



Angel House

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Director's Note

Since the passing of our counselor, Joyce Miller, I thought it only fitting to publish a letter written by one of her clients.

I am writing a letter to express how special Joyce Miller is to me. Notice I say "is" not "was". Joyce will ALWAYS be an important part of my life.

When I got the call that Mamma was missing on Jan.2nd, 2002 I was scared, but I had hope that we would find her. Of course I called the police, hospitals, my biological father, did everything I could think of. My mother, Sharon Mills, was a resident of Dothan although I grew up and lived in Montgomery at the time. I won't go into all the details of my case, but I will tell you that it was consuming my life. Mamma was my best friend. I was her only child. I was her only advocate. I needed her and she needed me. When Mamma was found just past the Florida line, lying in a ditch a month and a half later, the detectives called to verify it was indeed her body. I collapsed on the floor in disbelief. I had clung to hope that she would be safe somewhere and we would find her. All hope was gone now. Yes, she had severe bunions on her feet, worse than mine. That's how I knew it was her. Now all the hard work the Dothan detectives had done was passed over to Florida and they did not seem concerned since Mamma was not a Florida resident. It was as if the case was closed even though it was unsolved.

I spent hours calling, screaming, crying, for them to DO something. This was my Mamma and I wanted action, but they didn't care. Finally one day when I was on the phone with the detectives, crying and begging for help I was referred to Joyce Miller. My church had sent me to a grief counselor before, but he didn't understand that I did not care about grief, I wanted JUSTICE! I never went back to him. I knew he didn't understand. My pastor didn't understand. Nobody understood! I spent days on the floor weeping in my Bible, open to Psalms, Mamma's favorite, feeling abandoned by God. I was truly broken. When I went to meet Joyce for the first time, she said what I was feeling was normal. I could not possibly grieve yet, because this was not a

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natural death like cancer or an accident. Someone TOOK my mother's life. She explained I was in trauma and I did need to seek Justice. FINALLY somebody understood! Joyce and I talked about the case, talked about my Mamma. Joyce told me that I was Mamma's angel, that she named me appropriately. I immediately connected hearts with Joyce. We discussed our faith in Jesus and the Word of God. We shared scriptures that the Lord had given us. Joyce and I had our picture made for the newspaper with me giving her an angel.

Joyce explained that Florida had a bad reputation for not caring for the victim and that I needed Doug Valeska on my side. I remember googling his name and seeing that he was a Catholic who was for the death penalty. I was shouting Amen as I read stories of this man who fought for victims. Hope was being restored. Joyce put me in touch with him and we got close many times to getting the JUSTICE we had been praying about.

Joyce also helped me with my family through her wisdom in counseling. She helped my marriage when she explained that my husband wanted to shelter me from pain, she helped me remember to enjoy my precious children who were only ages one and four at the time. She warned me of a certain detective that was becoming too friendly. Joyce was a caring counselor and friend to me. When I explained that I just couldn't stand living in Alabama anymore and I just wanted to leave, she wasn't sure it was a good idea, but she understood. When my family moved to Nashville, TN she and I still talked on the phone quite a bit. I continued to seek justice through emailing, phone calls, letters. Joyce was always there for me guiding me with her wisdom and listening to me cry when I was disappointed with the justice system.

In 2006 God did a huge miracle and allowed me to solve the crime myself as I discovered it was my real father who murdered my mother. Joyce was there to counsel me again. God gave her the right words and prayers for me and my family. In 2007 I was honored when I was invited to come to Montgomery for Vocal's 25th anniversary celebration dinner at the Capital City Club and share my story. We were able to give a large donation from my mother's insurance in her honor. I have a beautiful picture of Joyce and me all dressed up. This will always be a treasure to me. Joyce was on mission here on earth. She knew her purpose and she walked in it beautifully, with strength from God.

God's Word promises us that "to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord" so although Joyce is no longer in her "earth suit" she is present with the LORD. Jesus promises that he is interceding for us and I believe Joyce is interceding for all the people that have lost loved ones to murder. She is still the one and only Joyce Miller, with a heart that cares for victims. I remember sharing with Joyce that God is the "Ancient of Days". He is the JUDGE who was there and saw my mother being murdered. He was there from the beginning of the case. He saw all my suffering and it didn't go unnoticed. Joyce and I pursued justice and may not have gotten it in the eyes of this world. But GOD let me know the truth and HE gave me a sense of JUSTICE in the spiritual world which I am so thankful for. If it hadn't been for Joyce I probably would have lost my mind. She kept me grounded with wise counseling, friendship, prayer, truth, and hard work. I know there are so many others who have their own story of how Joyce helped them also.

I love you Joyce and I know I will see you again, with Jesus, our Healer, the ONE who takes away every sickness, every cancer cell, every disease. And we will see God, the Ancient of Days, who knows every victim's murderer, who brings JUSTICE and wipes away every tear. Oh Joyce, I envy you. I look forward to hugging you and dancing before our Lord together hand in hand, knowing it was all worth it. See you soon my warrior princess.

Love, Angel Faulk

COUNSELOR'S CORNER—

(This was the last column Joyce contributed to our newsletter.)

The Holiday Season

The most difficult season without our loved one is upon us. The dreaded anticipation of how to get through this day or season is worse than the day itself. When we look at how the day will be, our imagination intensifies all our feelings of the loss of our loved one.

Some suggestions are:

1. Write your feelings in a journal before the holidays to express your feelings. Clarifying your thoughts will be less overwhelming.
2. Try planning ahead to actively participate in activities. This will enable you to decide in advance what you want to do and what you don't want to do and will prevent you from having to make decisions on the spot. If you are invited to something and you are not sure that you want to go, explain to the hostess that some days are not so good but if you're up to it, you will let her know. On the day of the party, go if you can.
3. If you have small children, let extended family members make their holidays as normal as possible. Try to decorate your home or let family and friends help you decorate. This will bring warmth into your

home and a reminder that life is continuing and so shall you.

Being with others during the holidays is often the best medicine for you. The most important thing to remember is to keep things simple. If you don't want to accept an invitation or you don't want to issue an invitation, don't be afraid to express your feelings. If you want to cry, do. If you want to spend some time alone, it is okay, as long as you continue to reach out to others in the family.

Things that might help: Bake (lots of stuff); shop by catalog or internet; make a holiday basket and drop it off for the Salvation Army in memory; or start a new tradition in memory of your loved one.

If none of this works for you, take a pill and go to bed. When you wake up the day will be over. Call on us if we can help.

Joyce Miller, MS, LPC



The Memorial Christmas Tree will be at the Court House, on the corner of Oates and Main Street. Take time to Reflect, Remember and Rebuild this holiday season.

HONORING THOSE WHO BRING HONOR TO VICTIMS IN ALABAMA

NATIONAL CRIME VICTIMS' RIGHTS WEEK AWARDS

Angel House annually recognizes individuals and organizations that demonstrate outstanding service in supporting victims and victim services. As the discipline of crime victim services has grown over the years, so has the number of remarkable individuals that significantly contribute to its success. Today, the field includes countless people who through vision, action and leadership have improved the lives of victims in the aftermath of crime. We invite you to submit a nomination for one or more of seven awards. In making your nominations, we encourage you to recognize individuals who have made significant contributions to the crime victims' field and/or to crime victims. Recipients of the awards will be honored in Montgomery as part of the national commemoration of National Crime Victims' Rights Week (NCVRW), which is scheduled for April 22 – 28th, 2012.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES FOR AWARDS

- A nomination letter must accompany each nomination form. No anonymous nominations will be accepted.
- Each form must include the nominee's name, title, organization, address, and telephone number.
- Nominations should not exceed two single sided, double spaced pages and should be typed and should reflect as much as you know about your nominee's accomplishments and services in supporting victims.
- Please review the award categories carefully and select the category that most accurately reflects your nominee's accomplishments and services in supporting crime victims. You can only nominate one individual to one category.
- Please provide additional information about the nominated individual that should be considered in the review process. Supporting documentation such as newspaper articles can also be attached.

DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTING NOMINATIONS

Nomination forms and supporting materials must be received no later than **Friday, February 24, 2012** and can be mailed to: (Selection Committee, P.O. Box 7133, Dothan,, Alabama 36302) or faxed to (334) 702-7014. If you have any questions about the award nominations or selection process, please call Shelly Linderman at (866) 31-VOCAL. The nomination form is also on the Website at www.angelhouseofalabama.org.

ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES

- You may nominate one or more worthy individuals.
- Candidates nominated but not selected in previous years are eligible for consideration. Previous award winners, however, are not eligible to be nominated and will not be considered for the same award.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE AWARDS

- Each year, through the prestigious Miriam Shehane Award, our organization. honors extraordinary individuals who exemplify the long-term commitment that characterizes individuals who work with victims with the same caliber of dogmatic passion and concern as the one who this award was named in honor of. This is awarded also with a cash scholarship of \$250.00
- The State King Solomon Award was instituted in 2004 to recognize a jurist that through their leadership, vision, and innovation have led to changes in the criminal justice system. This is awarded also with a cash scholarship of \$500.00.
- The State Law Enforcement Officer of the Year Award honors those in the field of law enforcement who go beyond the call of duty to assist victims in their time of need. The individual will be one that shows respect and dignity above all else to crime victims and their families.
- The State Prosecutor of the Year Award recognizes those in the field of the District Attorney's Offices that exhibit exceptional perseverance and determination to get the job done and work with the victim and/or their family. To show respect and dignity and, above all else, does what the victim wants and listens to the victim.
- The State Victim Service Officer of the Year Award recognizes those in the field that exhibit exceptional compassion and empathy for the victim and/or their family. An individual who treats the victim with kindness and care and who keeps the victims informed of their case.

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NOMINATION FORM

Your Name _____

Nominee's Full Name _____

Your Title/Position _____

Name for Award Plaque _____

Your Organization _____

Nominee's Title _____

Your Mailing Address _____

Nominee's Organization _____

Nominee's Mailing Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

City _____

Telephone _____

State _____ Zip _____

Email _____

Telephone _____

Type of Award: (Mark One)

The Miriam Shehane Award

The State Prosecutor of the Year Award

The State King Solomon Award

The State Victim Service Officer of the Year Award

The State Law Enforcement Officer of the Year Award

Signature of Nominator: _____

No anonymous nominations will be accepted. A nomination letter must accompany each nomination form. Nominations should not exceed two single sided, double spaced typed pages and should reflect as much as you know about your nominee's accomplishments and services in supporting victims. Please provide additional information about the nominated individual that should be considered in the review process. Supporting documentation such as newspaper articles can also be attached. You may send in multiple letters from various sources for one nomination.

Tis' the season for giving

Most of us are so blessed but with all the hustle and bustle of the holidays we seem to forget there are many families that are not.

House has lost one parents. If to assist this Christmas for the children please call our office. You can either donate new unwrapped toys or a donation and we will do the shopping for you.



Angel a family that their you would like family with

After 4 years the family still waits for justice

It's been over four long years since her sister, Christine Chumney, was murdered by her estranged husband. Four years of delays and stall tactics by the defense. Finally a date has been set for this case. It is on the December court docket. Hopefully this time the case will go and Sharon and Paul Yon will finally be able to move forward after this case is over.

Thank you Judge Moulton for setting a date and not allowing the defense another continuance.

In Remembrance



Milton Jones was robbed and murdered August 16, 2011 in Dothan, Alabama. He left behind 4 small children ages ranging from 6 months to 8 years old. He also left his loving mother and step-father as well as several sisters and brothers.

Please be in prayer for his family as they begin this difficult journey of losing a loved one in such a tragic way.

Thank You to the following for donations to our organization. Without you our job would not be possible...

Houston County Pre-Trial Program

Henry County Pre-Trial Program

Wiregrass Area United Way

Shady Grove Baptist Church

Mark Coskrey

Donuts and Dawgs

Doug Valeska

LITTLE KNOWN FACTS

Prejudice (law)

From Wikipedia the free encyclopedia

In law, the phrase **without prejudice** means that a claim, lawsuit, or proceeding has been brought to a temporary end but that no legal rights or privileges have been determined, waived or lost by the result. For example, if a party brings a lawsuit in small claims court but discovers that the claim is greater than the amount for that court to have jurisdiction, the lawsuit can be dismissed “without prejudice”. This means that the dismissal is no bar to bringing a new lawsuit in a court that does have jurisdiction.

By contrast, **with prejudice** means that a party’s legal rights have in fact been determined and lost. To continue the same example, if instead the court had jurisdiction, but the plaintiff did not appear for the trial, the court would dismiss the case “with prejudice”. That dismissal is a judgment against the plaintiff “on the merits” of the case and extinguishes the claim that was being sued over. However, this does not prevent an appeal or a trial de novo if ordered by a higher court.

Usage in common law:

In many common law jurisdictions such as the UK, Ireland, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Singapore, the term “without prejudice” is also used in the course of negotiations to indicate that a particular conversation or letter is not to be tendered as evidence in court. Such correspondences must be made in the course of negotiations and must be a genuine attempt to settle a dispute between the parties. It may not be used as a façade to conceal facts or evidence from the court and as such a document marked “without prejudice” that does not actually contain any offer of settlement can be submitted should the matter proceed to court. Courts may also decide to exclude from evidence communications not marked “without prejudice” that do contain offers of settlement.

The term “without prejudice save as to costs” is a modification to the above and refers to a communication that cannot be exhibited in court until the end of the trial when the court awards costs to the successful party.

November 1, 2011

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Governor Robert Bentley
State Capitol
Montgomery, AL 35130
Taylor Vice, Director
Constituent Services
(334).242.7100
1.800.591.4217

Victim Contacts

Attorney General's Office
of Victim Assistance
501 Washington Avenue
Montgomery, AL 36130
Patricia S. DeBortoli
Victim Services Director
(334).242.7300
1.800.626.7676
www.ago.state.al.us

Department of Corrections
Kim T. Thomas, Commissioner
P.O. Box 301501
301 South Ripley St.
Montgomery, AL 36310
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 231267
Montgomery, AL 36123
1.800.541.9388
www.acvcc.state.al.us

State of Alabama Board
of Pardons and Paroles
Cynthia Dillard, Director
P.O. Box 302405
Montgomery, AL 36130
VSO Debra Bonds
(334).242.8050
Fax (334).353.7701
www.pardoles.state.al.us