

# Vigil

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“With a therapy dog it gives that person a calming effect,” Luker said.

Linderman said they’re available to any victim who feels like they’re having a bad day.

Tom Anderson, the district attorney Coffee and Pike counties, served as the keynote speaker of the vigil. Anderson started out by thanking the people at Wiregrass Angel House for the work they do with victims of homicide and violent crime.

“What they do here is God’s work,” Anderson said. “They’re a shoulder to lean on, and a navigating voice.”

But Anderson said they came together Sunday afternoon at the Wiregrass Angel House grounds to remember the victims of homicide.

“Not only to do we remember them, but we celebrate their lives,” Anderson said. “You are the survivors of homicide victims, and we’re here today to show support for you.”

“This is the one day of the year that we take to honor those taken by the hands of another.”

Linderman said the balloon release at the conclusion of the ceremony acts as a therapy of sorts for the families.

“As you release the balloons it’s about letting go of the anger and sadness and remembering the good times with your loved ones,” she said told the people at the ceremony just before they all released the balloons.

Linderman also announced the recent launching of a new therapy dog program called Angel Paws at the Wiregrass Angel House, which she said is being led by retired Dothan police officer Tony Luker. Linderman said they have two therapy dogs, who donated to the program by Auburn University.



PHOTOS BY MATT ELOFSON/DOTHAN EAGLE

**The Dawsey family includes (from left) Heidi Fields, the niece of Daniel Dawsey, who was shot to death in Dothan in 2014; 8-year-old Kameia Dawsey, the daughter of Daniel Dawsey; and Kim Fields, Daniel’s sister.**



**Wiregrass Angel House Director Shelly Linderman points out the memorial quilt.**