



The WARM Way

A Publication for the Families and Friends of The WARM Place

FALL 2026

Keeping Dad in the Game

by Katy Roussey

When Cole Thompson died suddenly in June 2025, his wife, Niki, and their two young sons, Tagg and Troop, were left navigating a life they never expected. Cole was a beloved husband and father and the head coach of his son's baseball team. He suffered a widowmaker heart attack during practice, on the field. His sons were just 6 and 5 years old.

Niki had always known about The WARM Place. She had friends who were volunteers and board members, but she says she never understood just how meaningful its services could be until her family needed them. Both boys were initially apprehensive about attending The WARM Place, but quickly grew comfortable in their groups.

"The WARM Place has equipped my kids to understand the emotions surrounding their dad's death," Niki says. "Kids often feel sad, mad, confused, angry, but they don't know how to identify the emotion." Most importantly, Niki says The WARM Place gives her boys a place where they don't have to pretend they are okay. "My boys know they're in a space that is exclusively built for their devastation," she says. "It's a place that cares about the paramount of what happened to them, and they don't have to put on a brave face."

One day, Tagg told his mom, "I'm sick of dad being dead. I'm sick of being the kid whose dad died." Niki says The WARM Place has helped him understand that, while he is living with something incredibly difficult, he is not living through it alone. "They're amongst peers who are walking the same path. And that is important." The WARM Place has also given Niki support as she navigates grief and parenting after suddenly becoming a single parent.

"Sudden death of a loved one completely explodes the ground beneath you," Niki says. "For me, I went from a two-person team to an only parent overnight." Through the adult group, Niki has found encouragement, understanding and practical insight from other parents walking a similar path. "It's hard to know if I'm doing any of this 'right' as a parent," she says. "But when I am there I always feel validated. I feel encouraged, I feel seen, and I feel like I am not alone."

For Niki and her boys, remembering Cole has become part of everyday life. The Aledo baseball community has honored his legacy by dedicating the field where he died as Cole Thompson Field #10 and creating an outfield wall in his memory. Tagg and Troop visit often, and during the spring season, every player wore a hat with Cole's initials stitched into it.

For the Thompson family, grief will always be part of their story. But so will love, connection, remembrance—and the community they have found at The WARM Place. "The WARM Place bridges that gap," Niki says. "They help my children understand the emotions they'll feel their whole life pertaining to their dad's death at such a young age. Furthermore, they are given the tools on how to handle those feelings—which is so very important."

“My boys know they're in a space that is exclusively built for their devastation. It's a place that cares about the paramount of what happened to them, and they don't have to put on a brave face.”
-Niki Thompson,
TWP Parent”



Cole, Troop, Niki and Tagg



Troop & Tagg at the baseball field named after their dad

If you, like Niki, are navigating the difficult journey of supporting a grieving child, we want to help. Give us a call at (817) 870 2272 or scan for helpful resources on The WARM Place website.





The WARM Place®
Grief Support Center for Children

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John M. Richardson, MD

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A NOTE FROM SHELLEY

Executive Director



This fall, we are filled with gratitude as we celebrate 37 years of The WARM Place on August 24th. For nearly four decades, The WARM Place has provided a safe, supportive place for grieving children and families. We are especially grateful for the vision of our co-founders, Peggy Bohme and Dr. John Richardson, whose belief in supporting grieving children continues to guide our work today. We are honored to carry their legacy forward while continuing to find new ways to further our mission.

Recently, we expanded the reach of Grief Connections, an extension of our peer support programming that gives parents and caregivers an opportunity to connect with others who have experienced similar death losses. Through conversation, shared experiences, activities, and coping tools, participants can focus on their own healing while becoming better equipped to support the grieving children in their lives. We are excited that Grief Connections is now open to the public, extending this opportunity beyond families currently participating in our program. If you or someone you know is interested in attending an upcoming Grief Connection, give us a call at 817-870-2272.

We are also working on an exciting new project that will allow us to expand our reach by educating and equipping others to better support grieving children. When more people understand how children grieve and how to respond with compassion, we can help even more children know they are not alone. We look forward to sharing more about this initiative with you in 2027.

Thank you for being an important part of The WARM Place family. Whether you volunteer, give, attend an event, share our mission, or champion our work in the community, your support makes this work possible. We are grateful to have you alongside us as we continue creating hope for grieving children and families.

WARMly,

Shelley Bettis

UPCOMING EVENTS

SEPT 17

NORTH TEXAS
GIVING
DAY

OCT 17

A COOL NIGHT
PAINTING
HOPE

OCT 23

TRUNK OR
TREAT
FAMILY NIGHT

NOV 6-8

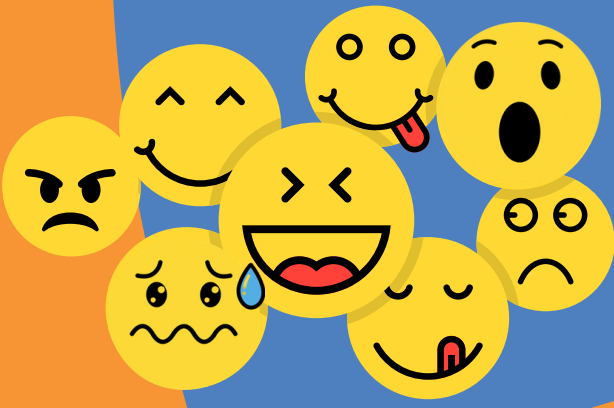
CAMP
REMEMBER
ME

NOV 19

CHILDREN'S
GRIEF
AWARENESS
DAY

NOV 3,7,10&14

VOLUNTEER
FACILITATOR
TRAINING



ALL FEELINGS BIG AND SMALL- in Grief We Have Them All

by Nicole Smith, M.Ed., LPC, NCC

BELOW IS A LIST OF RECOMMENDED BOOKS FOR CHILDREN FEELING THE "FEELS" OF GRIEF.

THE FEELINGS IN ME: GRIEF
by Gemma Keir

**THE ABCS OF GRIEF:
EMOTIONS & FEELINGS**
by Jessica Correnti

WHAT DOES GRIEF FEEL LIKE?
by Korie Leigh

**THE LOVE THAT STAYS
WITH YOU: A SOOTHING
STORY FOR KIDS ABOUT GRIEF**

LOSS AND BIG FEELINGS
by Christine Monroe

When we grieve the death of a loved one, our hearts feel the heaviness of the loss. It is common to experience a variety of feelings, some big feelings and some small feelings. Feelings in grief can change often and vary in their intensity, like the ebb and flow of waves. Sometimes waves are big and strong, sometimes they are small and gentle. But just like waves, our feelings come and go.

Grief can feel confusing; we don't understand what happened.
Take time to ask questions and talk with someone.

Grief can feel scary; the world does not feel safe.
Count on support and loved ones to offer security and reassurance.

Grief can feel sad; the missing of the loved one is so great.
Allow the tears to come.

Grief can feel angry; this was not fair.
Find an outlet to express yourself—scream, journal or draw it out.

Grief can feel lonely; part of your world is missing.
Share with others how much they meant to you.

Grief can feel overwhelming; you are trying to keep all things afloat.
Take one moment at a time.

Grief can feel guilt-stricken; you ask yourself, "If only...".
Believe in your heart you have done your best.

Grief can feel relieving; the loved one is no longer suffering.
Remind yourself of their love.

Grief can feel happy;
thinking about your loved one makes your heart warm.
Smile with their memories.

No matter what feelings you experience during the grief journey,
allow yourself to feel them and know all feelings are part of the process in healing.

Whether you have a child that is grieving the death of a parent, sibling, grandparent, or even a cherished pet, we encourage you to scan the QR code to view our full list of recommended reading.



A Cool Night

PAINTING HOPE

Benefiting Children and Families
at The WARM Place



SATURDAY, OCTOBER 17

THE LEGENDS CLUB AT AMON G. CARTER STADIUM

Join us for an unforgettable evening all in support of children and families at The WARM Place. Our goal this year is to raise \$650,000 to support our children's grief program, which is available to families at no cost to them.

Sponsorship opportunities are nearly sold out, with only a few tables left and a limited number of Copper Sponsorships still available. Be sure to secure your sponsorship by September 18. Individual tickets will remain available through October 5.

Join
us



Questions? Scan the QR code or contact Katie Lane at katie@thewarmplace.org or (817) 870 2272 to learn more.

WHO DO YOU RACE FOR?

SAVE THE DATE: Saturday, March 6, 2027

3024 Acme Brick | 5K & 1 Mile Fun Run

Bring the whole family and join us for this community-wide memorial race as we honor the people we love and support The WARM Place! Whether you're running, walking, or simply showing up to remember someone special, all ages and experience levels are welcome. Every step helps provide hope, healing, and support to grieving children and their families, at no cost to them. We'll see you at the finish line!



SCAN TO
LEARN
MORE ABOUT
THE 2027 RACE!



RACE 2 REMEMBER THEM

R2RT

The John M. Blackwell Memorial Race

The WARM Place®
Grief Support Center for Children

Donor Spotlight: CAROLE STEADHAM

As The WARM Place marks its 37th anniversary this August, we are honored to share a reflection from Carole Steadham, one of our dedicated monthly donors. Carole's story highlights her friendship with Dr. John Richardson, co-founder of The WARM Place, and the lasting impact he had on her life.

"My connection with Dr. John Richardson, co-founder of The WARM Place, began in 1966 when I chose Dr. Richardson as the pediatrician for our son, and later for our daughter. Fast forward to 2006, when we purchased a cabin in Red River, New Mexico. One day, our daughter happened upon Dr. John and his lovely wife, Joan. From that moment on, the rest is history.

We quickly became close friends, sharing stories, cooking together, and enjoying many dinner parties. Transitioning from a professional relationship to a true friendship became one of the highlights of my life. Despite all his accomplishments, Dr. John remained the kind of down-to-earth person everyone hopes to know.

When Dr. John passed away in 2019, the loss of such a meaningful friendship also became an opportunity to give back to his beloved Fort Worth community by contributing monthly to The WARM Place. I have heard many testimonials about how The WARM Place, through its mission of providing grief support, has changed lives.

In Dr. John's memory, supporting The WARM Place leaves a 'warm place' in my heart, knowing I am helping others navigate their grief."

Carole's story is a powerful reminder that a life well lived can continue to make an impact long after it ends. Through her monthly gifts in honor of Dr. John Richardson, she is helping create a lasting legacy of compassion and care for grieving children and families.

Many of our monthly donors choose to give in memory of someone special, transforming their love and loss into meaningful support for those who need it most. By making a monthly gift in honor of someone you cherish, you can help ensure The WARM Place remains a source of hope and healing for grieving children and families for years to come.

Scan to become a monthly donor in the Remember Me Giving Program, a community of loyal, generous donors committed to helping the children of The WARM Place know that they are not alone.



Dr. John Richardson, checking on construction when the new house was being built in 2001 (top) - then appreciating the completed home (below)

NOVEMBER: A MONTH TO ILLUMINATE HOPE CHILDREN'S GRIEF AWARENESS MONTH

Every day at The WARM Place, we recognize children's grief and create opportunities for children and families to find hope, healing, and community. November is Children's Grief Awareness Month, a time to shine a light on the impact of death in the lives of children and the importance of ensuring they have the support they need to grieve. According to the Childhood Bereavement Estimation Model, 1 in 13 children in Texas will experience the death of a parent or sibling before the age of 18.

We know that not every grieving child will have the opportunity to walk through the doors of The WARM Place. That's why raising awareness and equipping our community to understand and support grieving children is so important.

At The WARM Place, we're committed to making sure no child has to face grief alone. This November, join us in bringing greater awareness to childhood bereavement and reminding grieving children and their families that support is available. Together, we can help create a community where every grieving child feels seen, supported, and reminded that they are not alone.





Presented by

DOUBLE EAGLE

THE 6TH ANNUAL WARM PLACE CLASSIC, *fore the children!*

The 2026 WARM Place Classic was a hole-in-one, raising \$100,000 to support grieving children and families in our community! On April 24 we welcomed over 110 players to Squaw Creek Golf Course for a day of fun and connection, all in support of The WARM Place. This was only possible because of the players, sponsors and donors who contributed to making this event so memorable!

Thank you, thank you, THANK YOU!



TO LEARN MORE

THANK YOU TO OUR EVENT COMMITTEE!

Turner Bettis, James Delaune, Austin Franklin, Joe Greenhill, Kelly Hanes, Charles McKinney, Matt Orlie, Brian Roosth, Grant Summers



Thank you

At The WARM Place, healing begins with community. We proudly recognize the individuals, businesses, and organizations whose generous support makes a lasting impact in the lives of grieving children and families.

\$20,000+

Anonymous
 Cole Thompson Giving Fund
 Helen Irwin Littauer Educational Trust, Bank of America, N.A., Co-Trustee
 In memory of Michael P. Hoffman
 J.E.S. Edwards Foundation
 Pape-Dawson Engineers, Inc.
 Perry and Joyce Johns Foundation
 Sid W. Richardson Foundation
 The Lowe Foundation
 The Moody Foundation

\$10,000-\$19,999

Susan I. Adams
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 Junior League of Arlington
 Ken W. Davis Foundation
 Kleinheinz Family Foundation
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 Mary and Paul McKinney
 Lauren Muckleroy
 Once Upon a Time... in honor of
 Lauren Muckleroy
 Rhodes Osiek Patyk & Co
 RMP Industrial Supply, Inc.
 The L & B Westbrook Fund
 Virginia Street Smith Charitable Fund
 at the North Texas Community
 Foundation

Listing reflects donations from January 1 through August 13, 2026.



CELEBRATING 15 YEARS OF PAM MOONEY AT THE WARM PLACE

This November, The WARM Place will celebrate a very special milestone: Pam Mooney's 15th anniversary on staff! For 15 years, Pam has been an integral part of The WARM Place, bringing her heart, energy, compassion, and willingness to help wherever she is needed.

In addition to her role as Office Manager, Pam has also served as a Volunteer Facilitator in one of our children's groups since 2011, working directly with children in our grief support program. This unique perspective has allowed her to experience The WARM Place in many different ways and build lasting connections with the children and families we serve.

Pam plays a huge role in making The WARM Place truly warm. She is often one of the first people families meet when they arrive for their initial intake appointment, welcoming them with warmth and compassion. Throughout the year, she decorates the house to bring joy and smiles to the faces of our families, while also ensuring that no detail is left unattended behind the scenes.

Executive Director Shelley Bettis shared, "Pam's heart is in everything she does, and we are so lucky to have her at The WARM Place. People like Pam are one in a million! She cares deeply about her coworkers, fellow volunteers, and, most importantly, our families. No task is too big or too small for Pam, and the difference she has made here in the last 15 years has left a lasting mark on this organization. We are lucky to see how that impact will continue!"

We are so grateful for the 15 years of dedication, compassion, and care Pam has given to The WARM Place—and for the many ways she continues to make it a place of warmth and healing for children and families.

Looking back on the past 15 years, is there a special memory or moment at The WARM Place that has stayed with you?

"I loved when Dr. John would come and visit. He would look at everything—from the columns to the artwork—and was so intrigued by how The WARM Place had grown. He would tell us stories about Fort Worth, The WARM Place, and how everything came together to build this organization. Seeing the joy on his face as he watched The WARM Place grow was always a highlight."

In addition to serving as Office Manager, you also volunteer as a Children's Group Facilitator. What inspires you to give your time in that role?

"You see the children come to The WARM Place for grief support, and they're just so sad. Then, as they keep coming back, connecting with other kids and building relationships with volunteers, you see this beautiful transformation. The gleam comes back into their eyes and the smiles return to their faces. That's what makes it all worth it. It's hard to see them leave when their time at The WARM Place ends, but it's even more rewarding when you see them later down the road."

What's something people might be surprised to learn about you outside of The WARM Place?

"I like to shop, travel, and go on adventures. Most people probably don't know that I enjoy a few daredevil activities, too! I've been ziplining and white-water rafting. Some things like that are just fun for me."



Pam is always adding the extra special touch! Here she is celebrating co-founder, Dr. John's birthday with a homemade cake!



Halloween is a staff favorite—Pam always wins best dressed, here she is as Cinderella in 2014!



Volunteering is a family affair! Pam and her sister, Carla, volunteered together at Camp Remember Me in 2025.



Pam with former Executive Director, Shirley Montero, and current Executive Director, Shelley Bettis at A Cool Night

**ARE YOU INTERESTED IN GETTING INVOLVED AS A
VOLUNTEER LIKE PAM? SCAN TO LEARN HOW TODAY!**



WISH LIST

Your in-kind donation provides basic items that The WARM Place uses on a daily basis. These simple gifts make it possible to provide grief support services at no cost to families.

OUR CURRENT MOST URGENT NEEDS ARE:

- ☐ Crayons (24 pack)
- ☐ Paper Plates
- ☐ Unsweetened Iced Tea (Gallon Size)
- ☐ Lemonade
- ☐ Frosting

SCAN FOR OUR
COMPLETE WISH LIST!



NONPROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
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FORT WORTH, TX
PERMIT #872



WHERE GRIEVING CHILDREN
AND THEIR FAMILIES FIND HOPE

COMMUNITIES FOUNDATION of TEXAS

NORTH TEXAS GIVING DAY

SPONSORED BY 

HELP US RAISE \$50,000 ON SEPTEMBER 17!

Every donation, big or small, makes a difference!
Save the date for September 17, the largest
community-wide day of giving in the nation!

**The WARM Place was selected to
receive a \$5,000 match from**

THE MORRIS FOUNDATION

so your gift will go even further!

EARLY GIVING STARTS 08.27.26

SCAN TO LEARN MORE AND
SUPPORT GRIEVING CHILDREN IN
YOUR COMMUNITY!



The WARM Place®
Grief Support Center for Children

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