Director’s Note

A Debt of Gratitude

You’ve heard the saying, “behind every good man is a good woman”. In this case, it’s just the opposite. Mr. James Edward Shehane, the late husband of Miriam, was just that man. For over 32 years, Mr. Shehane quietly worked on the sidelines to help further the cause of victims’ rights in Alabama. For years he sacrificed anniversaries, birthdays, and holidays for various victims or victim’s events across the state. Many times Mrs. Shehane was crisscrossing the state to assist one victim or another and to tackle those who opposed ANY rights for victims of crime. Mr. Shehane never complained and ALWAYS supported what Miriam was doing. He never needed praise or recognition for his role in assisting to help further victims’ rights. He always understood all of his sacrifices were for the greater good of all victims, and it wasn’t about him. He is a pioneer in the victims’ rights movement and should be recognized. We will miss him greatly! The one solace that we have is that after 39 years he finally was reunited with his daughter, Quenette and his son, Jon; whom he lost four years ago.

Shelly Linderman, Director
Wiregrass Angel House

October 1, 2016

ANGEL HOUSE’S NEW PROGRAM

Wiregrass Angel House is proud to announce our new Therapy Dog Program. Angel House has partnered with Auburn University’s Canine Performance Sciences Program. Angel House will work with victims and witnesses of violent crime. These canines have been registered as emotional support animals as well as received their AKC good citizenship award.

Retired Lt. Tony Luker, of the Dothan Police Department, has come out of retirement to become the Dog Therapy Program Manager. We are so excited to be able to further our services to help those traumatized by violence and partner with other agencies in the wiregrass to provide to any victims, witnesses, or children that are in need of their services.

If you are interested in having Mr. Luker bring one of the dogs for a visit give the office a call reserve a time!

Welcome Aboard!

Wiregrass Angel House would like to welcome Mrs. Ayesha Russell, who will be working in the court system with our victims. She is receiving her Master’s Degree in Counseling from Troy University and Mrs. Donna Kilpatrick, our new counselor, who has received her Master’s from Troy University, as well.

We are excited to have them both a part of the team!
National Day of Remembrance

National Day of Remembrance was celebrated on Sunday, September 25th, to remember those loved ones that have been taken. Special music played as families watch on to honor their loved ones as the picture presentation scrolled with each victim who has been murdered in the Wiregrass. Although there was a light rain, there was no delay in the program. DA Tom Anderson delivered a heartfelt speech to assure the victims that although those that have not lost a loved one to murder can’t possibly understand their pain, they still want to be there to support those who have. Mr. Anderson is such a welcome addition to the board of directors. He has been a godsend to those hurting victims in Coffee and Pike counties. The second quilt was unveiled with many new victims’ memory squares. As the bag pipes played “Amazing Grace” by Mr. Chuck Arney, the families released balloons to their loved ones. A special thank you to Matt Elofson and Mike Gurspan from the local media, which took time out of their weekend to cover the event.
COUNSELOR’S CORNER

Never say this to the family of a victim:

- I know how you feel. (Was your child murdered?)

- You shouldn’t feel that way. (Tell me how I should feel; maybe I can make myself feel the way you think I should.)

- It was God’s Will. (If you’re so in touch with what God’s will is, ask him “why?”) You have got to get on with your life. (If I get up, I’m getting on.)

- You’ve got to be strong. (Why?) God took him or her. (No, my child was murdered by an evil person. He was not taken up from a mountain top in a cloud.)

- God needed him or her. (God doesn’t need him, if so he could make another one. I can’t, I needed him; he was my life.)

- You should be over that by now. (There is no getting over the loss of your loved one by violence.)

- You can have other children. (Get a grip.)
- God is testing you. (Well, I’m sure I failed his test and he’s failed mine, too. Does that matter?)

- Good will come from it. (How could anything good ever come from such evil?)

- It’s for the best. (Anyone that tells you it’s for the best that your child is murdered isn’t dealing with a full deck. Tell them to get the heck away from you.)

Homicide Support Group

August was one of the best meetings we have held this year. Special guest speaker, Steve Hardwick, gave a presentation on the Angel of Hope statue. MR. Hardwick is raising funds and securing city land to place the Angel. The statue represents all those children who have been lost through death. Our next support group meeting is set for Thursday, November 10th at 5:30. We will be working on presents for children for Christmas.
Barbour & Bullock County News:

Brandon Kennedy pled guilty to murder, a lesser included charge of capital murder. He was sentenced in to Life in prison.

Coffee & Pike County News:

A sentencing hearing was held in July for the murderer of Patrick Baker. Jasen Caradine was sentenced to 15 years and 9 months. A hearing was held in late August for a motion for a new trial as well as requesting an appeals bond. Judge Kelley has taken it under advisement and ruled the next week against a new trial. This defendant is headed to state prison. There were many who showed up for court to show support for Mr. Baker and his daughters.

Update on the murderer of Thurston Allen, Jr. He has been arrested. Thomonta Jones was charged with the murder of Thurston.

A special thank you to DA Anderson for being our speaker for National Day of Remembrance. He did an outstanding job!

Donations.....

Truist
Henry County Pre-Trial
Houston County Pre-Trial
IBM Employees
United Way of Greater Philadelphia & SNJ
Wiregrass United Way

A special thank you!

The Headland Cottage Quilters
and
Quilted Creations of Headland. Both donated their time and talent to making our newest quilt a reality for our families!
In Remembrance

Please remember the family of Chris Bailey. He was murdered in Dothan July 30th walking outside a nightclub on the way to his car. He left behind a mother, a four year old daughter, and one child due in October.

Also remember the family of Chris Grimsley who was killed Labor Day weekend at his Mother’s home in Dothan.

Henry County Trial

The trial of the defendant who murdered Jarvis Daffin, began the last week in September. Judge Brad Mendheim presided over the trial. Judge Mendheim oversaw the proceedings with honor and integrity. Many times during the case it was evident things were stressful but this judge handled them like a champ.

Justice Knight was convicted of capital murder. The prosecution team did an outstanding job, as they always do. The sentencing phase begins the week of October 11th.
October 6th was a sad day for the family of Tyric Brown. There was no justice for Tyric in the trial of codefendant, Montrez Brown. Mr. Brown was accused of assisting Gregory Spann of murdering Tyric in April of 2012; he was acquitted by a jury. The family decided to remember this day on a more positive note.

A celebration of life and tree planting ceremony was held on Tyric Brown’s birthday. He would have been 21 years old. Ms. Elaine picked out a southern magnolia tree. Family and friends gathered to celebrate his life and reflect on good memories.

**Dale & Geneva County News:**

An unsolved murder was finally solved after 26 years, by the Ozark Police Department. They arrested Carl E. Harris, Jr. of murdering his former wife, Tracy Harris in 1990. Great police work!

In July, James Lee Yeaple, was arrested and charged in the death of Devon Willett by Ozark Police. Mr. Willet was shot in 2015 and was placed on life support. He passed away a day later.
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED