National Night Out

The Dothan Police Department and other local agencies and organizations are joining together to promote crime and drug prevention throughout the City of Dothan/Houston County for the 30th Annual National Night Out on Tuesday, August 6, 2013, at the Dothan Civic Center.

This event is free and open to the public from 4:00 – 8:00 PM. Bring your family and friends for a night of fun, games, and fellowship. Entertainment will include live performances from the Friends Choir, Zenith Avenue, and a drum line competition.

There will be a variety of activities for children and teenagers, a dunking booth, a K-9 demonstration, a gun safety demonstration, a SWAT demonstration, a roll over vehicle demonstration, a rock climbing wall, face art, helicopters, fingerprinting, and other activities.

Wiregrass Angel House will have a booth indoors. Please come by and visit.
Director’s Note

Last month I was able to attend a training to become nationally certified as a crisis responder through NOVA, a non-profit that was established through the Department of Justice. NOVA was founded to help victims of violent crime in the nation. Established in the 1970’s, it wasn’t until the attack on the world trade centers they realized how imperative it was to have a crisis response team established in each state to assist victims of violent crime as well as victims of natural disasters. Through this training we realized there is not a certified response team, through NOVA, in Alabama to assist with traumatic events on a large scale.

We are currently working with NOVA to set up a crisis response team in Alabama to assist those that become affected by a catastrophic event. We have teamed up with the Houston, Henry, and Dale County DA’s, as well as VOCAL to begin to put the team in place. If you are a counselor, clergy, law enforcement, or victims’ advocate and would like to know how to join the Alabama Crisis Response Team please give us a call so we can assist you in becoming certified.

Shelly Linderman

Wendy Jay and members of Southeast Alabama Jeeps present Shelly Linderman, Director Wiregrass Angel House, $500 raised during their “Dothan’s Go Topless Day” held Saturday, May 18th
Justice for Antonio Glanton

November 8, 2010 is a day that forever changed the lives of Mary McKinney and her daughter, Shelonda. They received a phone call, at their home in Daleville, from the Montgomery Police Department informing them their son/brother had been the latest victim of a murder. Antonio Glanton was at his place of business when 22 year old, Kindall Riley, a former employee decided to seek revenge from being fired. He murdered Antonio and left him for others to find the next day. Ms. McKinney and Shelonda were devastated but they always felt they would see justice for their loved one. In their eyes, that didn’t happen. Last week was supposed to be the beginning of the trial. They were told a plea deal was offered. Manslaughter and he would be sentenced to 20 years. The prosecutor explained the problems of lack of physical evidence in the case and the defendant’s prior history of violence would not be allowed into evidence. He went on to explain the DA’s office would try the case if the family wanted to go for the charge of murder.

But the judge had explained that he wanted this case settled. The judge would be the one to decide the sentence for this defendant once he convicted of murder or manslaughter. They asked what would be the sentence. Murder conviction carries a 20 to Life sentence since a knife was used. Manslaughter conviction carries a 10-20 year sentence since a knife was used and a prior conviction.

They felt a sure 20 year sentence for manslaughter was better than rolling the dice with the judge’s sentence if the case was tried. They still felt cheated out of their day in court. Hopefully on sentencing day, their voices will be finally heard and Antonio will receive the justice he deserves for his life being taken so brutally and senselessly.

Memory Pavers

The paver project is still underway. The company sponsoring the arbor has given us a build date of September. This gives us more time to get everyone’s loved one memorialized on a memory paver. August 15th, is the deadline to order.

We have heard your concern and have talked to the paver company and are now able to put 16 characters per line. (This includes punctuation.) If you have already ordered your paver and would like to change it: contact Bobie at the office and she will assist you with this. Cost per paver is $30.00.

We still have a couple of scholarships available. Don’t let the price keep you from joining in. Call 334-702-7010 or come by the office for more information.
Little Known Facts

Truth in Sentencing

Since early 2000, the legislature charged the sentencing commission to look at overcrowding in the prison system, the length of time prisoners were being sentenced for each particular crime, and was there a disparity from one circuit to the other in Alabama.

Since the inception of the Alabama Sentencing Commission, they have designed a worksheet for all judges to utilize during the sentencing phase of each offense. All offenses are covered on the worksheet. The idea of this form was to have all circuits uniformed in handing down sentences. From 2006 ‘til 2013 these worksheets and the sentencing guidelines were voluntary. During the last legislative session, a law was passed to make the worksheets mandatory for all judges to use.

What does this mean to a victim?

Right now: nothing.

This only includes non-violent offenses.

But if the legislature ever sees fit to include all crime, sentences would be handled by a formula instead of a judge who has heard all the evidence and knows the defendant. Victims’ impact statement would not weigh in on the sentence as the worksheet does not take into account the pain, suffering, and trauma the victim and their families have encountered.

A judge can always go outside the guidelines, but with the worksheet becoming mandatory will make it much harder for them to justify without the case being appealed.

This is why victims must always keep a vigilant watch on all bills that come up for a vote in the legislature.
**Words of Wisdom**

The Lazy Days of Summer

I read recently, “A perfect summer day is when the sun is always shining, but you can still see the stars, the breezes blow in afternoon storms, popsicles drip on sandy hands, and the lawn mower is broken.” This sounds like a day from a novel. Here in south Alabama the sun is so hot, everything slows down, and afternoon naps take priority. All of these things set us up to slow down and remember what we have lost. If we dwell on the loss we will find our days become a daze.

It’s healthy to remember and reflect. But we also need to rebuild as Joyce taught us. Why not take these lazy days of summer to work on rebuilding? Who knows at summers end you may have developed a new hobby, made a new friend, or found you survived those lazy days of summer.

**S.E. VOCAL Chapter News**

Southeast Vocal held their regular support group meeting May 21st. Dinner was served. They voted not to meet during the summer months. Next meeting will be held Tuesday, August 20th, 6:00 PM at Wiregrass Angel House. Dinner will be served.

**Donations**

Kirke Adams
Dr. Barbara Alford
Dale County DA’s Office
Geneva County DA’s Office
Henry County Pre-Trial
Houston County Commission
Houston County DA’s Office
Houston County Pre-Trial
IBM Employees
Southeast Alabama Jeeps
Target Employees
UPS Employees
Doug Valeska
Wiregrass United Way

Memorials for: Alice Helms Key
By: Charles and Mary Woodall
And
Mitchell & Lillian Weaver
The Houston and Henry County DA’s offices have been very busy the last couple of month with many trials, sentencings, and parole hearings.

Tony Dent was convicted of murdering his infant son, Christopher, in 2006. The jury convicted him of manslaughter and he has come up for parole consideration. The district attorney spoke in person to the parole board against his early release. The parole board denied his application and put his next date off for five years.

A preliminary hearing was held in the case for the three defendants who have been charged with murdering Tyric Brown in Henry County. Several family members attended the hearing to show their support.

**Featured Unsolved Homicide case**-

For the upcoming newsletters we will be featuring various local cold cases. This month we are focusing on Perry Griffin who was murdered June 26, 2007.

Perry Griffin was 37 years old. He was the manager of Panhandle Converter and Scrap Company. Police say Perry arrived at the company around 3:00 a.m. to pick up a truck loaded with scrap metal. He planned on making an early morning run to Mississippi. Surveillance cameras on the property show Perry arriving and picking up the truck. Perry is seen unlocking a security gate and driving the truck out. He then hopped out of the truck and locked the gate behind him. Police say the tape then showed that Perry wasn’t the only one on the property that morning. Detectives say as Perry was walking back to the truck a masked man armed with a shotgun confronted him. Following a verbal exchange, police say Perry made his move, trying to grab the weapon away from the masked attacker. But at that moment, a second masked gunman emerged from the shadows. Investigators say a struggle ensued and Perry was fatally shot. Police recovered one of the weapons at the crime scene. Police believe robbery may have been the motive behind the slaying. Detectives say the video shows one of the gunmen grabbing money off the ground before fleeing the parking lot.

Perry left behind a wife and three small children. The Houston County DA’s office has authorized an additional $5,000.00 reward leading to the conviction for those responsible for this crime.

**Death Row Update**-

Update on Artez Hammond. He was convicted of brutally murdering Marilyn Mitchell in 1998. The defense filed an appeal with the US district court to alter or amend their appeal in April. The Attorney General’s office filed a response. The attorney general is waiting on a response for the middle court to rule. There are sixty six death row inmates ahead of him to be executed.
Dale and Geneva County News

On Monday, June 10, Samuel Wilson pled guilty to robbing the Captains D's restaurant in Ozark. He received a sentence of 20 years. What was supposed to be an inside theft turned into an armed robbery when Wilson and his accomplice brought a gun into the restaurant. Two employees were in on the plan. However, two other employees and two customers were held at gunpoint. The customers were made to get on the floor with their head down. District attorney Kirke Adams thanked the witnesses for their willingness to assist the prosecution. The two employees involved in the plan await trial. The fourth subject has not been arrested.

Barbour and Bullock County News

Teresa Pugh, pleaded guilty to Chemical Endangerment of a Child and received a 10 year sentence in each case. The 10 year sentences are to run concurrent with each other.

District Attorney Ben C. Reeves, Jr., who prosecuted the case, said “The evidence showed that Ms. Pugh gave birth to a child on May 26, 2011, January 11, 2012, and again on October 1, 2012. Each newborn baby tested positive for cocaine and Pugh admitted that she used cocaine throughout her pregnancies.”

The chemical endangerment law states that “a person commits the crime of chemical endangerment to a child if a responsible person knowingly, recklessly, or intentionally causes or permits a child to be exposed to, to ingest or inhale, or to have contact with a controlled substance, chemical substance, or drug paraphernalia”.

This is the first time the District Attorney’s Office has prosecuted a case under this law with these particular facts.

Reeves said, “Drugs are a big enough problem in our society with those who choose to consume them, but it’s a sad day when a child is born with drugs in their system.”
Governor Robert Bentley
State Capitol
Montgomery, AL 35130
Taylor Vice, Director
Constituent Services
(334).242.7100
1.800.591.4217

Department of Corrections
Kim T. Thomas, Commissioner
P.O. Box 301501
301 South Ripley St.
Montgomery, AL 36310
(334).353.3871
www.doc.state.al.us
State inmate parole info.
1.888.726.9799, Option 4

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

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.paroles.state.al.us