



# Wiregrass Angel House

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## Justice for the Dixons

Five long years! That's how long it has taken for the Dixons to receive justice for their brother and son, Patrick. Everett Morton was convicted of being the mastermind of the murder of Mr. Dixon. Five years his mother, two sisters, cousins, and aunts have waited to hear a jury tell them that someone was responsible for their loved one's murder. Someone would be punished for taking the life of their loved one. Although the 5 days of jury selection, testimony from the detectives, forensics; listening on a daily basis of the intense suffering Mr. Dixon encountered while being killed was almost intolerable. They know it was worth every minute they endured. We would like to say a special thank you to Judge Conaway for his respect and compassion to the family throughout the week. You were a true professional, and never lost sight of this family's loss. To DA Valeska, Chief Asst. Gary Maxwell, and Andy Robinson for their long hours put into this case; a great big thank you, as well. You could tell many hours went into the preparation of this case.

To the CID division of the Dothan Police Department.: The detectives went beyond the call in this case and the family knew it. Without you—there would be no bad guys to prosecute. Sometimes saying, "thank you" isn't enough. The jury recommended Life without parole to the judge. Formal sentencing was held June 29, 2011. . . . .

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July 1, 2011

## **Donors for the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Charity Golf Classic**

We apologize for omitting the following names in the previous newsletter. Your support of Wiregrass Angel House and the work we do is greatly appreciated.

*Azar's*

*Bates and Borland*

*Carla Woodall Houston Co. Circuit Clerk*

*David Holmes - Attorney at Law*

*Hathcock Roofing and Remodeling*

*Pat Jones – Attorney at Law*

*Sheriff Andy Hughes*

*Southside Granite – Terri Pierce, Owner*

*Super Pawn Center*

*Trinity Bank*

*William Hinesley - Attorney at Law*

**Welcome to our newest Wiregrass board members:**



**Lt. Tony Luker of the Dothan Police Department  
Honorable Kirke Adams, Dale/Geneva County DA**

July 1, 2011



Saturday, July 30<sup>th</sup> is National Night Out in **Houston** County for all the citizens to come and enjoy the sounds of blue grass music, to check out the latest gadgets from the fire department, to watch the Special Response Team put on an awesome show with their maneuvers, and to check out the booths inside for all the organizations that help each day. This will be the 28<sup>th</sup> Annual National Night out campaign to involve citizens, law enforcement agencies, and local agencies to take a stand against drugs and crime. This event will be held at the Dothan Civic Center and is free and open to the public.

There will be a variety of activities for children and teenagers. We encourage everyone to come and be a part of this worthwhile event!



*Captain David Jay-Coordinator of National Night Out*

### **Shawn Aldridge**

On June 28<sup>th</sup> the Dothan Police Department responded to a call where a 4 year old was not breathing. Shawn Aldridge was found dead in his parent's vehicle. Shawn had crawled in the back of the vehicle and could not get out. He died from the heat. He had been trapped for an estimated 4 hours.

Both of his parents have been charged with Manslaughter.

Please be in prayer for Shawn's siblings as well as his grandparents.

July 1, 2011

### **Another Cold Case Solved!**

The Dothan Police Department has done it again! Another cold case solved! On September 26, 1981 Mr. Russell Douglas was found murdered at the Northview Amoco gas station. He was a clerk at the station. Mr. Douglas was at work when a man came in to rob him. During the robbery, evidence was left behind that was sent to the Department of Forensic Science. For many years, various investigators have worked this case; collecting evidence, running down leads, interviewing witnesses, etc.

In March 2010, the Dothan PD formed a cold case unit to review unsolved homicides. Evidence in this case was resubmitted for analysis. In December 2010, the police received a CODIS hit from the submitted suspect.

In April 2011, the case was presented to the grand jury in Houston County, in which they handed down an indictment on Nathaniel Dennis for Capital Murder during the commission of a robbery. This defendant is currently serving a sentence in Virginia for assault and robbery. The DA's office is currently in negotiations with the Sussex County Virginia DA in the extradition of this defendant.

This is beyond words of excitement for the Douglas family. Mr. Douglas' wife and children were elated when they heard the news. To have a case solved that is 30 years old is remarkable. It speaks volumes for the detectives at CID, the cold case unit, and the Chief. By solving this case it shows the Douglas family, as well as other families, that they are important and their loved ones are not forgotten.

You all should be so proud of your accomplishment.

July 1, 2011

## **Dale/Geneva County News**

Marcus Blackmon was at his home with his long time girlfriend on a regular Sunday afternoon when Jarmon Barrow and Everette Newson entered his house with a gun attempting to rob Marcus. Barrow shot Marcus and he died.

His girlfriend begged for her life and another person hid in the corner.

Barrow and Newson were charged with felony murder.

In April, Barrow was convicted of felony murder and awaits sentencing by Judge P.B. McLaughlin, Jr. Supernumerary District Attorney David Emery tried the case for the State. Many hours of meeting with the Blackmon family preceded the trial. The Defense saw Marcus as a felon and a generally bad person. Mr. Emery handled the case well and was able to show the jury who the real bad person was in this case. The family was appreciative of the work of law enforcement and the District Attorney's Office. They were most appreciative of the time spent with them explaining the court process and answering questions.

Newson's case is scheduled for trial in September.

## **Inside C.R.E.P.**

By: Don Salt

As a Court Referral Education Program (CREP) instructor, it is my privilege (and responsibility) to help the students make a change in their life. They may have been arrested for a DUI, an open container, or minor drug charge. I explain the law to them and emphasize the dangers of drinking even a small amount of alcohol and getting behind the wheel to drive. I also help them find activities they can enjoy that do not involve alcohol or other drugs.

The students show up with the attitude of, "I don't want to be here and there is nothing you can say that will make me want to change." When they leave, they frequently swap names, phone numbers, and email addresses so they can continue to keep in touch. I have seen students cry over how difficult it is to quit using drugs. Other students gave out their phone numbers and told them to call anytime they needed to talk with someone. It is great watching a class bond and become their own self help group. It is also very fulfilling to watch grown adults admit to mistakes and commit to changes in their lifestyle they expect to keep for the rest of their lives. This may include a stronger commitment to church, giving up old friends, or just avoiding the places they used to frequent.

As the class ends and the students are leaving for the last time, I get hugs and handshakes from students who would hardly give me a smile on the first day. Watching the changes the students are making in their lives is very fulfilling.

July 1, 2011

## **COUNSELOR'S CORNER--HOMICIDE IS NOT GRIEF**

When someone you love is murdered, from the time of notification you are in shock. It's as if you are in a daze and nothing registers.

Then there is usually denial. "No, they have made a mistake, it can't be true." Afterwards a flood of emotions come and go; several different emotions constantly. We can't ever seem to find the right emotion to bring us peace.

Someone comes along and suggests that you should seek "grief counseling". But you need to seek "trauma therapy" first. It is usually a long time before we get to grief. The traumatic event that has shattered your life forever must be dealt with first before we get to the "grief stages."

Sometimes you feel like you are not making any progress, but you are. If you get up and put one foot in the front of the other, you are making good progress.

Joyce Miller, MS, LPC

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### **Sentencing on murderer of Patrick Dixon**

*Continued from front page*

June 29, 2011 was the formal sentencing date of Everett Morton, one of the men who was convicted of killing Patrick Dixon. The jury recommended Life without parole. It was a 12-0 recommendation. After a long deliberation and a very eloquent speech of why the judge should override the jury's recommendation, Judge Conaway sentenced the inmate to Life without parole. Judge Conaway stated he felt that the jury's recommendation of 12-0 should be respected and even though the family wanted the death penalty they respected the judge's decision. They understood why he made this very difficult decision.

The family is so relieved this offender will not be back out again to hurt anyone else.

***LITTLE KNOWN FACTS***

What makes it capital murder?

Many times a victim's family is insulted when someone says, "oh that's just murder; not capital murder." We are offended to think our loved one was murdered and the highest charges are not applied to this devastating crime. However, other crimes must be a part of this offense before it becomes capital. i.e.

- (A.) Kidnapping or attempted kidnapping
- (B.) Robbery or attempted robbery
- (C.) Rape 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> degree
- (D.) Sodomy 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> degree or attempted
- (E.) Burglary in the 1<sup>st</sup> degree or 2<sup>nd</sup> degree
- (F.) Murder of any police officer or correctional officer
- (G.) Contract to hire
- (H.) While under the sentence of Life
- (I.) During sexual abuse
- (J.) Arson 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> degree
- (K.) Two or more people in one scheme
- (L.) Murder of a public official, state or federal
- (M.) Taking control from an aircraft
- (N.) Convicted of another murder within 20 years
- (O.) Victim is a witness
- (P.) Victim is less than 14 years old.
- (Q.) Firing into an occupied building from the outside
- (R.) Shooting into a vehicle where victim is
- (S.) A deadly weapon fired on, otherwise used within or from a vehicle

Assuming the crime is found capital and the defendant is found guilty, there will then be a short trial to find aggravating or mitigating circumstances.

The jury then returns an advisory verdict based upon it's consideration of mitigating or aggravating circumstances.

The trial judge has the complete authority to reject or accept their recommendation. The judge is the deciding authority and makes the final decision.

To make it a capital crime there has to be two felony offenses at the same time.

July 1, 2011

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### **Prayers for the Perez family**

The day before Mother's day, "Polis" Perez left work to go on his lunch break, never to return. Twenty-one years old, he still checked in with his mom on a daily basis. Missing flyers went up and the Henry County Sheriff's Office started an investigation. The next Saturday, the investigator visited the family to explain it was no longer a missing person's case, but a homicide. There has been no body found, but they did find his car. They have found evidence in the car believed to turn this case from missing persons to a murder.

**Please keep this family in your prayers.**