thinking since then. I know Stef and Steve are in a better place than I could ever imagine and that every day is a holiday for them. In my mind, I think Stef and Stephen would be sad if they felt their Mom and Dad couldn't celebrate life anymore.

Pat and I now have another son, Christopher, plus we have our fourth child on the way. We're trying to rebuild our lives and I feel we have been blessed along the way. Of course, Christopher is too young to understand Father's Day, but even without him here, I would still consider celebrating Father's Day.

I still remember the Father's Day a couple of years before Stef and Stephen died. With their mom, they had searched all over for something special for me, finally deciding on a T-Shirt that proclaimed "World's Coolest Dad." I still wear that now faded shirt on occasion despite the many grass stains and grease marks.

When Father's Day arrives, I think I'm going to pull that old T-Shirt out and wear it.

I'm going to lay down out in the grass, letting the warm breeze hit me. And I'm going to pretend I'm being caressed by Stef and Steve. I'm going to remember . . . and I'm going to celebrate!!!

Wayne Loder
TCF Lakes Area, MI

DAD
A son's
first Hero.
A daughter's
first Love.



OUR CHILDREN REMEMBERED

Birthdays

APRIL:

Joshua April 10th
Amy April 19th
Brando April 21st

MAY:

Patrick May 2nd
Meaghan May 4th
Kallie Unknown
Michael May 15th
Maria May 16th
Debbie May 28th
Ashton May 29th

JUNE:

Catherine June 8th
Lukas June 11th

Anniversary Dates

APRIL

Karen 4/8
Matthew 4/10
Amy 4/10

MAY

Katelyn 5/4
Ryan 5/4
Curtis 5/7
Kallie 5/8
Dayla 5/25

JUNE

Jenny 6/5
Jackson 6/4
Justin 6/7
Brando 6/15
Paula 6/17
Jeff 6/29
Jeff 6/29
Jillian 6/30



JOIN OUR WALK TO REMEMBER JULY 12TH, 2015

SIGN UP TO BRING A BIRTHDAY CAKE TO THE MEETING OF YOUR CHOICE IN HONOR OF YOUR CHILD'S BIRTHDAY.

PLEASE BRING A PHOTO OF YOUR CHILD TO EACH MEETING!!!



LENDING LIBRARY

We have lots of books that may be checked out at one meeting and brought back to the next meeting. See Amy, our librarian.

We gladly accept any books that you have read and would like to donate to our lending library.



© 2015 Compassionate Friends of Tampa bay Area All Rights Reserved



**The
Compassionate
Friends**
of Tampa Bay Area
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

The Compassionate Friends of Tampa Bay Area
PO Box 603
Brandon, FL 33509

Chapter Phone: 813 690-4448
Chapter E-mail: TampaCompassionateFriends@gmail.com

The mission of The Compassionate Friends: When a child dies, at any age, the family suffers intense pain and may feel hopeless and isolated. The Compassionate Friends provides highly personal comfort, hope, and support to every family experiencing the death of a son or a daughter, a brother or a sister, or a grandchild, and helps others better assist the grieving family.

HAPPY FATHER'S DAY TO ALL OF OUR
COMPASSIONATE FRIEND'S DADS - YOU ARE
OUR HEROES!