

FEBRUARY 2021 Happy Valentines Day!

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If this is your first Newsletter:

If you are receiving this newsletter for the first time, it is because someone has told us it might be helpful for you. We also invite you to our monthly meetings at Hayes Barton Baptist Church. At these meetings you may talk or choose not to say a word. There are no fees or dues. We are sorry you have had to experience the death of a child (or children) but we are here for you. We, too, are on this journey of grief and extend our hearts and arms to you.

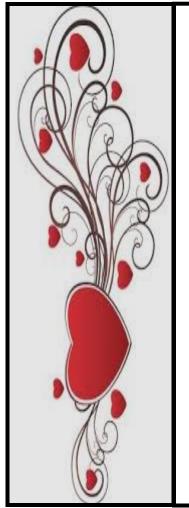
Our Wake County TCF Chapter meets every second and fourth Tuesday nights of the month at 7:00pm in Room 224 at Hayes Barton Baptist Church, 1800 Glenwood Avenue (at the corner of Glenwood Avenue and Whitaker Mill Road at Five Points) in Raleigh. Enter from Whitaker Mill Road into the Main Entrance of the Family Life Center.

Zoom Meetings:

Tuesday February 9 7:00pm

Tuesday February 23 7:00pm

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Surviving With a Smile

All alone in a room full of people,
Trying to make it through another day.
Feigning interest in the conversation,
They don't know we don't care what they say.

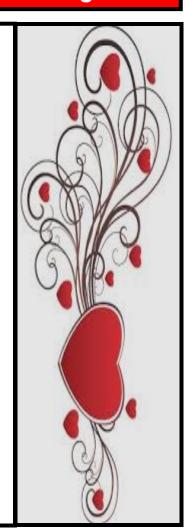
Time stands still for those who are mourning.
Our lost child is constantly on our mind.
Though we desperately want to live normal lives,
Your absence is excruciatingly unkind.

Days, weeks and months continue to pass by And people don't really understand So we keep our smiling masks at the ready And our "that's so interesting" faces at hand.

What we truly want is to talk about you
For you are forever in our heads.
The first thing we think about in the morning
And the last thought at night as we go to our beds.

But, here we are in a world that knows not How we can hide our pain for a while. Though we are grieving and miss you fiercely, We courageously present with a cordial smile.

by Paula Grossman, mother of Mitch TCF Inner Loop Chapter, Houston, TX





IN MEMORY

FEBRUARY LOVE GIFTS Given In Loving Memory Of Children



Barbara and John Dower In Loving Memory of Our Precious Son Robert Dower

[His 9-year Angel-Versary will be remembered with our gift.

Jean Goldberg In Loving Memory of My Son **Tommy Goldberg**

Kathleen and Mike Mendy In Loving Memory of Our Son Michael Daniel Mendy

Please send Love Gifts to: Love Gifts—Wake County Chapter, TCF, P. O. Box 6602. Raleigh, NC 27628-6602. Send pictures & articles to Pattie Griffin at pattie.grif@gmail.com or 30 Shepherd Street, Raleigh NC 27607.

ATTENTION - Wake TCF Members:

The church where we meet is still closed with all meetings cancelled so we cannot meet in person again this month, therefore we will have two zoom meetings during February. Our first zoom meeting will be Tuesday, February 9, at 7:00pm, and our second zoom meeting will be Tuesday, February 23, at 7:00pm. If you would like to join us for either of these meetings, please contact Judy Schneider for the link needed to be able to join the meeting.

jschn 2000@yahoo.com

Our chapter also has a private Facebook page so we can communicate when we can't meet in person. It is a great way to ask a question or make a comment or request feedback on a relevant topic. Since it is a private group, you will have to request to join. The group name is "TCF Wake County" and the administrator is Judy Schneider. Please contact Judy if you would like to join this group.

Tears Are The Proof of Life:

broken-hearted mourner asked me. "All the rest of your life," I had to answer truthfully. We never quite forget. No matter how many years pass, we remember.

The loss of a loved one is like a major operation; part of us is removed, and we have a scar for the rest of our lives. This does not mean that the pain continues at the same intensity. There is a short while, at first, when we hardly believe it: it is rather like when we cut our hand. We see the blood flowing, but the pain has not set in yet. So when we are bereaved, there is a short while before the pain hits us. But when it does, it is massive in its effect. Grief is shattering. Then the wound begins to heal. It is like going through a dark tunnel.



light up ahead, then we lose sight of it awhile, and then see it again, and one day we merge into the with it. As a matter of fact, we even light.

We are able to laugh, to care, to live. The wound is healed so to speak. The stitches are taken out. and we are whole again. But not quite. The scar is still there, and the scar tissue, too. As the years go by, we manage. There are things to do, people to care for, and tasks that call for full attention.

But the pain is still there, not far below the surface. We see a face that looks familiar, hear a voice that has echoes, see a photograph in someone's album, see a landscape that once we saw together, and it is as though the knife were in the wound again. But not so painfully,

"How long will the pain last?", a Occasionally we glimpse a bit of and mixed with joy, too. Because remembering a happy time is not all sorrow; it brings back happiness seek such moments in bittersweet remembrance. We have our religious memories and our memorial days, and our visits to the cemetery. And though these bring back the pain, they bring back memories of joy as well.

> How long will the pain last? All the rest of your life. But the thing to remember is that not only the pain will last, but the blessed memories as well. Tears are the proof of life. The more love, the more tears. If this is true, then how could we ever ask that the pain cease altogether? For then the memory of love would go with it. The pain of grief is the price we pay for love.





"Those we love are with the Lord and the Lord has promised to be with us: If they are with Him and He is with us....
They cannot be far away!"

by Peter Marshall

"The light that Tommy radiated in the world in his eighteen years was more than most people shine in a lifetime. His warmth burned like a subtle candle illuminating a spark of happiness to be shared by all. Tommy's candle may have been put out on earth, but we do not stand in darkness, for the sparks which Tommy emitted lit candles of love and hope in everyone who knew him."

—Clipping of a quote written by one of Tommy's friends that was printed in the 1984 Broughton yearbook in his memory.

At this time of the year when Tommy's 56th birthday is near, my memory bank is full of memories of the 18 years we were blest with his life. It is impossible to believe he has not been part of our lives for the last 37 plus years. He is so near and dear to my heart, my forever 18 year old son.

Tommy's Mother, Jean Goldberg



Who'd You Be Today

by Kenny Chesney

Sunny days seem to hurt the most.
I wear the pain like a heavy coat.
I feel you everywhere I go.
I see your smile, I see your face,
I hear you laughin' in the rain.
I still can't believe you're gone.

It ain't fair: you died too young,
Like the story that had just begun,
But death tore the pages all away.
God knows how I miss you,
All the hell I've been through,
Just knowin' no one could take your place.
An' sometimes I wonder,
Who'd you be today?

Would you see the world?
Would you chase your dreams?
Settle down with a family,
I wonder what would you name your babies?
Some days the sky's so blue,
I feel like I can talk to you,
An' I know it might sound crazy.

It ain't fair: you died too young,
Like the story that had just begun,
But death tore the pages all away.
God knows how I miss you,
All the hell I've been through,
Just knowin' no-one could take your place.
An' sometimes I wonder,
Who you'd be today?

Today, today, today.
Today, today, today.
Sunny days seem to hurt the most.
I wear the pain like a heavy coat.
The only thing that gives me hope,
Is I know I'll see you again some day.
Some day, some day, some day.



As Valentine's Day approaches, here is a poem to our children from us:

(A Valentine Sent To Heaven)

Angels come swiftly, hurry to our side, Carry our hearts back with you, to our children Who in heaven now reside. Carry them gently, handle them with care And take them to their sides, and gently lay them there. Whisper to them of our love, and our longing hearts, All our lonely aching while we are apart. Hold them gently to you, and let them see our love Let them see this. our valentine, to them above. Reassure them of our love. that it is still the same And gently hold us when we cry, when we hear them whisper our names. Let this exchange of love be our valentine And whisper to them that our love will stand the test of time. Show them the memories are safely held inside And with us they will always abide. Let them see this day, a day filled with our love As we shed our tears, and whisper their names, To our Valentines above.

Sheila Simmons, TCF Atlanta Online

The gift of guilt

Sometimes the hardest part of grief is guilt. We obsess over what we did or didn't do, the missed opportunities to say I love you, the times we lashed out in anger or impatience.

A young woman doesn't forget telling her brother she hated him a week before he died in a boating accident. A mother is immobilized by guilt because of an argument she had with her son the day before he died.

Guilt complicates and prolongs the grieving process by preventing the emotional and spiritual growth necessary for recovery. Self-condemnation and regret can all too often lead to depression or suicide.

So how can we escape the destructive forces of guilt when it's so much a part of our grief? We can start by acknowledging that guilt stems from goodness. Guilt is the conscience protecting the violation of an inner moral code.

Instead of beating ourselves up over real or imagined offences, we can recognize the goodness that makes us wish we had done things differently or better, and work towards expressing our guilt in more productive and positive ways.

Write down the things you wish you had done differently. Underline the goodness that can be found at the source of your guilt.

If you wish...

You had been kinder, be kind to someone who least expects it.

For another chance to say I love you, resolve to never let a day go by without telling people in your life how much you care.

You had been more understanding or patient, listen to a troubled adolescent or elderly person.

You hadn't taken your loved one for granted, say a prayer of

gratitude for all the people in your life today.

You could take back every unloving word you ever said, say something nice to everyone you meet.

You had spent more time with your loved one, spend time with a shut-in, a lonely relative or a child.

You could resolve the misunderstandings at the time of your loved one's death, work on improving your relationships.

For your loved one's forgiveness, resolve to forgive yourself.

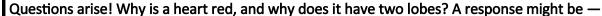
Guilt can tear us apart or inspire us to do great things. It can distance us from God or bring us closer to Him. It can imprison us in darkness or fill our world with light. It can be a lasting curse - or a lasting gift.

> —by Margaret Brownley Simi Valley, CA

THE SEASON OF THE HEART

This is the Season of the Heart! Yet many of us will be asking how to live during this season with a heart that is broken. Just what is it that our hearts are knowing during these days? What are the feelings that pulsate and ebb and flow? Is it . . .

- ▼ The Heart that catches its breath on a memory and is overwhelmed?
- **▼** The Heart where hope seems absent?
- The Heart that feels it absolutely cannot hold one more ounce of pain?
- ▼ The Heart that knows the fleeting smile of a loved one?
- The Heart that catches a fragment of joy and is warmed?
- ▼ The Heart that knows pain, and keeps on loving?
- The Heart that is tempted to lie still and lonely?
- The Heart that searches for the acceptance of a friend?
- ▼ The Heart that is one day, suddenly, surprisingly single?

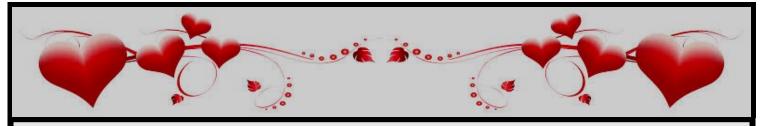


- ▼ A Heart is so vulnerable; so easily bloodied.
- **♥** A Heart consists of opposites; changed by sorrow and by joy.
- **♥** A Heart, when whole, includes all emotions.
- A Heart can lie cold and sad and broken.
- A Heart can grow and heal and love.

We each have our choices to make!







DID YOU HEAR ABOUT MRS. BRYAN?

DID YOU HEAR ABOUT MRS. BRYAN?

She's not the same any more.

She comes home from work, takes a bath, and goes to bed; her dreams are better than life.

She keeps the curtains drawn so she won't have to watch children playing.

She doesn't ride by the school or the park any more.

She doesn't know if she'll be able to work all day.

She doesn't sit at the table to eat any more.

She goes to the grocery store on her lunch hour so she won't have to think of all the things she won't have to buy.

She sits in her yellow chair and stares.

She looks at pictures all the time; she wants to live in the past.

She doesn't laugh any more, there's nothing funny.

She doesn't go shopping in the department stores, she says it hurts to see all the toys.

She doesn't watch T.V.

She buys flowers all the time.

She reads books on grief and death.

She doesn't know if there's a God any more.

She doesn't pray any more; God doesn't answer her prayers.

She reads the death notices everyday.

She goes to the cemetery every chance she gets.

She cries everyday.

She wishes she could die.

DID YOU HEAR ABOUT MRS. BRYAN?

She lost her son.

DID YOU HEAR ABOUT MRS. BRYAN?

She went to a conference by The Compassionate Friends and met others who had lost a child too.

She went to find an answer to her question of "Why"?

She found out she wasn't the only one with this loss and they don't know why they lost their child either, because nobody knows but God.

She met others who had lost more than one child and her heart went out to them.

She met others who hurt and want to die also.

She saw some pictures of the most beautiful children who are no longer here and wondered, "Why are they there and why am I here"?

She met some people who understood how she felt and that she could talk to.

She met others with this loss who are trying to help someone else.

She learned grief is the price you pay for love.

She learned that when you lose your parents, you lose your past, when you lose your spouse, you lose your present, but when you lose a child, you lose your future and it is the hardest loss of all to bear.

She knows there will be others who will suffer the loss of a child, she doesn't know who, but she knows you have to have been there in order to help or understand the pain, because it's too unbearable to imagine.

She found out she was not alone.

DID YOU HEAR ABOUT MRS. BRYAN?

She hurts all the time.

She knows it's going to hurt to see other children playing.

She knows it's going to hurt to sit at the table and not see him there.

She knows it's going to hurt when the Little League starts playing baseball.

She knows it's going to hurt to see other boys in their Boy Scout uniforms.

She knows it's going to hurt to go to a department store and see all the things he would like to have and not be able to buy them.

She knows it's going to hurt on special days like Easter, Thanksgiving and Christmas.

She knows it's going to hurt when it's time for report cards.

She knows it's going to hurt when the church has a special program he would have been in.

She knows it will hurt when his birthday comes around.

She knows it will hurt to watch his friends grow up.

She knows it will hurt when "that day" comes.

She knows she will never get over her loss, but she doesn't want to, she wants to remember him every day of her life.

She knows people think she should be over her loss by now, after all it's been several months, but she knows when you lose a child you lose part of yourself and you're never whole again.

She knows her life will never be the same.

DID YOU HEAR ABOUT MRS. BRYAN?

She says she has nothing but beautiful memories of a very special boy.

How he loved to tell jokes and make people laugh.

How his feelings could get hurt easily, because he felt so deeply.

How excited he could get over the littlest things.

How he wanted to do everything tomorrow.

How he loved to read, draw, ride his bike, swim, play baseball & star wars.

How smart he was in school.

How he left his clothes on the floor at night.

How he loved to open presents whether they were his or not.

How he read in bed at night and would fall asleep with the light on.

What an early riser he was.

How he would read the funnies in the car on the way to church on Sunday morning.

How he went to bed with his baseball cap on.

His curiosity.

How he would say the blessing at meal time when it was his turn.

How he liked to talk about the stories in the Bible.

How he loved everybody and always had a smile on his face.

What a child of promise he was.

DID YOU HEAR ABOUT MRS. BRYAN?

She's started praying and reading her Bible again.

She believes there's a God after all, because if there is no God for her, then there would be no God for her son.

She actually believes there's a heaven...

She says her son is waiting on her, he's her heavenly treasure. She says her son lives with God, and that he'll live forever. She says that he's happy, that he'll never hurt or cry.

She believes time is not the same for her son as it is for her, that it won't seem very long to him till we're together again; it Just seems long to us here on earth.

She thinks he knows all the answers to her questions, and how this is all going to come out.

She believes when she dies she'll go to heaven too.



She believes love never dies, that's the one thing that will continue on.

She says her son can love her now as he never could here, because it's perfect love.

She says her values have changed, it's how you live that's important, not what you have.

She says God gives her strength everyday.

She says she lives one day at a time, for that's all she's promised.

DID YOU HEAR ABOUT MRS. BRYAN?

She wants to let others know how thankful she is.

She says she's thankful for all the prayers for her and her family.

She's thankful for all the people who showed their love to her son.

She's thankful when others will talk of her son and tell her something about him that they treasure.

She's thankful for all the compliments she receives about her son.

She's thankful for the friends he has.

She's thankful her son loved life and was a happy child.

She's thankful she raised her son to know the Lord, that he was saved and baptized.

She's thankful for the Grandma and Papa he had and is glad they tried to spoil him just a little.

She's thankful he had a Father who loved him.

She's thankful he had a sister named Angela Carol.

She's thankful she was his Mother.

She's thankful her son knew he was loved.

She's thankful God gave her a memory to remember that special boy who was hers for ten short years.

DID YOU HEAR ABOUT MRS. BRYAN?

She's started writing putting her thoughts down on paper.

She wants to keep that love going and his memory alive.

She wants to be a tribute to her son.

She wants his life to count for something.

She wants to help others who suffer this loss because she knows your faith is never more tested than when you lose a child.

She wants others to know how thankful she is that God gave her John Michael at all, and she wouldn't trade those ten precious years for anything.

She wants him to look down from heaven and say with pride, "That's My Mom".

DID YOU HEAR ABOUT MRS. BRYAN?

She didn't lose her son after all, he lives in her heart.

Carolyn Bryan In Loving Memory of John Michael Bryan, Age 10 Copyright © 1984



Promise of Spring



When February comes there is finally an end in sight to the long winter. Sometimes, melting snow reveals the green tips of an early crocus or even the exquisite blossom itself, a soft flower of hope invading a harsh landscape of graying snow and biting wind and ominous sky. A small promise of new life to come. My heart, grieving for my son who died, was like that image of winter. For somehow, even during the darkest, coldest moments, an unexpected sign of hope would intrude. And as the hours and days and months dragged on, my heart finally learned, once again, to be open to the promise of new life. Painful memories melted into loving ones. Life that seemed forever dormant once again sprang forth from my heart. In living hopefully and lovingly, the seasons of the heart can change. The loving memories of your special child, like the flower in the snow, can be the beginning of the end of winter.

Maryann Kramer, TCF, Arlington Heights



Appropriate Expectations You Can Have for Yourself in Grief



Please review the following list of expectations and evaluate yourself on each one to see if you are maintaining realistic expectations for yourself.

You can expect that:

Your grief will take longer than most people think.

Your grief will take more energy than you would have ever imagined.

Your grief will involve many changes and be continually developing.

Your grief will show itself in all spheres of your life: psychological, social and physical.

Your grief will depend upon how you perceive the loss.

You will grieve for many things both symbolic and tangible, not just the death alone.

You will grieve for what you have lost already and for what you have lost for the future.

Your grief will entail mourning not only for the actual person lost but also for all the hopes, dreams, and unfulfilled expectations you held for and with that person, and for the needs that will go unmet because of the death.

Your grief will involve a wide variety of feelings and reactions, not solely those that are generally thought of as grief such as depression and sadness.

The loss will resurrect old issues, feelings, and unresolved conflicts from the past.

You will have some identity confusion as a result of this major loss and the fact that you are experiencing reactions that may be quite different for you.

You may have a combination of anger and depression, such as irritability, frustration, annoyance, or intolerance.

You will feel some anger and guilt, or at least some manifestation of these emotions.

You may have a lack of self-concern.

You will have trouble thinking (memory, organization and intellectual processes) and making decisions.

You may feel like you are going crazy.

You may be obsessed with the death and preoccupied with the deceased.

You may experience grief spasms, acute upsurges of grief that occur suddenly with no warning.

You may begin a search for meaning and may question your religious and/or philosophy of life.

You may find yourself acting socially in ways that are different from before.

You may find yourself having a number of physical reactions.

Society will have unrealistic expectations about your mourning and may respond inappropriately to you.

You may find that there are certain dates, events, and stimuli that bring upsurges in grief.

In summary, your grief will bring with it, depending upon the combination of factors above, an intense amount of emotion that will surprise you and those around you. Most of us are unprepared for the global response we have to a major loss. Our expectations tend to be too unrealistic, and more often than not we receive insufficient assistance from friends and society. Your grief will not only be more intense than you expect but it will also be manifested in more areas and ways than you ever anticipated. You can expect to see brief upsurges of it at anniversary and holiday times, and in response to certain stimuli that remind you of what you have lost. Your grief will be very idiosyncratic and dependent upon the meaning of your loss, your own personal characteristics, the type of death, your social support, and your physical state.

by Therese A. Rando



A Love Song

The mention of my child's name may bring tears to my eyes, but it never fails to bring music to my ears. If you really are my friend, please don't keep me from hearing the beautiful music. It sooths my broken heart and fills my soul with love.

-Nancy Williams, Central Jersey TCF



LOVED AND ALWAYS REMEMBERED Our February Children Birthdays



Thomas R. "Tommy" Goldberg Son Jean Goldberg

Gregory Ellis Williams Son Darrell & Linda Williams **Riley Martin** Peggy & Rodney Martin Son

Nicole "Colie" Hoffman Daughter Sandra Hoffman Daughter Gretchen Wrigley **Ann Myers Edison Ruef** Son Jennifer & Martin Ruef Ryan Hill Son Deborah & King Hill **Keenan Cozzolino** Natalie & Chris Dunigan Son Daughter Doug & Debbie Clifton

Amanda Dare Clifton Carolyn & David Roberts Jack Roberts Son

Jeff Miller Son **Carol Shelton** Olivia Menard Daughter Jen & Chad Menard **Brandon Lewis** Marty & Paula Lewis

Julie Kesner Daughter Joan Schmidt

Daughter Kathleen & Kevin Combs Sarah Glesner Keith F Larson II (Kip) Son Keith & Mary Ann Larson Corinne Greenslade Daughter Marie & George Greenslade Daughter Sarah & Kevin Whitenack Clare Whitenack Stephen Greenslade Son Marie & George Greenslade

Nick Wallace Son Greg & Dora Wallace Garrilyn J.I. Horton Daughter Shewan Lynette Horton Meredith Elisabeth Edwards Daughter Beth Eastman-Mull Daughter Pete & Kathy Montague

Suzanne Ridgill **Luke Johnston** Susan & David Johnston Son

Amark Patra Son Shuva Patra William Bunn Mark & Amy Bunn Son Scott Shorter Jeanne & Ken Shorter Son **Cameron Wagner** Son David & Cindy Wagner

Zachary McNeill Son Penny McNeill

Halo Patton-Degraffenreaidt Daughter Nijah Patton & Robert Degraffenreaidt

Alexander "Lex" Luster Son Maria & Anthony Luster **Tyron James Harris** Jim & Bonnie Harris Son



A VALENTINE WAITING FOR YOU

There's a valentine waiting for you This nonjudgmental group

That's different from all the others. Who've been there

It's there every month at our meetings Help to take away your fear and fright.

So come join with us together. For fathers, mothers, sisters

and brothers. Read your loving message printed clear,

Its envelope is made of caring. In not only this month's valentine,

The glue of understanding seals it tight. But all those throughout the year.

Mary Cleckley, TCF Atlanta GA



Our February Children Anniversaries



Michael MendySonKathleen & Mike MendyStephen ZombekSonMarguerite Zombek

 Stephen Zombek
 Son
 Marguerite Zombek

 Daniel Paul Wisler
 Son
 Alice Wisler

 Dylan Raitz
 Son
 Marie & Bill Raitz

 Robert Dower
 Son
 John & Barbara Dower

 Tiffany Pemberton
 Daughter
 Angie & Greg Selvia

 Kevin Philling
 Son
 Dee & Chiccola Bell-Phil

Kevin Phillips Son Dee & Chiccola Bell-Phillips

Kim Moreno Thomas Daughter Judy Moreno

Nick WallaceSonGreg & Dora WallaceGlenn VickSonSue & Melvin VickMichael AssaffSonJanet & Mark AndertonChristian WilliamsSonCharlene & Milton Peacock

Rylan Buchanan Son Sarah Galperin

Julie Elizabeth McClelland Daughter Dru McClelland Smith

Andy Katchuk Son Pam Katchuk

Riley Martin Son Peggy & Rodney Martin

Shreya RastogiDaughterSudhir Rustogi & Neerja RastogiDevin GroseGrandsonMichael & Cecelia McCarron

Bedie Joseph Son Mike & Kate Joseph

Corinne Greenslade Daughter Marie & George Greenslade

Pamela Jenks McAteer Daughter Carolyn Nelson

Addison Tompkins Daughter Wanda Tompkins & Ron Trombley

Caroline AllenDaughterBetsy & Alex AllenAbigail "Abby" CoxDaughterBetsy Whaley

Josiah Pickett Son Ashley & Cedric Pickett

Davis Peacock Son Kim Hasty

Javan Stewart Son Ursula Seda & Omarr Stewart

Danny NoonanSonTimothy NoonanAdam T. MorganSonCindy Morgan

Malcolm BaldwinSonKimberly & Daniel BaldwinSkyler McCardleDaughterMelissa & Brent McCardle

Will Day Son Beth & William Day

Halo Patton-Degraffenreaidt Daughter Nijah Patton & Robert Degraffenreaidt

Jeffrey SchneiderSonVince & Judy SchneiderDana Elizabeth RabelerDaughterLawton & Valerie Rabeler

Zachary Michael Arata Son Mike & Karen Arata

Charles Williams Son Kay Scott

Andre Eric Houseman, Jr. Son Sharon Houseman

HEARTS AND LOVE — February (The Month of Love)

Hearts are everywhere Hearts of chocolate Hearts of paper

Hearts, hearts, hearts,

The love of the lost It's gone forever

Unless you recall it somehow ...

So get you a heart Of whatever source

And give it away right now.

The love that comes back Because you gave it away

Is the best kind of love, you know

Hearts of love for the living.

Mary E. Pauley, TCF LaGrange GA





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THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS, INC. Wake County Chapter PO Box 6602 Raleigh, NC 27628-6602

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