



The Compassionate Friends of Canada

When A Child Dies...

National Newsletter - May 2019

National Office

The Compassionate Friends of Canada
1346 Ravens View Drive
Victoria BC
V9B 6P7
Canada
E-mail: nationaloffice@tcfcanada.net
Website: www.tcfcanada.net
Toll-free number:
1-866-823-0141

National Executive:

Andy Bond (Ottawa, ON) - President
Donna Rodin (Medicine Hat, AB) -
Past President
Susan Doyle Lawrence (Victoria, BC) -
Vice-President and International Liaison
Cathy Sosnowsky (Vancouver, BC) - Secretary
Diana Cadigan (St. John's, NL) - Treasurer
Eileen Bond (Ottawa, ON) - Chapter
Development Committee
Directors-at-Large
Barbara Kachur (Saskatoon, SK)
Gary Kachur (Saskatoon, SK)

Transforming the pain of grief into the elixir of hope.

- Reverend Simon Stephens, Founder, TCF

Annual Reports:

The North Bay, ON, chapter celebrated its first anniversary and sent in its first Annual Report. High five!

So far we have received 13 Annual Reports, more than half way to the total of 22 received in 2018. Keep them coming, please!

Donations Received:

In our June newsletter we will include a financial report for the fiscal year just ended. In the meantime our thanks go out to the following chapters for their ongoing financial support of our national organization:

Winnipeg, MB; Saskatoon, SK; Kelowna, BC; Victoria, BC

Processing Donations:

If your Chapter has donors who would like to receive a charitable donation tax receipt, but does not have registered charity status, we can help. The donor (or you) can send a cheque to TCF Canada, specifying which chapter is to benefit.

TCF Canada will issue a tax receipt for the full amount to the donor, and send the amount of the funds to the chapter. If you have questions, you may contact NationalOffice@TCFCanada.net.



We have our Oceanside, BC, Chapter to thank for this bright idea:

They've made up business cards with essential meeting information.

"These are easy to carry with you and hand out when you meet a bereaved parent."

The Steady Eddy Approach

The Cranbrook, BC, Chapter of TCF held their first meeting in January 2018 after a long period of inactivity. Rekindling the Chapter came with the support and guidance of the National Office, after two former members, Deb Janisch and Dawn Storgaard, attended a National Gathering in August 2017 in Medicine Hat, Alberta. Below is the story of how we approached this endeavour using the “Steady Eddy Approach”. By keeping things simple, we have not become overwhelmed by the responsibilities of chapter leadership.

What happened to move us forward? At the National Gathering, Deb and I recognized how important it was to be among other bereaved parents and to feel that we simply “fit in”. My husband Doug and I had been active members in our former community of Kelowna, BC, and really missed that when we moved to Cranbrook. Deb felt likewise as we explored the lack of resources in Cranbrook. At the Gathering, we felt encouraged, accepted, and understood in a way that brought hope and comfort to us both. Each evening we reflected on the day’s happenings and asked the fundamental question: “What could we do in Cranbrook?” Hope was in the air and Deb and I became inspired to move forward, but were a bit daunted at the thought. Upon returning home, we spoke with our husbands, Doug Storgaard and Ron Janisch, who immediately said “go for it”, “we are with you”. Coupled with guidance from the National Board and information from other chapter leaders, we decided to reignite the Cranbrook Chapter. It was as simple as that.

How did we do it? Keeping with the Steady Eddy theme, we contacted former members and asked if they were interested in joining regular meetings again and if so, to share what they needed in a meeting format. Former members shared that they wanted and needed:

- to feel safe in sharing their stories
- opportunities to talk about their child
- hope for the future.
- opportunities to listen and learn about the experiences of others
- to be listened to or remain quiet

These needs fit well with the guiding principles of TCF and offered the budding chapter leaders an opportunity to develop a meeting format/structure to meet those needs.

Doug, Deb and I set a simple framework for each meeting and agreed to use the style regardless of the numbers attending. We agreed to split up the work, “go slow as we grow”, and not become discouraged if the meeting numbers were small. Doug and Deb work together with the background organizing and computer work, while Dawn usually facilitates the meetings. We strive to keep in touch with members between meetings as able via phone, email or coffee, especially with new or potential members. A home visit is offered when a new member is too overwhelmed to attend but has reached out for support. Ron is our “handyman” and does whatever we ask of him such as building a candle holder or offering a ride to a new member.

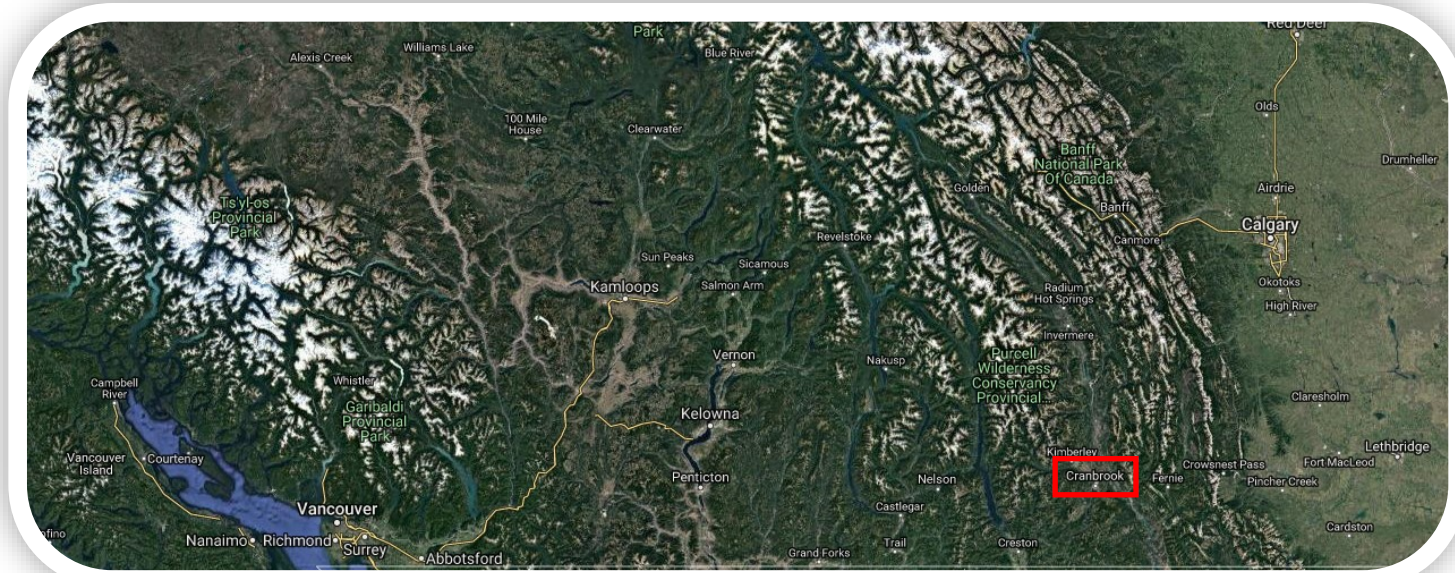
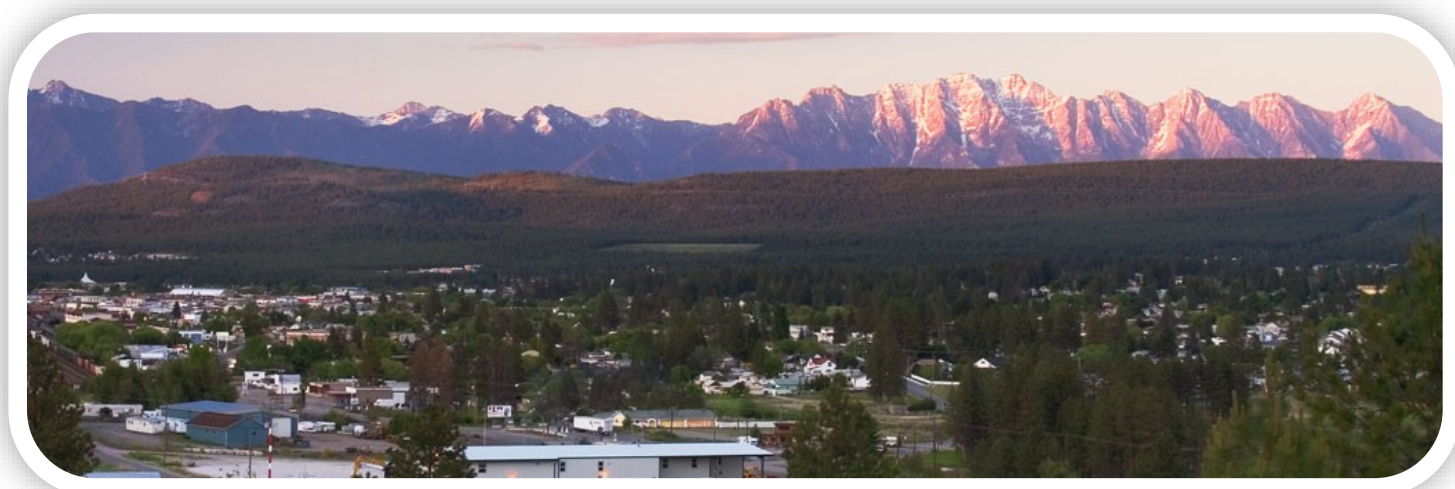
We deliberately did very little community outreach or advertising in the first year as we needed to build our confidence in leading a chapter. The sharing circle is crucial to a successful chapter and we put our energy there. We use the same format regardless of numbers present and begin by reading the guidelines briefly and explaining the format for sharing their stories. I remind the group that everyone will get more than one opportunity to share and it is okay to say “pass” at any time. We strive to keep the focus on our children or grandchildren in the sharing circle, not on the collateral damage we have all incurred. However, we don’t limit what is brought forward. A tool we use is a “talking stick” that is passed from member to member and seems to have a calming effect because it sounds like rain (it is actually called a rain stick). We close the meeting with saying “goodnight” to each of our children.

How is it going? Well, we continue to grow slowly and surely. Our members have indicated that having the opportunity to share their struggles as well as their children's lives and uniqueness, has been helpful in their journey. "It's not only sadness that we share." We offer an opportunity at each meeting to share another tidbit about their child and do this right before we say "goodnight". Our new meeting place is warm and inviting and provides a more private setting than our former one. We are receiving enquiries from agencies and individuals in the area, not just Cranbrook. Plans for increased community outreach have been supported by a local sponsor, McPherson Funeral Home, who does all photocopying for our Chapter. We are having our first AGM in June 2019 and have asked the membership to consider ideas to engage other bereaved parents. We are open to membership feedback on ways to make our Chapter stronger and the meetings meaningful.

We continue to feel optimistic about making a difference in our community regardless of our size. We will be there when needed. It's as simple as that.

Submitted by

Dawn Storgaard



For Your Calendar:


May 25:



Facilitator Training: Join Eileen and Andy Bond for an hour by phone on a Saturday as they lead you through the essentials of facilitating a sharing circle. They will cover the basics as well as tips and hints for a successful meeting.


Andy's invitation: We are planning to conduct another telephone training session on **Saturday, May 25th**, starting at **12 noon Eastern time**. It is expected to run for about an hour and is open to both new and experienced Chapter Leaders and Sharing Circle Facilitators. If you would like to attend, even if you have expressed interest before, please contact NationalOffice@TCFCanada.net for the toll-free call-in number or to request a copy of the "Information for Facilitators" handbook. I can either send you a .pdf version via Dropbox for you to print and bind, or a hard copy by regular mail for \$15 to cover the cost of printing and mailing. If you have any questions, please e-mail me at NationalOffice@TCFCanada.net.

June 14: ABM

The 2019 Annual Business Meeting of The Compassionate Friends of Canada will be held by teleconference on **Friday, June 14th** at **11:00 am EDT**. Each registered Chapter may nominate a representative to attend. If you would like to participate, please contact NationalOffice@TCFCanada.net for the toll-free call-in number.

 Please note that nominations for the Board of Directors may be submitted up to **May 31st**. A copy of the Nomination Form is attached.

May 2019						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	 25
26	27	28	29	30	 31	

June 2019						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	 14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

Congratulations:

In early May, Susan Taylor was honoured at a Health Sciences Volunteer Appreciation dinner for her twenty years of service to her community through TCF Winnipeg (which is where TCF began in Canada). Congratulations, Susan, and thank you. Your dedication continues to be an inspiration to others.

In this, the 50th anniversary year of The Compassionate Friends, let us remember these other contributors and milestones:

- 1969: England, Founder Rev. Simon Stephens
- 1972: USA, Paula and Arnold Shamres
- 1977: Canada, Joan and Bob Martin
- 1986: TCF Canada National, Gwen Brown and Ken Pinch
- 1997: Worldwide Candle Lighting
- 2001: TCF Canada incorporation
- 2005: International Council, Founding Chair Margaret Pringle (England)

The Compassionate Friends of the United Kingdom will hold a celebratory International Gathering in England this fall:

50th Anniversary Supportive Gathering
De Vere Horwood Estate,
Milton Keynes
November 1-3, 2019
www.tcf.org.uk



The
Compassionate
Friends



This is not the end.

Continue to the next page for the BOD Nomination form.





THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS OF CANADA

1-866-823-0141 NationalOffice@TCFCanada.net www.TCFCanada.net

NOMINATION for the NATIONAL BOARD of DIRECTORS

Nomination submitted by: _____ TCF Chapter: _____

NOMINEE INFORMATION

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/Town: _____ Province: _____ Postal Code: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Name(s) of Child/ren who died:

LAST Name: _____ Given Names _____ M / F _____

Date of Death: (dd/mm/yy) _____ Age: _____ Cause of death: _____

LAST Name: _____ Given Names _____ M / F _____

Date of Death: (dd/mm/yy) _____ Age: _____ Cause of death: _____

Attendance at local Chapter meetings: Years: _____ Months: _____

Present / past involvement at TCF local / national levels: _____

Occupation / Profession: _____

Other Volunteer Offices / Activities: _____

Vision for The Compassionate Friends of Canada: _____

NOMINEE AGREEMENT

If elected, I agree to serve a two (2) year term.

Signature of Nominee: _____ Date: _____