

Newsletter

The holidays

Remembering: Curse or blessing??

We want to remember...never forget, but *OH*, the pain! We miss them sooo much, our loved ones, especially at these holidays.

We look at their picture and we remember. They so loved these holidays.

This newsletter is the hardest one to write. It comes slowly, grudgingly. Then the light.

What makes December so difficult? Those memories of our holidays together. Yet it is our duty to remember. Memories are all we have now; memories and a burning desire for justice.

Someone got away with murder!

We are the advocates for our loved ones. We speak for those who can no longer speak for themselves; and our collective voice will not be silenced!

Yet there is a softer side as reflected in this poem read at our Annual Meeting Memorial Service.

We Remember Them

—Rabbis Sylvan Kamens & Jack Reimer

In the rising of the sun
and in its going down,
We remember them.

In the blowing of the wind
and in the chill of winter,
We remember them.

In the opening of buds
and in the rebirth of Spring,
We remember them.

In the blueness of the sky
and in the heat of summer,
We remember them.

In the rustling of leaves
and in the beauty of autumn,
We remember them.

In the beginning of the year
and when it ends,
We remember them.

When we are weary
and in need of strength,
We remember them.

When we are lost
and sick at heart,
We remember them.

When we have joys we yearn to share.
We remember them.

So long as we live
they too shall live,
For they are still a part of us
As we remember them.

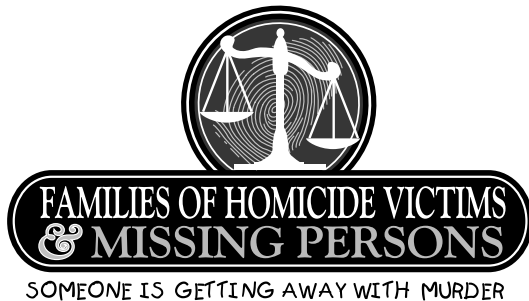
Mission Statement

Families of Homicide Victims and Missing Persons, Inc is a Colorado nonprofit working to find, support and empower family members and friends suffering from a loved one's unresolved murder or long-time, suspicious disappearance.

On The Web

The *Resources* page at unresolvedhomicides.org, now provides a link to *Help Find the Missing*. Previous newsletters can also be found on our website. Look under News for reports of our fight to fund a Cold Case Team.

This newsletter is published occasionally. It is the official publication of Families of Homicide Victims and Missing Persons, Inc.
Send letters and comments to:
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Howard's Notes

Our Goals: A state-level, cold case homicide team of investigators to effectively address the burgeoning list of unsolved Colorado murders

Our 2011-12 legislative agenda: Victim Comp for Cold Case families suffering trauma from dealings with criminal justice personnel

Our additional target: A society that protects witnesses who come forward with important information about murders

We have raised public awareness of Colorado's 1,500 unsolved murders. The state has begun to attend to our plight and a number of local law enforcement agencies have focused resources on their cold cases and some have been solved.

These results attest to our ability to work together toward goals of common benefit. We accomplished this from 2006 through 2009 with Forums and legislative visits that resulted in an amendment to the Victim Rights Act so that it now recognizes Cold Cases; a law setting up a Cold Case Task Force and Cold Case Team in the Department of Public Safety and empowering victims' families; and media recognition that FOHVAMP is the voice of Cold Case Victims and their Families.

There are more sheriffs and police chiefs on board with our goal to give renewed attention to these cases. That is important because it takes support from leadership to assign the necessary resources to the investigation of these murders.

We acknowledge there are still some—at both the state and local levels—who are very defensive about local control of these unsolved murders. We must not allow justice to be sacrificed to turf wars.

Blocking our goal of victim compensation for cold case families is a regulation requiring the family member to apply within one year. But many jurisdictions have cases that have gone unsolved for an average of 22 years. We want this regulation changed so that family members can apply for Victim Compensation as long as their case remains unsolved. We need to find a legislator to carry this bill since Rep. Joe Rice, who understands our situation, lost his seat in the recent election.

Finally, more of our murders could be solved if people with information would come forward without fear of retaliation. How to create a safe environment for those who have this information is a dilemma that requires the cooperation of civilians and law enforcement (LE). But LE must take the lead.

To this end, work has been started in the Denver D.A.'s office to keep witnesses safe. If this program has success we will help spread the word statewide.

[Continued on page five]

Remembering...

Hollis Whitson in memory of **all** our lost loved ones
Michael & Lisa Radelet remembering **all** our murdered loved ones

Carol Gallegos (Wal-Mart donation) in honor of her son, **Joseph Nelson**, 23, November 10, 2005

Friends of **Ryan Guitron**, 30, October 15, 2003

Donna Zuniga (Rocky Mountain Clothing gift) in memory of **Bobbie Neville**, 43, July 3, 2007

Diane Riechert to honor high school friend, **Connie Paris**, 18, March 31, 1968

Mary R. Waters lovingly remembering her son, **Gerald Steven Waters**, 34, June 25, 2000

June Menger in loving memory of her son, **Sid Wells**, 22, August 1, 1983

Davida and Larry Gonzales fondly remembering their grandson, **Dominic Paul Gonzales**, 18, Feb 18, 2007

Gary Rodriguez remembering his friend, **Ryan Guitron**, 30, October 15, 2003

Rhonda Hoffman in fond memory of her friend, **Ryan Guitron**, 30, October 15, 2003

Jean C. Bullington lovingly remembering her daughter, **Amber Bullington**, 18, Feb 6, 2000

Deanna Maes in honor of her friend, **Jessica Arredondo**, 21, November 26, 1988.

James Stewart in loving memory of his daughter, **Cindy Louise Stewart**, 43, July 6, 1999

Jeanne K. Snyder in honor of her daughter, **Barbara Ruth Snyder**, 26, November 27, 1983

Kathy and Bruce Anderson in memory of their son, **Mitch Anderson**, 26, April 11, 2001

Brian Ortiz in memory of his nephew, **Eric Ryan Ortiz**, 27, August 19, 2007

Alice Dunda in memory of **Ryan Guitron**, 30, October 15, 2003

Roxi Graham in loving memory of her mother, **Annabelle Leonard**, 84, & brother, **Thomas Leonard**, 48, March 15, 2003

Gail Rice remembering **all** our victims

Robert and Alma Anderson in memory of brother **Joseph Anderson**, 69, September 12, 1991 and nephew, **Donald D.Ova**, December 25, 1984

Julie Towers in memory of her mother **Helen Towers**, 70, March 28, 2000

Janet M. Trautman remembering her beloved daughter, **Lysa Moser**, 38, June 8, 2001

Ray and Martha Broach to honor Ryan Guitron, 30, October 15, 2003

Gregory J. Rosing to honor friend, Ryan Guitron

Judith Hemschemeyer in fond memory of her husband, **Morton Rosenfeld**, 43, May 19, 1979

Teresa Castellano in fond memory of **Connie Paris**, 18, March 31, 1968

Report on our October Annual Meeting held in CO Springs

Our 9th Annual Meeting, held in Colorado Springs at Cheyenne Mountain Resort, October 9th, 2010 was an authentic Colorado experience! The event's success was marked by our members' meetings with investigators ["I learned more about our case in 10 minutes than I had known in nine years"].

Three Cold Case Investigations workshops for different parts of the state ran simultaneously for 90 minutes each. "I like being able to ask questions" was how one member summed up the experience. The presence of detectives was deeply appreciated.

Members used the one-hour break that followed to visit with each other, continue conversations with detectives or check out of their rooms.

Many members had followed the case of keynote speaker Dorthy Moxley in the media. We hung on every word as she recounted her successful 27-year search for justice on behalf of her murdered daughter, Martha. It was obvious to each of us that Dorthy Moxley had walked in our shoes.

Featured speaker Phyllis Silverman was the first grief expert to address our annual assembly. Comments included "Very knowledgeable, very interesting" and "Excellent presentation" though we had some sound problems. Dr. Silverman wrote about our meeting in her blog: <http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/raising-grieving-children> and invites us to comment there.

Our luncheon included a slide show prepared by our videographer featuring many of our victims. It was deemed quietly appropriate.

Afternoon workshops earned our members' praise. Crime Labs & Cold Cases by Gregg Laberge drew this comment: "This was an awesome class; you must do this every year." (We do)

Forever Young: Impact of Unsolved Youth Murders "had people I could kinda relate to" —a member

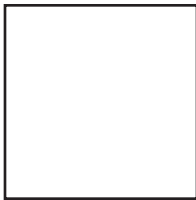
The Coroner's Duties: "Very informative"

Media Attention to Your Case: "I learned a lot from this one. Lots of options."

Finally, the emotional Memorial Balloon Release at the driving range on a beautiful afternoon. We read the poem on the front page of this newsletter, then released the ballons which had our loved ones' names on cards printed with the poem.



To have your loved one remembered in this way in the next edition of the newsletter, please send a donation to FOHVAMP, P.O. Box 145, Pine, CO 80470



Address Service Requested

Families[^] of Homicide Victims
and Missing Persons, Inc
P.O. Box 145
Pine, Colorado 80470

FOHVAMP's Raffle: And the winner is...

One hundred forty-six raffle tickets were sold at \$50 each for a total of \$7,300. Top ticket sellers were Michael Radelet, Diane Riechert, Sherry Burt, Vicky Hales and Debra Callahan. The drawing was held at our Annual Meeting at 5 PM on October 9th.

The winner could choose between a one-week Hawaiian vacation to two islands or split the pot. And the winner took a few days to make that decision. When she found out we would have to purchase the vacation, the winner and her husband chose to split the pot. Thoughtful.

Then they donated \$1,000 of their winnings back to FOHVAMP!

The name of the winner of the FOHVAMP raffle is: **Hollis Whitson**. Thank you, Hollis, for your generosity.

Our winner is an attorney who practises with her husband in Denver. She is called upon to serve as Alternate Defense Counsel in Death Penalty cases.

The winning ticket was sold by Mike Radelet, a long-time FOHVAMP supporter. Thanks, Mike!

...Howard's Notes [Continued from page 5] Investigator #3

“There [is] a gap that needs to be addressed and perhaps shored up? First, there are no time constraints placed upon the Judicial Districts to review a cold case and decide its prosecutorial merits. Some cases have languished for years, unaddressed by the respective DA. Common respect and courtesy would at least allow us to receive a response from them. I have communicated my frustration [to] other law enforcement personnel in different states. They are appalled by the delays and lack of prosecution of murders (cold cases in particular) by Colorado District Attorneys. I feel the burden has to be placed where it belongs as we in law enforcement have carried it for too long.”

We can only imagine the frustration felt by these Cold Case Investigators and wonder how they keep up their zest for pursuing our cases under such circumstances. They deserve our support. There are some DA's who do show the courage to prosecute our cases successfully. They do not make the “ethics” excuse. We must support them as well.

...Howard's Notes [Continued from page 2]

When FOHVAMP was founded in 2001, there were no dedicated cold case detectives in local LE agencies. Files of some old murders might be reviewed when investigators were not weighed down with current cases. Others were consigned to the dust bin of history.

In the decade since FOHVAMP came on the scene, several agencies have added such teams ranging from one person to nine. Others have experimented with volunteer investigators with limited success.

One of the few success stories comes to us from Grand Junction where retired detective Larry Bullard cracked the 1975 double homicide of victims Linda Benson, 24, and her 5-year-old daughter, Kelly Ketchum, inside their apartment. The killer was sentenced to two life terms.

We asked Bullard what it takes to solve these old murders: "The resources that I believe are needed to solve cold cases is trained investigators (full or part time) with full police powers, a lab that can process evidence in a timely manner (not years of waiting), travel expenses to interview people, and a commitment from the administration that cold cases need to be worked. Although there have been a few successes, volunteers can't get it done because of the travel, legal authority and time required to work a case. Without these 4 things I feel [most] cold cases will never be closed."

As we learned at our Annual Meeting, Denver now has nine Cold Case Detectives working old, unsolved homicides and sex assaults. Denver's District Attorney collaborates closely with the Cold Case Unit at Denver Police Department.

Now, there are Cold Case Investigators in Aurora, Colorado Springs, Jefferson County and Arapahoe County. Three Cold Cases were solved recently in Larimer County. Knowing this requires top-level support, we asked Sheriff Jim Alderden about it.

"You are correct about this being the third [cold case solved] in two months and the fourth since I've taken office. I wish I could tell you there was some magic bullet that led to this success, but each case and circumstance is different.

"All I can say is that we try to stay on top of these cold cases and the technology and aren't shy about spending the time and resources to pursue new leads and information that develops. We have pursued countless leads that didn't pan out. Perseverance and willingness are critical, combined with an equal amount of luck."

The prosecutor's role is an important element in

putting these killers who got away with murder into prison. FOHVAMP has advocated cold case training for prosecutors, their consultation with the family of the victim and more courage to try old cases that have gone as far as they can.

We asked three veteran investigators from three different agencies to comment on prosecutors:

Investigator #1

"District Attorney is the final decision maker as far as deciding whether to prosecute or not prosecute any case. Usually this is a very good system but when homicides are involved some political issues influence the D.A.'s decision. Specifically the time and cost of prosecuting a homicide case. It is my opinion that the cost of prosecuting a moderate to weak homicide case unduly influences the D.A.'s decision not to prosecute a case when the D.A. believes the likelihood of a successful prosecution is low. "We in law enforcement hear this next phrase from the D.A. all too often, 'ethically we can not go forward with a prosecution that we do not believe has a high/good likelihood of a conviction.' I find this phrase offensive. I believe if the D.A. believes the suspect is the perpetrator of the crime AND there is no valid reason to believe that the case will become stronger for prosecution with the passage of time, it is UNETHICAL not to prosecute the case."

Investigator #2

"Typical standard with DAs offices in accepting any case for prosecution is 'the likelihood of successful prosecution'. Probable cause alone doesn't cut it. There are times that a case should not be prosecuted if there is a reason to believe that the case will get better (still trying to locate a key witness, waiting on some forensic testing, etc). However cold cases that have been thoroughly investigated are different. If there is nothing that hasn't been done or is pending there isn't the likelihood of it getting better. I think that prosecutors need to be a bit more brave in taking on these cases even when they feel that they might have something less than 'likelihood of successful prosecution.'

"I think that what is needed to help solve more cold cases is more dedicated cold case units and detectives. Not those who just do it between other cases. I also agree with having prosecutors assigned. Cold cases are truly a different beast for investigation and prosecution. And really there is so much to learn as you attack them."

[Continued on page 4]

Our 2010 Annual Meeting in Colorado Springs



The setting at Cheyenne Mountain Resort



Keynoter Dorothy Moxley & M.C. Mike Radelet



Featured speaker Phyllis Silverman



Quilts of Hope from Jan Smolinski



El Paso Sheriff's cadets prepare balloons



Memorial Balloon release at 5:30 PM