

# VOCAL NEWSLETTER

March 2009



Volume 8, Number 6

*Victims of Crime and Leniency*

## The Samson Massacre



Lisa White McClendon—52

Virginia E. White—74

James Alford White—55

Tracy Michelle Wise—34

Dean James Wise—15



Andrea Dawn Myers—31  
(Deputy's wife)

Corrine Gracy Myers—18 months  
(Deputy's daughter)

James Irvin Starling—34

Sonya Lolley Smith—43

Bruce Wilson Maloy—51

*Injured:*

Ella Kay Myers-3 months  
(Daughter of Deputy)





## The Samson Massacre

*All of our hearts and our services go to the families left in devastation by the rampage of the perpetrator of the Samson Massacre.*



**Phyllis White** Her husband- James Alford White, age 52, her daughter –Tracy Wise, age 34, her grandson- Dean Wise age 15, and her mother-in-law-Virginia White, age 74.

**Murry Wise** His wife Tracy and his only child, Dean James Wise. (This was Phyllis's daughter and grandson)

**Deputy Josh Myers** His wife-Andrea Dawn Myers and his daughter, 18 month old Corrine Gracy Myers. (Andrea was visiting friends across the street from her home with 2 of her children).



**Wade Smith-His wife- Sonya Lolley Smith** Sonya was pumping gas when the shooter drove by and shot her.

**Chelsea Lee-Daughter of Sonya.**

**Tyler Smith-Son of Sonya.**

**Elizabeth Starling-** Her husband, James Starling age 24, father of 2 children and one unborn of 4 ½ months. James was walking to the neighbor's house to help them move boxes to their new home. The shooter came by and shot him to death.

**Tommy and Jean Starling-**Parents of James Starling.

**Tommy Lavalle and Sgt. Joel Starling-**Brothers of James Starling.



**Eva Maloy, Valerie Maloy Hicks, and Samuel Maloy-** Their father-Bruce Maloy was a real hero trying to stop the gunman from killing anymore innocent people. Without Mr. Maloy slowing the perpetrator down, which allowed time for police to respond, there would have been a great many more victims. Thank God for this Hero.

**Mickey Maloy-** Brother of Bruce Maloy.



The Wiregrass Area and the State of Alabama has been devastated by the homicide of 10 innocent people in the small town of Samson (Pop. approx. 3000). Samson is in Geneva County and everyone knows everyone. Most have lived here all their lives. As most of you have heard on the news or in the paper, the perpetrator murdered his mother Lisa White McClendon, and then went to his Grandmother's where family and neighbors were sitting on the porch visiting. He murdered six people (one got away and one survived). He drove a block and murdered James Starling as he was walking down the street. He drove a few blocks and murdered Sonya Marie Lolley Smith at the Big/Little Convenience Store while she was pumping gas in her van. He proceeded toward Geneva (about 20 miles) and the police were there to try and stop him. As he sprayed the parking lot at Wal-mart with bullets everyone escaped injury except the Chief of Police, Frankie Lindsey. His life was saved by his bullet proof vest but he did get hit in the shoulder.

A civilian, Bruce Maloy, had just left work when he encountered the shooter. Mr. Maloy chased the shooter's Mitsubishi Eclipse with his Isuzu Pup, ramming the car as often as he could, trying to run him off the road. However, the shooter got ahead of him and stopped in the middle of the road, aimed his gun and waited for Mr. Maloy. This civilian was a real hero. Without Maloy slowing the perpetrator down which allowed time for police to respond, there would have been a lot more victims. Thank God for this hero. The shooter's next stop was Reliable Products but this was his end as the police had him surrounded and he shot himself in the head. He did not get to murder anyone at Reliable Products.

The degree of cooperation between all law enforcement was refreshing. Every agency was there to help Samson with a terrible massacre and no personalities tried to interfere or take over the investigation. Law enforcement represented on the scene were: Alabama Fish and Game, Military Police, FBI, ABI, Dothan PD, Samson PD, Geneva PD, Geneva Co. Sheriff's Office, Houston Co. Sheriff's Office, Dale Co. Sheriff's Office, Dale and Geneva Co. District Attorney's Office, Sen. Harri Anne Smith, and Rep. Warren Beck.

### **Funerals for the Victims**

Funerals were held in Samson and Geneva for the murdered victims from March 14<sup>th</sup>-March 18<sup>th</sup>. Each service was unique in honoring the victim(s). Every church and chapel was filled with mourners.

It was so hard for Chelsea Lee to say goodbye to her mother, Sonya. As she read a poem that she had given her last Mother's Day. It was difficult for Sonya's husband, Wade, as well as her sister. "She was a Mother to everybody, she took care of us all."

Deputy Josh Myers had the support and attendance from law enforcement in Alabama and Florida. The most unique thing was the Dothan Police Honor Guard. Two officers in dress uniform with white gloves stood at attention, guarding the casket. The officers changed guards every fifteen 15minutes and they changed with exact precision. At the back of the chapel was a large screen playing videos of Andrea and Corrine with the rest of the family interacting with them. Andrea was a great mother and wife. She loved her family and loved taking care of them. She was from Wichita, Kansas where she had been a volunteer fire fighter. Her pastor came from Kansas to conduct her and her daughter's funeral. He had married Josh and Andrea and dedicated each one of their children. Andrea hated wearing shoes and when she married; she and her bridesmaids were barefoot at the wedding.

Corrine's favorite song was "Marinky Dink" (Skina Marinky dinky d-dink— skinna marinky doo— I love you) This was played at her funeral. Andrea and Corrine loved to sing and dance.

There are no occupational fields as dedicated to each other as law enforcement. When a law enforcement officer has a tragedy, all officers bond together to support and comfort that officer and his family; even though they have never met him or his family they are there for them.

#### **Law Enforcement Supporting Deputy Josh Myers were:**

Florida Highway Patrol  
 Florida Wildlife and Conservation  
 Walton Co. Florida Sheriff's Office  
 Washington Co. Florida Sheriff's Office  
 Holmes Co. Florida Sheriff's Office  
 Florala P.D.  
 Alabama Wildlife and Conservation  
 Alex City P.D.  
 Alabama State Troopers  
 A.B.C. Enforcement Officers

A.B.I.

Coffee Co. Sheriff's Office

Enterprise P.D.

Dale County Sheriff's Office

Geneva P.D.

Dale and Geneva Co. District Attorney's Office

Houston Co. District Attorney's Office

Houston Co. Sheriff's Office

Elba P.D.

Covington Co. Sheriff's Office

Andalusia P.D.

Slocumb P.D.

Hartford P.D.

Russell Co. Sheriff's Office

Samson Rescue Squad

Samson P.D.

Geneva Co. Sheriff's Office

Dothan P.D.

Mr. and Mrs. Tommy Starling and Mrs. Elizabeth Starling laid their son and husband, James, to rest on Monday the 16<sup>th</sup>, his birthday.

Elizabeth is 5 months pregnant with their 3rd child. Many family, friend, and co-workers came to show the family how much they cared about James. ("Blue" as he was nicknamed by his childhood friend that stuck with him.) The church, the walls, and vestibule were filled with those who wanted to show their respect for James and his family.

Four members in the same family, representing four generations, were laid to rest in the four caskets taking the front of the 1<sup>st</sup> Baptist Church in Samson on Tuesday. The matriarch of the family, Virginia White, her son, Alfred, his daughter, Tracy, and her 15 year old son Dean. The four ministers talked about the love of quilting for Ms. White. The gardening that Alfred enjoyed. There was a pink ribbon made from flowers to show how Tracy felt about being a cancer survivor. Dean Wise, 15 years old, loved Alabama Football and hunting.

This was obvious as his pallbearers wore their camouflage outfits and orange hats as they carried his casket.

Funeral services for Bruce Maloy, age 51, were held at Pittman Funeral Home's chapel. Three big chapel rooms were overflowing with many mourners standing in the halls and outside during the service. Mr. Maloy was hailed the "hero" who rammed the shooter's car saving the life of Ashley Knowles as the shooter had his rifle pointed toward her. Mr. Maloy continued to chase the shooter trying to run him off the road until he lost his own life.

The tragedy that took place on March 10<sup>th</sup> in Samson and Geneva will be with the citizens for months and years to come. The trauma that is associated with these murders will stay with the family members for life.

When all the media has gone and others have begun to go about their business and their daily lives, the families will still be affected by the trauma of losing their family members. Please remember to pray for those that are members of these families.

### **Grace Under Pressure**

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 Berardi, and Amarylis Benefield from the DA's office, were on the scene within a short time, offering compassion and assistance in any way they could, to take care of the families left behind. They worked tirelessly for days without rest, trying to assist victims and other citizens with whatever needs they might have. It is nice to know how much he and his staff care for their citizens.

Chief Powell, Dothan P.D., organized and orchestrated events to flow in an orderly manner. From closing off Samson on the night of the massacre to directing the funeral procession and all facets in between. Chief Powell and his team did an awesome job!

Supporting all the families constantly were Senator Harri Anne Smith and Rep. Warren Beck, and Probate Judge Fred Hamic.

## ***A NOTE FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, MIRIAM SHEHANE***

The legislature is in session and we're hoping to get some much needed funding for VOCAL this year. Also, a bill is going through to increase the number of people allowed at executions. Both these bills are extremely important and we need your prayers and support. I will be calling you soon with more information.

Also, I want to share with you that my grandson, Joshua, has just graduated from the Montgomery Police Academy. My heart is bursting with pride that he has chosen this career and will be among those we call "the good guys".

Hope all of you are doing well. Let us know if we can be any help to any of you. After all, that's what we're all about.

**Don't forget National Crime Victim's Rights Week will be celebrated April 26-May 2 this year. Our Annual Statewide Candlelight Vigil will be held on the lawn of the Attorney General's Office on Friday, May 1<sup>st</sup>.**

### **GENEVA COUNTY JUSTICE**

Justice came to town for the Wilkerson family in the voices of Kirke Adams and Bill Filmore when the verdict was read: both defendants - **guilty of murder.**

A week long trial for two co-defendants, Patricia Wilkerson and Glenn Lee, who gunned down Timothy Wilkerson in the middle of the street in Samson, Alabama on April 29, 2007. It was a week of defense attorneys, Lee Knowles and David Harrison, continually making the victim the one at fault. Tim's family had to sit and listen to one false statement after another about their father, brother, and cousin and they were not allowed to respond. But Kirke Adams and Bill Filmore spoke for the family and Tim. "We are the voice of Tim. He was a father, son, brother, cousin. He is not here to tell his side. We are here to tell it for him."

It was a long week for this family but they were strong in their faith and family. They had such an outpouring of support from their churches. Every day members and the pastor attended to lend their support in any way needed.

I would like to take a moment and tell you of Tim's oldest sister, Nell Parker. Mrs. Parker is one of the strongest, most faithful women I have had the pleasure to be around. While being diagnosed with bone cancer two years ago, she sat in court, every day for eight hours, out of respect for her brother's memory. You could see the pain in her eyes, but being in court to see justice for her brother's death was far more important than the pain she had to endure.

The family wanted me to express a special thank you to Kirke Adams, Bill Filmore, and Steven Smith for all their hard work in preparing for the case as well as the trial presentation. (The PowerPoint was awesome at closing.) Well done!

I would also like to thank Judge P.B. McLaughlin who presided over the case. He went out of his way to make sure the trial was fair and impartial. No matter how long a witness took or how many witnesses were called, **he never rushed the prosecution or defense. It is not that way with all judges.** We do have judges in other counties that try to have both sides rush through their cases. Some are often heard telling them to speed it up they are taking too long with a witness. Thank you Judge McLaughlin for making sure not only the defendants had their day(s) in court, but the victim did also.

Shelly Linderman, Angel House Project Director

### **RETIREMENT OF CPL. HOWTON**

When a door closes a window opens. That is exactly what happened for Cpl. Geno Howton, of the Montgomery Police Dept. He officially retired January 29<sup>th</sup> from the department, and is working as an investigator for the Alabama Bureau of Investigation. Congratulations and Good Luck in your new venture!

## CHAPTER NEWS

**JEFFERSON COUNTY CHAPTER** Roebuck Precinct, Red Lane Road, Birmingham, 1st Thursday of each month, 3 p.m.  
Chapter President: Carol Melton, (205) 841-1465; Email [carolmeltonb@bellsouth.net](mailto:carolmeltonb@bellsouth.net)  
Chapter Mailing Address: 4162 51<sup>st</sup> Avenue North, Birmingham, Alabama 35217

January was not as busy as usual for us. We went to the parole board for Susan Waller and got five more years for the man who raped her and another girl in 1986. She is very lucky to be alive. The trial for the man that murdered Tonie Linn has been delayed until this summer. The defense lawyer wanted to get more evidence sent off after nearly twenty years. He is just looking for time but it is very hard on the victim's family.

Our annual candlelight vigil will be Thursday night, April 30<sup>th</sup>, in the large jury assembly room. If you want pictures in our PowerPoint presentation, please get them in to us as soon as possible. The guest speaker will be our new District Attorney Brandon Falls. He has reached out to the Latino community in Hoover and spoke to them in Spanish.

We attended a meeting of the Alabama Network of Victim Service Providers. It was very interesting. The guests were from MADD. They have a very good program.

One of our members Mary Holkeyfield who had a son murdered also had a grandson shot this summer. Both of the men that did it never made it to court. The one that shot the grandson was killed recently. Two of our victims will not have to wait for the persons that killed their loved ones to go to the death chamber. Steven Ple of the Changing Times murders and the one that killed Huffman teacher Mr. Culdwell both died of liver disease. Mary Kate Gach got news that Jack Trawick is in line for his execution in June. Attorney General Troy King is emptying out death row.

Keep Nancy and Kevin Kersh in your prayers. They still have not found their daughter Naddia. She has been missing since November 3<sup>rd</sup>. Flo Sargent has had heart and gall bladder surgeries. She is in rehab so keep her in your prayers.

We owe special thanks to the F.O.P., Sheriff Mike Hale, Connie Walrond, The Realtors Caravan Scott, Rogers and Betty Parker for donations to VOCAL. Without help of these people we would not be able to do the things we do.

On January 29<sup>th</sup> we went on a trip to Holman Prison. Chapter President Carol Melton had been there fifteen years ago. Time sure changed things. The trip was put together by Jeanette Carr and Doris Hancock. We had about sixteen going. Margie Caslin, Deputy Billy Jack Logan, and Carol Melton came from Jefferson County. From Dothan were Pat and Gary Jones and her three nephews, Pamela from the AG's office, and two other couples from Dothan.

This trip was a lot different than the last one. We had to show identification with a picture and be shook down. We were shown a movie about prison statistics. The warden took us through the tour and was very patient with all our many questions. On Carol's first trip, the prisoners reached out and tried to touch the group. This time it was totally different. We went down a hall



and they stood on each side and did not act up. We actually went out into their exercise yard which had only a few weights. We went into the building where they were making furniture. The furniture can only be sold to the State. Wages are fifteen cents an hour, with fifty cents an hour the top pay. Inmates can work if they keep their records clean. We also went into the tag shop where they can produce up to seventeen thousand tags a day. Those with "life without" sentences are encouraged to work because they will need the money.

The warden took us to solitary confinement and made an inmate come out so that we could see the cell. There is an iron door on it and a slot to put the food through. They cannot have books to read and a light shines on them all the time. The inmate had his cell covered with paper and used toothpaste to hold it up; the warden removed it. The Faith Dorm is where all

### Victims of Crime and Leniency

Established in 1982  
A 501c3 Non-Profit Organization  
Miriam Shehane, Executive Director

**Angel House & Wiregrass Angel House**  
Projects by V.O.C.A.L.  
Shelly Linderman, Project Director

VOCAL is an advocacy group for victims' rights consisting of concerned citizens, victims of crime and their families, law enforcement officers, attorneys, and others interested in reducing crime and improving the plight of its victims.

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Chapters include Jefferson, Shelby, Shoals, Southeast, and Tuscaloosa

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the religious ones are kept to themselves. The beds are made of wood like a three sided box and mattresses are about two inches thick. They all get three pairs of shoes a year and they were lined up under their beds. Death row is horrible. You can reach out and touch both sides of the walls. They have bars and can be watched all the time.

Prisoners get an hour and fifteen minutes in the yard and can go for five hours a week to work on the computer. The computers get a CD every six months (no internet). Prisoners shower every other day.

We saw the holding cell for the death chamber. It looked like the Holiday Inn compared to the other cells. They get a choice for their last meal off the prison menu. It was asked if they could order steak and the warden said there was no steak served in his prison. The lethal injection is administered by the warden. It is three shots given within forty-five seconds.

There are some gangs there but the warden said most of the arguments are about where they are from. I hope this was not sugar coated for us. From what I saw prison is hell. The old saying that they made their beds hard and now have to lay in them fits. They are not made for comfort. It helps to know that they are not living in luxury. I hope this will help to know that they are serving hard time.

**SHELBY COUNTY CHAPTER** Owens House, Columbiana, 2nd Saturday of each month, 2 p.m.  
Chapter President: Johnnie Doss Page, (205) 669-4238  
Chapter Mailing Address: P. O. Box 32, Columbiana, Alabama 35051

Chapter members Johnnie Page, Mary Furline, Mitzie Wheat, and Cecilia Hilyer attended the meeting of the Alabama Network of Victim Service Providers in February. The presentations by MADD representatives and Wanda Jones from the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office were very informative. It was great to see so many of the victim advocates that we have worked with in the past and to meet new advocates.

We are making plans for our annual Candlelight Vigil to honor and remember victims of crime. The vigil will be held on Monday, April 27, at 7 p.m. at the Shelby County Courthouse. Attorney General Troy King will be the guest speaker. We are also planning our annual golf tournament to raise funds for the chapter.

Chapter members have been busy getting assistance in protesting the parole of Carl Rupert Smith. The hearing was scheduled for March 10 but has been postponed. Smith murdered his ex-wife Jean Smith Ware and her husband Hugh Marlin Ware on July 13, 1982.

**SHOALS CHAPTER** Christian Faith Church, 640 County Road 323, Florence, 2nd Tuesday of each month, 6:30 p.m.  
Chapter President: Denny Kimbrel, (256) 757-1354; Email bamafnatk@aol.com  
Chapter Mailing Address: 442 County Road 111, Killen, Alabama 35645

Fourty-four year old Norman Widdowson of Iron City, Tennessee plead guilty and received a 20-year sentence for his part in the January 27, 2007 murder of Greg Wright from the Green Hill, Alabama community. Widdowson is to assist in the prosecution of father and son—David 49 and Greg Nard 27 from Iron City, Tennessee, both charged with Capital Murder. These trials should start at the end of March. Shoals members are supporting the Wright family.

Shaun Shapley, age 43, plead guilty for the murder of his 17-year-old stepdaughter Jennifer Braggs. Jennifer was a senior at Lexington High School. He was to go to trial the next week. At a motion hearing two weeks before, Shapley and Jennifer's older sister's two young children were to have their DNA sent to a lab. Shapley had choked Jennifer to death and then shot her in the chest as if he was trying to take the gun away from her. The autopsy report showed she was choked first. This happened as Jennifer's older sister and mother were in another room. His plea was for only 25 years. Jennifer's family was there for Shapley—yes "The Scum Bagg" who murdered their daughter and sister. Her biological father was not there at any time, but approved the plea. Some of Jennifer's friends from school and their parents and members from VOCAL attended the hearing.

Members of Debra Paulk's family got the news that Florence police arrested 60-year-old George Rhodes Jr. of Florence for the 2005 murder of 48-year-old Debra Paulk in her home in Florence. Rhodes was indicted for the murder in August 2008 but had not been located until now. VOCAL has and will support this family.

Some Shoals members went to Russellville, Alabama as did Janette Carr, VSO in Attorney General Troy King's Office, and Miriam Shehane in support of a rape victim. A trial date as of now is in July. We will support this victim.

Thanks to all that wrote letters for the parole hearing of Corely Allen Johnson who murdered 18-year-old Shelaine Maxwell of Florence. Thanks also to A.G. Troy King, Lauderdale County Asst. D.A. Will Powell, VSO Jannette Carr, VSO Doris Hancock, Miriam Shehane and other VOCAL members for being there and supporting this family. Thankfully parole was denied.

Chapter members are planning the annual Candlelight Vigil for National Crime Victims Rights Week. Our vigil will be Tuesday night, April 28<sup>th</sup>, at Wilson Park in downtown Florence at 7:00 p.m. Rape Response will join us again and thanks for the work they do. Also we are working on our Fundraiser to be held at Underwood - Petersville Rec. Center on Saturday, May 9<sup>th</sup>, starting at 2 p.m. It will be a musical fundraiser as last year with four or five great groups donating their time. We appreciate their support of VOCAL.

This March will be 10-year anniversary for the family of Danny Sledge; please keep this family in your thoughts and prayers. And never forget to pray for the families in the many unsolved murders in our area, as we know it must be terrible not to have an arrest in their cases.

**SOUTHEAST CHAPTER** Wiregrass Angel House, 105 N. Bell, Dothan, 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month, 6:30 p.m.  
 Chapter President: Pat Jones, (334) 585-2684; Email gary399@centurytel.net  
 Chapter Mailing Address: 406 Hickory Grove Road, Abbeville, Alabama 36310

Reaching up to Heaven

*The Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. Romans 8:26*

I see children reach up their hands to their mothers, eager to get their attention. It reminds me of my own efforts to reach up to God in prayer. Therefore, I needn't worry about getting my request exactly right. I need only to hunger for God and reach up, knowing that He cares. - *David Roper*

O God, too weak and worn for words, I shrink; From trials that deeply wound, and yet to think; Your Holy Spirit helps me as I pray; And gives a voice to what I cannot say! - *Gustafson*

When praying, it's better to have a heart without words than words without heart. - *March 15, 2009 Daily Bread*

As I tried to make sense of the tragedy of March 10, 2009 at Kinston, Samson, and Geneva, traveling home from there assisting Joyce and Shelly, I prayed and I prayed for all the victims' families that we had seen and for those that we had not seen. I didn't know all the details of the crime or the condition of those that had been shot. So I just called the name of "Jesus" over and over in a prayerful attitude. I knew that he would be there with the people of these communities as he has been there for me.

In January, we attended Attorney General Troy King's press conference in Dothan. He was there to inform the public of the bills that he had in his crime package that he hoped to get passed in the 2009 Legislation. In our area where this was his reason for being here, the media turned the whole emphasis on "Country Crossing and Gambling". Very little focus was put on his crime package by the media. I can assure you that this was not his intent. We have an attorney general that I am proud to say stands up for and beside the victims and law enforcement in Alabama.

VOCAL's primary bill of interest is the "Quenette Bill". Victims please contact us at 1-800-239-3219 and ask how you can help. If we don't get your support to help us through this financial crisis, there may not be VOCAL much longer.

Janette Carr and Pat Jones are rallying around the HB297 and SB356, Execution Attendance Bill. This is to increase the number of family members from 2 to 8 for the victim and inmate to attend the execution. Please contact your Representative or Senator and ask them to vote for this. We had the DA and law enforcement from the area where the crime occurred also included in this bill but will probably have to be taken out. Senator Roger Bedford, Senator Vivian Figures, Speaker Pro Tem Demetrius Newton, Rep. Yusuf Salamm, Rep. Thomas Jackson, Rep. Joseph Mitchell are all opposed to this bill or portions of it with comments such as turning an execution into a side show, picnic, revenge, not a counseling or social event but a governmental function. Victims, you have a voice, let them know how you feel about this. Call your representative. Pat Jones' family has an execution date set for May 14<sup>th</sup>. There are 6 family members and under present law only 2 can attend. Thank you Rep. Billy Beasley, Sen. Harri Anne Smith, Rep. Lesley Vance for your support on this.

Victims' Rights Week is April 26 – May 2. Southeast Chapter's vigil is Sunday, April 26, 2009, 3:00 PM, First Presbyterian Church, Hwy 84 W, Dothan. Attorney General Troy King will be our guest speaker. If you wish to write up a memorial for the booklet, please send to Pat Jones by April 13. Also if you want to nominate someone for an award to be presented at the vigil, we need that also by April 13.

**TUSCALOOSA CHAPTER** Tuscaloosa Co. Courthouse, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, County Chambers, 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday, Quarterly, 6 p.m.  
 Chapter President: Betty Holland (205) 556-6390, Email hollandbetty@bellsouth.net  
 Chapter Mailing Address: P.O. Box 71709, Tuscaloosa, AL 35407

Tentatively the Candlelight Vigil had been set for Thursday, April 30, at the Tuscaloosa County Courthouse.

## FIFTH CIRCUIT PLANS CANDLELIGHT VIGILS

Chambers County	Courthouse in Lafayette	Sunday April 19 <sup>th</sup> at 3:00 p.m. C.S.T.
Macon County	On the square in Tuskegee	Tuesday April 21 <sup>st</sup> at 6:00 p.m. C.S.T.
Tallapoosa County	At the courthouse	Sunday April 26 <sup>th</sup> at 3:00 p.m. C.S.T.
Randolph County	Courthouse in Wedowee	Tuesday April 28 <sup>th</sup> at 3:00 p.m. C.S.T.

E. Paul Jones, District Attorney will be the speaker at each event.

For additional information contact Diane Walden at 334-864-0122.

### NOT SO PLEASANT DUTY

The most difficult duty for a law enforcement officer is the notification to the family of a murder victim. There should be two people to do the notification whenever possible. Don't engage in small talk, don't say we lost her or she left us. State the fact, "We have come to give you terrible news, your "daughter has been in killed in a robbery." Most families will immediately go into shock, scream, or even sit quietly; all reactions are different for different people and ethnic groups. Often times they may become hostile to you as the bearer of the news. Continue to be polite, don't take it personally. Tell them you are so sorry. Please don't say "I'm sorry for your loss". They didn't lose an earring--their child was taken from them. Don't say "I understand." No pain this horrendous could have ever been experienced by another person. Don't say, "The deceased person or the victim." Use the person's name.

Do listen to them. Do offer to call family members or their church, do be empathetic, do use common sense (no scissors or knives lying on a table beside them, all they want to do is cut the pain out). Do give them as much information about the homicide as possible. Do make sure someone is with them before you leave. Do return to check on them the next day and for several days thereafter.

Joyce Miller, MS LPC

### VOCAL Was There

Rickey Stokes  
Viewed: 5508  
thehoustonnewspaper@yahoo.com  
334-790-1729  
Date: Feb 22 2009 10:19 PM

There is a group that many do not know about... VOCAL.

They came to my in laws residence Tuesday and cleaned it up. Cleaned the crime scene area up, removed the carpet and affected areas. FREE.

So the family did not have to do anything or make arrangements for anything.

This is my second time around them. One was where a child was killed. They came over and cleaned the area before the family got home.

Please, make donations to them. Contact District Attorney Doug Valeska's office, 677-4892 and see where to send donations.

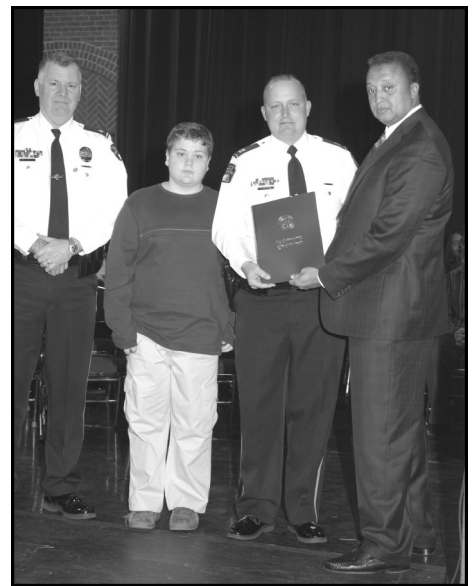
When needed... VOCAL was there.

**If we can help you, give us a call!**  
**800-239-3219**

### PROMOTION OF KEITH BARNETT

Congratulations on the promotion of Lt. Keith Barnett our board member, to Captain Keith Barnett on the Montgomery Police Department!!

Good Job!



VOCAL—Victims of Crime and Leniency P.O. Box 4449, Montgomery, Alabama 36103

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

Agency or Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (Office) \_\_\_\_\_ (Home) \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Victim's Name \_\_\_\_\_ My Relationship to Victim \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Crime \_\_\_\_\_ Nature of Crime \_\_\_\_\_

City and County of Crime (City) \_\_\_\_\_ (County) \_\_\_\_\_

Type Membership: Regular \$25 Agency/Organization \$50

Are you available and interested in volunteer work? Yes No

## Sheriff Updates on Yesterday's Coskrey Deaths: Classified Murder - Suicide

John S Keppy

Viewed: 16574

Written by: JSKeppy

Date: Feb 18 2009 12:49 PM

Houston County Sheriff Andy Hughes is tentatively classifying yesterday's death of John and Carolyn Coskrey as a murder - suicide.

According to Hughes, a relative of Carolyn Coskrey had an appointment with her yesterday, but was unable to contact her. The relative contacted another relative to check on Mrs. Coskrey's well being. The second relative entered the residence and found both of the Coskreys with gunshot wounds. The Sheriff's Office was contacted and deputies dispatched at 1:09pm. They arrived on scene at 1:21pm, entered the residence, and discovered both of the Coskreys apparently deceased due to gunshot wounds. Investigators found no signs of forced entry. A shotgun and a handgun were recovered from the scene. No evidence of foul play has been found.

The last time the Coskreys were known to have been alive was at 9:00am yesterday.

This morning, deputies transported the bodies to Montgomery for autopsy. Sheriff Hughes said that he is waiting on autopsy results before closing the case. Sheriff Hughes has requested that anyone who might have any information relevant to this investigation call the sheriff's office at 677-4809.

VOCAL Wiregrass Angel House volunteers assisted the family by spending over six hours at the scene cleaning and repainting, relieving family members from having to perform that unwelcome task.

Houston County Sheriff's Chaplain Curtis Grant was quickly on scene to provide family members comfort and solace. The Chaplain continues to be a tremendous asset to the citizens of Houston County as he continues to respond to tragic situations, providing support to family members and emergency services responders at these tragic scenes. Both VOCAL and Chaplain Grant are some of the unsung heroes behind the scenes.

### Murder-Suicide in Dothan.

Please remember the Coskrey's children and grandchildren in Houston County as they have lost both of their parents (grandparents).

On February 17<sup>th</sup> Carolyn Coskrey was shot to death by her husband, John and then killed himself.

### Key Club helping to make a difference

The Key Club of Dothan High School saw a need and jumped immediately in to help- Wiregrass Angel House. For months Wiregrass has needed to the back yard cleaned, raked and trees cut and removed. The Key Club worked tirelessly over 8 hours to make sure we have a place we can be proud of to bring visitors.

Thank you for your help and giving so much of yourselves.



*Chase Medley, Whitney Michael, Victoria Hines, Sarah Caskey, Jason Darvin,  
Matt Vance, Eric Gross, Victoria Beverett, and Ellie Hoffmeister*

## ***CANDLELIGHT VIGIL VICTIM'S TESTIMONY***

*VOCAL will produce a testimonial booklet for the Candlelight Vigil to be held during National Crime Victims' Rights Week in April 2009. If you wish to have a brief memorial or tribute statement included in this booklet, complete the following form and mail or fax to the VOCAL office by April 10.*

PLEASE PRINT THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:

YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

YOUR RELATIONSHIP TO VICTIM: \_\_\_\_\_

IN MEMORY/HONOR OF \_\_\_\_\_ WHO WAS  
(NAME OF VICTIM)

\_\_\_\_\_ ON \_\_\_\_\_  
(NATURE OF VICTIMIZATION) (DAY/MONTH/YEAR)

BRIEF MEMORIAL OR TRIBUTE STATEMENT YOU WOULD LIKE TO HAVE ADDED IN THE TESTIMONIAL BOOKLET:

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PLEASE INDICATE IF YOU WILL ATTEND THE CANDLELIGHT VIGIL: \_\_\_\_\_

MAY WE ADD YOUR NAME TO OUR MAILING LIST? \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO:**

VICTIMS OF CRIME AND LENIENCY  
P. O. BOX 4449  
MONTGOMERY, AL 36103-4449  
Fax 1-334-262-7197

## DONATIONS

VOCAL appreciates the faithful contributors who support our efforts in assisting crime victims. Your donations make it possible for us to provide more services and support to victims and is tax deductible.

### Memorials for Jason Buckelew

Miriam Shehane  
Gussie Williams

### Memorials for Joel Folmar

Miriam Shehane

Beasley and Allen Law Firm

Shirley Bowers

Farmer's Exchange Bank

Rebecca and Terry Lake

Vickie Prosch

Herman Sharpe

District Attorney Douglas Valeska

### Memorial for Desta Dodson Byrd

Ronald & Vencil Dodson  
Brice Brackin

### Memorials for Angelia & Jason Foster

Noah Foster

### Memorials for Conni McClenny

Cheryl Wood & Constance Walrond

## ***VICTIM CONTACTS***

Governor Bob Riley  
State Capitol  
Montgomery, AL 36130  
Patricia C. Simpkins  
Dir., Constituent Services  
(334) 242-7100  
1-800-591-4217

Attorney General's  
Office of  
Victim Assistance  
500 Dexter Avenue  
Montgomery, AL 36130  
VSO Janette Carr  
VSO Doris Hancock  
(334) 242-7339  
1-800-626-7676  
www.ago.state.al.us

Department of Corrections  
Richard Allen, Commissioner  
P.O. Box 301501  
301 South Ripley Street  
Montgomery, AL 36130  
VSO Janet Findley LeJeune  
(334) 353-3871  
www.doc.state.al.us  
State inmate parole info.  
1-888-726-9799, Option 4

Alabama Crime  
Victims Compensation  
Commission  
Dr. Cassie Jones  
Director  
P.O. Box 1548  
Montgomery, AL  
36102-1548  
1-800-541-9388  
www.acvcc.state.al.us

State of Alabama  
Board of Pardons & Paroles  
Cynthia Dillard, Director  
P.O. Box 302405  
VSO Debra Bonds  
Montgomery, AL  
36130-2405  
(334) 242-8050  
Fax (334) 353-7701  
www.pardons.state.al.us

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422 South Court Street  
P.O. Box 4449  
Montgomery, AL 36103