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ory that day. Other items come to mind each day. In my home office is plant pot made by the eight year old hands of my son. Small pieces of fabric were lovingly glued to the pot to create an interesting look. I have kept that pot all these years. He was so proud of it; that's a Mother's Day present I'll not forget. Each time I look at it, I think of Todd.

Next to my kitchen phone is a pencil holder that Todd made in second grade. It has been in use since then. It's simply part of who I am and will always be. Each week I clean out the inside and replace the pens and pencils. One of the pencils, never used, contains the words "It's a Boy!" on it. That is the pencil that Todd gave me when his son was born. He was so proud of his baby boy. What a great father he was. Memories are everywhere in my home and my office, in my car and even in places that I go. Todd was here, we did this there....I remember when we all met at Ritter's Ice Cream every Saturday night to look at the other collector cars. When I drive by there, I can see Todd, GTO gleaming, hood up, talking with other aficionados, holding a child in one arm, gesturing with the other hand to demonstrate one thing or another. At night, after I touch the desk that was so lovingly restored, I look at the wall next to my bed. Two reproductions of German paintings brighten this wall.

These are pictures that Todd bought for me when he was in Germany on an exchange program with Texas A&M. I always look at them as I begin my reading, and then, before I turn out the light, I look at them and think about my son and tomorrow. I remember Todd's glorious European adventure, smile at the joy that is his life and turn out the light. These pictures are the last things I see before I sleep. Good night, Todd. I'm so glad you gave me so much of yourself to treasure, but I wish you were here. Your mom misses you.

Annette Mennen Baldwin

In memory of my son, Todd Mennen—TCF, Katy, TX—August 30, 2007

Welcome New Friends

At nearly every meeting we welcome new members to our group, always with mixed emotions. We are glad you found us, but we are so sorry for the circumstances that bring us together. We understand your pain; we hope our unconditional friendship and understanding will help you through your grief.

Attending a meeting for the first two or three times takes courage, but for many it is the first real step toward healing.

To receive this newsletter via e-mail please contact Mark Simon at mas18@rochester.rr.com

TCF Rochester Donations:

If you would like to contribute to our Compassionate Friends Chapter please forward your Love Gifts and Donations to The Compassionate Friends of Rochester at 18 Latium Drive, Pittsford, NY 14534. Please make checks payable to The Compassionate Friends of Rochester, NY. Sincerest Thanks.

MEMORIES

Our memories are all that's left
Some are good
Some bad

Remembering the good times
Makes us smile and share them with others
While choking back a tear because
We miss you

Remembering the bad times
Can't be helped
They bring on the tears
And the fears.

The what-ifs and the maybe I could have
They will be with us always
Because
We Love You

The times we shared our precious
The love for you endless
Our prayers and words go on and on
To stay in touch with you
Your objects are ours to cherish
Because they are a part of you

The trips to the hospital
The fear and anxiety
When alarms went off

The worries and decisions
Bringing you up
The call from school
The arguments

The need to instill you with
The rights and wrongs

Are all out weighed by
The love
The laughs
The good times we shared.

Times that are captured in albums
Times in scrapbooks and toy chests
Even in the tools and the foods
We shared

But you're not here
They were meant to share
And laugh
And remember
With you.

Now we can only share them with strangers
Outsiders
To our family
But part of our new family
Related by our losses
Brought together by our grief

All good people with memories of loved ones
That departed too soon

All have a hole, an emptiness
Where their loved one belongs

We won't forget you
We will always love you

Mom and Dad

Joan and George Carafos—TCF Rochester, NY Chapter



Upcoming Planned Events—Mark Your Calendars:

Music and Grief—**October 23rd** meeting with Phil Marshall—Hospice Music Therapist

Fall Pot Luck Supper—**November 4th**—contact Jan Levy at 585-442-1094

Writing Tributes Breakout Session—**November 13th**—Cathy Spoto

What we Loved and What Drove Us Crazy About Our Child

Annual Memorial Candle Lighting—**December 11th**—**7:00 PM** (regular meeting)

stay tuned for more activities and speakers

I believe with perfect faith

That you are forever

Your body may lay in this sorrowful ground

But your spirit soars with the eagles,

Still rages at injustice,

Reaches in loving kindness,

Dances with the ecstasy of life that never ends,

And laughs deep in the belly

To cleanse us from our mortal sadness

Others may not believe, but

Every day your spirit comforts me

Your voice still speaks within my heart

And while I may long for the warmth of your hands

On my shoulders,

I can feel your work in God's plan

I believe that with perfect faith,

No Loss is Forever

author unknown

Love Gifts for September

Ted Wurzburg in memory of Mallory Rose Wurzburg

Richard and Kathleen Duncan in memory Jennifer Duncan Young

Chapter Information:

Meeting Location:

Lifetime Care Care
3111 Winton Road South
(across from Valley Cadillac)

Meeting Days for October 2007:

Tuesday the 9th and Tuesday the 23rd
7:00 P.M. to 7:15 P.M. - social
7:15 P.M. to 9:00 P.M. - meeting

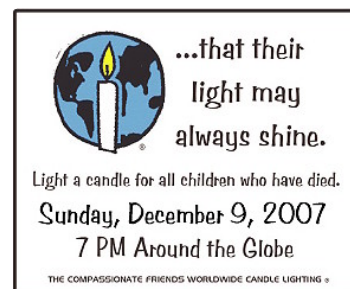
Contacts:

Phyllis Simon - 585-586-4721
Cathy Spoto - 585-254-6983
TCF Regional Coordinator:
Jacquie Edwards-Mitchell 718-451-0814
TCF National 877-969-0010
or www.compassionatefriends.org

Send news letter inputs or web comments to:
Mark Simon at: mas18@rochester.rr.com

Miscellaneous:

Please remember that we are counting on *everyone* to participate in our **SHOPPING FOR A CAUSE** fund raiser at Macy's on October 13th. Please contact Jan Levy at 585 442-1094 for tickets.



Please bring your old working cell phones to a meeting to support our recycling fund raiser.

Rochester Chapter TCF Mission:

The MISSION of the Rochester Chapter of The Compassionate Friends is to assist families toward the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child of any age and to provide information to help others be supportive.



Memories Surround Me

I have learned that there is a comfort in keeping my son here, beside me, sharing my life's journey as he once did. No, he is not here in a physical sense. He is here in my memories and in my daily life. I keep his presence alive on the earthly plane.

In my home are pictures that remind me of my child's life. A picture in an announcement....a beautiful, sleeping baby boy who is just one day old. Next to that is one of my son standing beside his GTO. Now I can relive any year of my son's 35 years of life. Whether it is high school graduation or graduation from Texas A&M, there is Todd...smiling, happy, radiating the joy of his accomplishments. He's in the pool as a teenager and then on another shelf, he's holding his daughters, one in each arm, as he stands in that same pool. Smiling, always smiling. Todd loved life. He looked forward to each new adventure. This is portrayed in all the pictures displayed and those that are yet to be brought out from their hiding places.

In my bedroom is a wood shop project that Todd made for me when he was in eighth grade. It is an alpaca, which rests on a wall stand. Todd made these treasures with his hands; his name is forever etched into both pieces. Each week I lovingly dust that alpaca and its shelf and remember how proud my son was of his first woodshop accomplishment.

And then there are the projects from the "macramé summer." Todd made a lovely plant holder for me and then he boldly went to a large wall design that is something akin to a dream catcher. It has always been displayed in the atrium of my home. Each time I walk past it, I reach out and touch it and feel the love that went into this creation. Ironically, I now have another dream catcher attached to the one that Todd made. This is the dream catcher with his picture and my words of remembrance that were written for the National Compassionate Friends Conference in Oklahoma City. I touch them both now....remembering my beautiful child.

In my bedroom is a Queen Ann desk. This was purchased and refinished by my son during his "wood working summer" in high school. He painstakingly sanded and worked the wood to a smooth finish. Then he used fine sand paper and later steel wool to finish the staining and glossing process. It is a beautiful desk with a fold out writing area, tiny drawers and hidden compartments. I keep much in this desk. Every night as I am getting ready for bed, I touch Todd's desk.

In 1994 Todd and I went out for Mother's Day dinner and later we stopped and picked out a new washing machine. Todd recommended the Amana. I trusted his judgment. I bought the Amana. Each week when I do laundry, I wipe off the washing machine and remember that shopping trip, his words of "keep it simple, Mom, and you won't have to worry about repairs" and consider that he gave me some good advice and a wonderful mem-



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