Director's Note

It has been very busy at Angel House the first part of 2015. Our annual golf tournament fundraiser is in full swing. We have been busy signing up teams and securing hole sponsors. We are so grateful and humbled by the enthusiastic support we receive from the local businesses. We have such a giving community when it comes to assisting non-profit service agencies in the Wiregrass area. We are so blessed to live in a community where so many have such a generous heart. Without the support of the community our agency, as well as other non-profits, would not be able to continue to assist those who are in need of our services. Thank you for supporting our agency with time, talent, and financial resources.

Within the community our board members reside. Our board is truly a working one. From participating in laboring at the annual day of service to securing sponsors for our fund raisers, they give so much to our agency to insure we are successful. Thank you for believing in our mission.

Shelly Linderman
Counselor’s Corner

Reflect-Hardened hearts

You know how people just showed up? There was love. There was support. There were all these promises from them. They said that if you needed anything...absolutely anything.......hearing it was so repetitive, the phrase was almost annoying. However, you were thankful so many recognized your grief for what it was, this great...huge....impactful....tragedy.

One day you realize some time has gone by and you wonder where all those people are. You still hurt. If they care about you, if they care about your loneliness, then shouldn’t they still be around? You feel the anger rise up inside and you want to poke your finger into somebody’s chest. Really. Hard. You want to set the record straight, “Hey! What are you doing? You can’t be okay yet!”

Because.... under the anger is terror. You aren’t ready to let go of your hurt. As long as you still have hurt, then your loved one is still close by. You can still feel them near. Grief can also turn you into an amazing actor. You can be absolutely falling apart and manage to convince everyone around you that you are, “better-(cue fake smile and nod) thanks for asking”.

If anyone asks if there is anything they can do, it means they care. Let them help you. Let them carry out your garbage. Let them bring you food. Let them call you and tell you the latest gossip. Let them come by and see your messy house. Let them sit on your couch and do nothing but BE there because they just want you to know they love you.....ok? This-this that you are going through- this “awful” that is so bad there isn’t a name to explain how bad it REALLY is- it isn’t instantly fixable. The hurt that accompanies it, isn’t going to get better quickly either.

Don’t push people away. Don’t tell them you’re fine when you aren’t. Don’t try to be ok for other people. In three months you will still need someone’s shoulder to unleash a flood of tears and heartache on and the guy patting you on the back in the produce section at the supermarket might be telling the truth when he says he doesn’t normally do this sort of thing....

Virginia Askew, M.S
Victim’s Assistant
Wiregrass Angel House

Congratulations to our counselor, Ms. Virginia Askew, for receiving her certification in child interviewing by the National Child Advocacy Center. This will enhance her skills when working with children who have witnessed violence and homicides. This was made possible by a private foundation grant!
SAVE THE DATE!!

The 12th Annual Conference for Law Enforcement Training

Will be held on Tuesday, April 21st, at The Embassy Suites

In Montgomery, Alabama

Instructors include:

Cell Phone technology and social media used to collect evidence.
Glenn Bard is a retired Pennsylvania State Trooper First Class and U.S. Veteran of Operation Desert Storm. In 1999 Glenn began Computer Crime Investigations for the PA State Police and has since investigated crimes across the United States ranging from Child Pornography to Criminal Homicide. Glenn has also conducted forensic examinations for city, state and federal Law Enforcement Agencies including the FBI, US Postal Inspectors, and I.C.E. as well as foreign governments.

And

The prosecution of Ariel Castro captor of: “The Cleveland Three”.
Saleh Awadallah has been an attorney since 1994, and joined the Prosecutor's Office in 1998. Saleh currently oversees the Major Trial Unit and supervises unit staff. He is responsible for the intake, charging, supervision, and assignment of all homicides, including capital murder cases and felony sexual assault and child abuse cases in Cuyahoga County. From 2006 to 2011, Saleh helped supervise the General Felony Unit and helped reorganize the office to implement regional community prosecution. From 2009 to 2011, Saleh was the Region 5 Supervisor and served as office training coordinator. He edited the Trial Prosecutor’s Handbook, a compilation of articles, many he wrote, on technical, legal and evidentiary issues. Saleh also produced numerous in-house continuing legal education seminars. Saleh has lectured and presented for the Cuyahoga County Prosecutor’s Office.

Scholarships are available for law enforcement! Please contact our office or go to our website at: www.wiregrassangelhouse.org
Donations

Henry County Pre-Trial
Houston County Pre-Trial
IBM Employees
Target Employees
UPS Employees
Wiregrass United Way

Memorials: Cole Norris
Kristie and Terry Allums

Memorials: Jack Hamm
Kristie and Terry Allums
Mr. & Mrs. Marvin Sexton
Ms. Jane Turnipseed Thomas
Ms. Margaret Pitchford and Family

Southeast VOCAL News

The annual Wiregrass Vigil will be held Sunday, April 19th at First Presbyterian Church at 3 p.m. A memorial slide show will be presented to honor the victims in the Wiregrass area. Special guest speaker will be Houston County Sheriff Donald Valenza.

If you would like to place a memorial in the booklet please contact President Beckie Schuler (334) 791-3969.

6th Annual Golf Tournament

Wiregrass Angel House will be having their 2015 Charity Golf Tournament which will be held Thursday, April 16th at Highland Oaks Golf Course.

A special thank you to DA Doug Valeska and DA Kirke Adams! They have taken their time to be a part of our public service announcement and have promoted the tournament. Also thank you to WTVY for producing and promoting the PSA through the months of February, March and April.

If you are interested in buying a hole ($150.00), sponsoring a team ($400.00), or a hole sponsorship ($500.00) please call Gary Maxwell or Angel House at (334) 702-7010.

Thank you for your support!
Annual Day of Service

They say an organization is only as good and strong as the board that runs it. Angel House is a strong agency because of our wonderful board members! Thank you President Gary Maxwell, Tony Luker, Will Glover, Yahnna Holland, and Barbara Ward for working so hard at our annual day of service. A special thank you to our Miss Angel queens and director Ashley Weed-Thomas for always supporting everything we do at Angel House. You ladies and your parents are top notch.
Dale and Geneva County News

A preliminary and bond reduction hearing was held for Chris Findley in Geneva with Judge Stephen Smith. He bound the case over to the grand jury and would not reduce the amount of bond. Good job Judge Smith! The family was so grateful and relieved he is staying put until trial.

A sentencing hearing was held for Felicia Lane. She pled guilty to manslaughter last month in the homicide of Eddie Andrews. Judge Ken Quattlebaum heard testimony from both sides. He sentenced her to the maximum time allowed-20 years! Thank you Judge Quattlebaum for assuring justice was given in this case. DA Adams did a superb job arguing for the victim and his family, to ensure this defendant received the just amount of time deserved.

Joseph Rodgers, who is charged in the murder of Christian Markoff, was denied youthful offender status by Judge Bill Filmore. Last month Rodgers was certified by Judge Fillmore to stand trial as an adult. Thank you Judge Filmore for your wisdom in this case.

Barbour and Bullock County News

In Barbour County, after a firestorm of media reporting by one blogger of half-truths and sometimes straight out lies, in reference to the district attorney and Judge Burt Smithhart, the case of Willie Dickerson, who has been charged with murdering Willie David Pugh, was moved to another county. The judge has also recused himself. Another judge from Russell County has been assigned the case. Hopefully this will put an end to all of the outlandish tales and we can finally get justice for the Pugh family. The trial is set for April.

A hearing was held in the case against Noah Bunnell, who was charged with murdering Jackie Bunnell. There were approximately 15 motions to be heard by the court. One of the motions was for bond to be set. The family is extremely relieved the judge denied this motion and kept it at no bond, as it is a capital murder case.
It has been an extremely busy 2015 for the District Attorney’s office in Houston County!

We would like to welcome Seth Brooks, Raynor Cliffton, Russ Goodman, and Mark Johnson to the Houston County DA’s office. We know they have a heart for victims and will do a great job representing them in court.

A trial was to begin the middle of January for the accused murderer of Milton Jones. The day the trial was to begin, the murderer pleaded guilty to two counts of capital murder in which he received life without parole instead of the death penalty. The family is extremely grateful for all the hard work done on this case by both the DA’s office and the Dothan Police Department. Now the family can begin the healing process.

There are several capital murders and murder trials set for this year in Houston County. We hope the judges do not grant continuances in the older cases so that justice can be served to these families and their murdered loved ones.

We would like to extend a thank you to the family of Jack Ham, who died unexpectedly, for requesting memorials to be sent to Wiregrass Angel House. What a wonderful gesture on their part to think of us during this most difficult time in their lives.

A retrial for the murderer, Everett Morton, who assisted two others to rob Mr. Patrick Dixon, was held in front of Judge Conaway. The case was sent back to be retried as the first jury wasn’t given the lesser included option of just felony murder. DA Valeska performed an outstanding job trying this case. Unfortunately the jury couldn’t agree on a charge and settled for the lesser included charge of murder. This murderer will be eligible for parole one day. Hopefully Judge Conaway will give him the longest sentence possible allowed by law, to insure justice will be served to Patrick Dixon’s family. The Dixon family was in attendance daily, supporting DA Valeska and grateful he took this case so personally when trying it.
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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

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

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

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

Victim Contacts