

# VOCAL hosts candlelight vigil for lost loved ones

By Carly Omenhiser  
Sun Staff Writer

At the 12th annual Victims of Crime and Leniency memorial service, candles were lit and balloons were released at the First Presbyterian Church of Dothan April 26 to honor loved ones who have been lost to a violent crime.

Keynote speaker Attorney General Troy King said, it was important to honor those who

have been touched by crime. He added that the Wiregrass has been affected this year more than ever.

"My thoughts and prayers are with each one of you," King said to the many family members of murdered loved ones in the crowd. "We remember those who were left behind by violent crime."

King said 345 white crosses rest on the grassy area in front of his office to represent the victims of

crime in Alabama this year and to remind people of the importance of justice.

"I dream of the day when we can put away the candles and we don't have to have vigils," said King. "I will continue to work to pass legislation to make that happen."

The memorial service also recognized several area law enforcement officials, including Dale and Geneva county District Attorney Kirke

Adams for his work during the tragic events that occurred in Samson March 10.

King presented Adams with the Miriam Shehane Award for his acts of compassion for the victims of the mass shooting.

King said that Adams knew many of the victims and went to visit each of them to make sure they had proper counseling from VOCAL.

The March VOCAL

newsletter states, "Kirke Adams, District attorney for Geneva and Dale County, showed care, concern, compassion, and respect for the victims in his county on Tuesday night. He, as well as, Bill Filmore, Steven Smith, Cathy Berrardi, and Amaylis Benefield from the DA's office, were on the scene within a short time, offering compassion and assistance in

Please see VOCAL, Page 5



DALEVILLE SUN-COURIER Wednesday, April 29, 2009 Page 5

Many of Southeast Alabama's law enforcement officials were recognized at the annual VOCAL memorial vigil. Officials were presented awards by Attorney General Troy King for their dedication to their work and the safety of the community.

## VOCAL

Continued from Page 1

any way they could, to take care of the families left behind."

"I hope the public realizes over the past two months, how important law enforcement is and what they do to

protect the community," said Adams.

Adams also took the opportunity to recognize and thank his assistant district attorneys, Cathey E. Berrardi, Stephen G. Smith, Al Danner and Chief Assistant District Attorney Bill Filmore.

To commemorate National Crime

Victims' Rights Week, April 26-May 2, candlelight vigils will take place across Alabama.

Henry County Sheriff Will Maddox lit a candle in honor of Dexter Hammond, the Headland police officer who lost his life in the line of duty April 24.