Annual Day of Service for Volunteers

Thank you just doesn’t seem sufficient enough for all the hard work put in by the folks who came to give of their Sunday, to help us clean the yard and garden. We truly appreciate each and every one that worked so hard!

Toddler Miss Angel Reagan Greenwood, Mrs. Jackie Greenwood, Tiny Miss Angel Autumn Fulford and her grandfather Mark Emerson, Future Little Miss Angel Mallory Webb, Mr. and Mrs. Webb, Mrs. Mary Lynn, Mrs. Barbara Ward, Mr. Roger Ward, Mrs. Bobie Salt, Mrs. Ashley Thomas, Miss Skylar Thomas, Ms. Janette Grantham, and Mr. Chuck Linderman. Thank you all for the labor of love!

A special thank you to Tony Luker who pressure washed the entire house!
CREP Corner

The mandatory annual in-service was held October 22-26\textsuperscript{th} at Gulf Shores. The conference was great! We learned a great deal and did a lot of laughing at ourselves and others. Cheryl Plato-Bryant and her staff did an outstanding job pulling it all together.

Denny Kimbrel and Glenda Richardson came and shared their stories as victims during the in-service. What a powerful and inspirational story they both have. They both have shown such courage and grace through their ordeals. Thank You!

Director’s Note

It’s hard to believe this is our last newsletter for 2012. The year has gone so fast. The holiday season is fast approaching. This is the time of year we are supposed to look at our lives and feel grateful. Unfortunately for victim’s families that’s not always an easy task. It is hard to feel grateful when you feel so much sadness because of your loved one being taken from you. If you are a victim or a survivor, try to stay busy during this time of the year. If you happen to run into a victim or a survivor, don’t avoid them. Talk to them. Let them know that you are thinking about them and that you will say a prayer for them. You see, victims want to know that they and their loved ones, especially their loved ones, are not forgotten. They don’t expect you to fix their situation. They just expect you to show them the same respect you did prior to the crime.

For the past several years Wiregrass Angel House has helped families of recent victims with special needs during the holiday season. If you would like to help support a family with young children this Christmas, please call the office and I will give you ages to shop for.

Also- In this issue we have included a nomination form for the 2012-2013 Angel House awards. These awards are presented during the last week in April to commemorate National Crime Victims Rights’ Week. If there has been someone that you have worked with that you feel is worthy to be nominated, please take time to fill out the forms and mail them back in. If it is easier, you can also email to wiregrassangelhouse@ymail.com. Deadline is March 15\textsuperscript{th}, 2013.

Shelly Linderman
Annual Day Of Service Photos
VOCAL Support Group Meeting

Southeast VOCAL chapter held their monthly meeting on Tuesday night October 16th. They held elections for officer positions other than president. Patrick Amason is the new vice-president and Kimberly Humphries is the secretary/treasurer. They both will do an excellent job in assisting the new president Beckie Schuler.

A special thank you to Houston County DA and staff for showing their support, attending the meeting and providing dinner. Thank you, DA Adams and DA Reeves for pledging their support for the southeast VOCAL chapter, as well.

Due to the Thanksgiving holiday our next support group meeting will be held Tuesday, November 13th at 6:00 p.m.

Southeast VOCAL chapter’s annual Christmas party will be held Saturday, December 8, 2012. Please contact Beckie Schuler for additional information at (334) 983-5598.
Counselor’s Corner

Joyce wrote this article several years ago. I think it still holds true today. I wanted to re-run it for those who have forgotten it and for others who have not seen it. I hope it helps during this time of the year for each of you.

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.

In Remembrance- Joyce Miller, MS, LPC
An arraignment was held October 9th with Judge Brad Mendheim, for Ryan Peterson, who killed Cameron Eubanks, Tiffany Grissette, and Thomas Robins in August. He pled not guilty by reason of mental disease or defect. Arraignments are a necessary part of the legal process, but are very hard on the families that have to attend. The strength these three families have shown has been remarkable. DA Valeska met with the families afterward to explain the long journey they have embarked on in the criminal justice system. The families were very pleased the DA, personally, took the time to sit down with them and explain the process as well as listen to them.

October 17th Cornelius Benton was sentenced to 20 years when he pleaded guilty to shooting Christopher Woods. DA Valeska, prior to the plea deal spoke with the family to make sure they were in agreement.

The district attorney’s office and DA Valeska attended the parole hearing with the family of Brian Dowling, who was killed by a drunk driver. Parole was denied till 2017.

On Oct. 3rd, the DA’s office transported and attended the parole hearing with Bonnie Ingram, mother of Terry Clenney, who was murdered by Tim Brewer. He received a manslaughter conviction and received the maximum amount sentence of 20 years. The parole was denied and the offender will end his sentence in prison.

A special thank you to the parole board for carefully weighing these decisions and giving justice to the families.

The 1st sovereign citizen in Alabama to be tried and convicted was also up for parole only after 3 months since her conviction. Janet Hancock was sentenced to 3 years for Burglary. She will end her sentence next July, due to the good time law.

DA Valeska is introducing a new bill this next legislative session for restitution to be ordered for witnesses. Without witnesses most cases would not find justice. Witnesses have a difficult time to come back and testify with the financial strain that is placed on them. With this bill, restitution would be ordered for offenders to pay to witnesses upon conviction. No tax dollars will be used for this. Valeska will be requesting Senator Holley and Rep. Grimsley to sponsor it. The DAs in the wiregrass feel it is job one to make sure the victims in their area are taken care of. Without witnesses to testify, they won’t be able to prosecute.

Congratulations to the Houston County DA’s Office

Houston County Assistant District Attorney, David Atwell, was awarded the prosecutor of the year from the District Attorney’s Association.
Dale and Geneva County News

Dale County DA’s office protested the parole of Anthony Harp. He was convicted of murdering Brian Dowling and received 20 years. He was denied till 2017.

Congratulations to DA Kirke Adams for being selected as the new chairman of the VOCAL state board of directors.

Barbour/Bullock County News

Judge Matt Horne is sending the case of Willie Dickerson to the grand jury in Barbour County. Dickerson is accused of murdering Willie David Pugh. A preliminary hearing was held September 26th, in which many witnesses testified to the facts of the case. On January 24th Mr. Pugh was found after he had been missing for over two weeks. Betty Pugh, mother of Willie, was at the proceedings. The justice system has been a very hard ordeal for her and her family. But she is glad to have DA Reeves to prosecute this case.

A Eufaula Jury returned a guilty verdict against Steven Phillip Wynn, 41, of Eufaula, Wednesday, October 10th for sexual abuse of a child under the age of twelve.

After a day-long trial, the jury deliberated approximately twenty minutes before returning the verdict. District Attorney Ben C. Reeves, Jr., who prosecuted the case said, “I had a strong jury that listened closely to the evidence and rendered a just verdict. Everyone who worked on this case did a great job. This little girl has been through so much over the last year. It’s wonderful to know that she received the justice she so deserved.”

Sexual abuse of a child under twelve is a Class B felony, which is punishable up to twenty years in prison. Wynn was sentenced by Circuit Judge Burt Smithart. He received 17 years. Good job DA Reeves and Judge Smithart for getting justice for this victim!