



Homicide Survivors, Inc

For Families and Friends of Murder Victims

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Spring 2012 Newsletter



“Every year, FBI field offices select individuals or organizations—one per office—to receive the DCLA. The criteria for the award? Achievements in combating terrorism, cyber crime, and illegal drugs, gangs, and other crimes; or violence prevention/education efforts that have had a tremendous positive impact on their communities. This year’s crop of award recipients joins the ranks of a dedicated group of people and organizations that, since 1990, have collectively enhanced the lives of thousands of individuals and families and helped protect communities around the United States. “ - FBI Website

Homicide Survivors Inc.

FBI Director’s Community Leadership Award

2011 Winner

for the Phoenix Region!!!

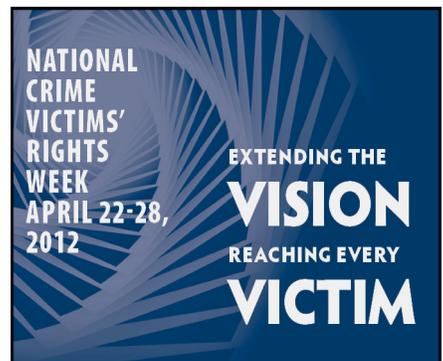
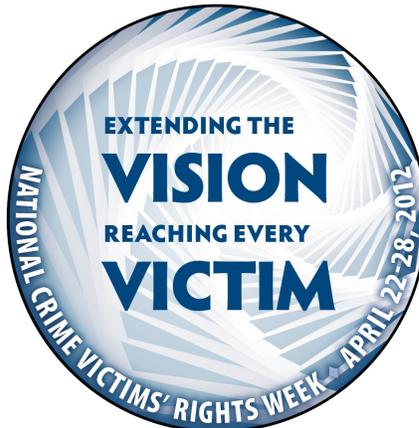
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“Those things that hurt, instruct.”
Benjamin Franklin

National Crime Victims' Rights Week Events



TOLL-FREE NUMBERS

Americans Overseas Domestic Violence Crisis Center	866-USWOMEN
Battered Women's Justice Project	800-903-0111
Bureau of Indian Affairs, Indian Country Child Abuse Hotline	800-633-5155
Child Welfare Information Gateway	800-394-3366
Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline	800-4-A-CHILD
Federal Trade Commission Identity Theft Hotline	877-ID-THEFT
Mothers Against Drunk Driving	800-MADD-HELP
National Center for Missing and Exploited Children	800-THE-LOST TTY 800-826-7653
National Children's Alliance	800-239-9950
National Council on Juvenile and Family Court Judges	800-52-PEACE
National Crime Prevention Council	800-NCPC-911
National Criminal Justice Reference Service/Office for Victims of Crime Resource Center	800-851-3420 TTY 877-712-9279
National Domestic Violence Hotline	800-799-SAFE TTY 800-787-3224
National Human Trafficking Hotline	888-373-7888
National Organization for Victim Assistance	800-TRY-NOVA
National Organization of Parents Of Murdered Children, Inc.	888-818-POMC
National Resource Center on Domestic Violence	800-537-2238 TTY 800-553-2508
National Sexual Violence Resource Center	877-739-3895 TTY 717-909-0715
Office for Victims of Crime Training and Technical Assistance Center	866-OVC-TTAC TTY 866-682-8880
Rape, Abuse, & Incest National Network	800-656-HOPE
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Helpline	800-662-HELP (English/Español) TTY 800-487-4889
United States Postal Inspection Service	877-876-2455

Sponsored by:

U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Justice Programs
Office for Victims of Crime

April 2012

Sexual Assault Awareness Month, Child Abuse Prevention Month, and Victims' Rights Week

EXTENDING THE
VISION
REACHING EVERY
VICTIM

Victims' Rights Week (April 22-28, 2012) is commemorated every April. April is also Sexual Assault Awareness Month and Child Abuse Prevention Month. Pima County Attorney Barbara LaWall encourages residents to participate in community activities that support crime victims and promote violence prevention efforts. She hopes that community members will support the work of these nonprofit agencies that help victims rebuild their lives.

- Throughout April. Casa de los Niños' **A Night for Children**. People will be hosting their own fundraising events. The public is encouraged to attend any of the 30 Days, 30 Ways Calendar events. Call 624-5600 or visit www.casadelosninos.org.
- April 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 9th 9:30am-2:00pm. **U of A Hands Project**. Make a commitment that these hands are not to hurt. Contact Erin Strange at 626-1829 or strange@health.arizona.edu.
- Tuesday, April 3rd. **National Day of Action**. Support your local community and donate to the Southern Arizona Center Against Sexual Assault. Participating locations: 1600 N. Country Club Rd. and 101 W. Irvington Rd, Office 3A. www.sacasa.org.
- Tuesday, April 10th 6:00pm. **Take Back the Night**. Geronimo Plaza, Main Gate Square, U of A. Help end sexual violence. Sponsored by Southern Arizona Center Against Sexual Assault. Free; open to the public. Call 327-1171 or visit www.sacasa.org.
- Saturday, April 14th 9:00am. **Walk like MADD**. Reid Park (Country Club and 22nd St.). A walk and car show. For information call 322-5253 or jason.frazier@madd.org.
- Saturday, April 14th. **Cinema Nirvana Movie Night**. Tucson Yoga, 150 S 4th Ave. Donations accepted. Proceeds to support the Southern Arizona Center Against Sexual Assault. www.sacasa.org.
- Tuesday, April 17th 5:30pm. **Screening of *The Invisible War***. Joel Valdez Library, 101 N. Stone Ave. View an award winning documentary about sexual assault in the military with panel presentation to follow. Free and open to the public. www.sacasa.org.
- Saturday, April 21st 6:00-8:00pm. **MADD Candlelight Vigil**. Brandi Fenton Park. A remembrance of victims of drunk drivers. Free and open to the public. Call 322-5253 or email jason.frazier@madd.org.
- Sunday, April 22nd 12:30-4:30pm. Southern Arizona Children's Advocacy Center **Charity Bowling Tournament and Raffle**. Golden Pin Lanes, 1010 W. Miracle Mile. For more information call Callie Koch at 243-6420 or ckoch@soazadvocacy.org.
- Monday, April 23rd 11:00am. **Victims' Rights Week Celebration**. Arizona State Capitol, Senate Lawn, 1700 W. Washington St., Phoenix. Lunch will be provided. RSVP to diana.cooney@apaac.az or (602) 542-7222 by April 4, 2012.
- Tuesday, April 24th 4:00pm. **Preventing Dating Violence** presentation by Bobbi Sudberry, Executive Director of Kaity's Way. TPD West Division, 1310 W. Miracle Mile. Sponsored by Homicide Survivors and the Pima County Attorney's Office. For more information call 740-5525 or email robert.mccafferty@pcao.pima.gov.
- Wednesday, April 25th. **Denim Day**. An annual international event to protest a 1999 Italian Supreme Court ruling that overturned a rape conviction because the victim was wearing jeans. Call 327-1171 or visit www.sacasa.org.
- Wednesday, April 25th. **Dine Out For Safety**. Dine out at participating agencies and a portion of the proceeds will be donated to the Southern Arizona Center Against Sexual Assault. Visit www.dineoutforsafety.com for a complete list.
- Saturday, April 28th 10:00am-12:00noon. **Step Up, Speak Out, End Bullying PSA Showcase and Awards Event**. The Loft Cinema, 3233 E. Speedway Blvd. Come view the anti-bullying PSAs created by children and adults throughout the community and recognize the award winners. For more information visit www.endofbullying.com.
- Saturday, April 28th 9:00am-4:00pm. Southern Arizona Children's Advocacy Center **Zoo Day**. Reid Park Zoo. Free admission. Happy Bear will be present. For more information call Cynthia Flores at 243-6420.
- Saturday, April 28th 6:00-8:00pm. Homicide Survivors' **Candlelight Vigil for National Crime Victims' Rights Week**. Children's Memorial Park (Oracle and River). Free and open to the public. Call 740-5729 or visit www.azhomicidesurvivors.org.

"April is an important time to reach out to survivors, educate ourselves about these crimes, learn more about what we can do to prevent them, and renew our commitment to making our county a safer place for everyone." Pima County Attorney Barbara LaWall

Homicide Survivors Annual Candlelight Vigil

Saturday, April 28, 2012

6-8 pm

Children's Memorial Park



Our annual candlelight vigil is a time for us to gather and remember those we have lost to murder. It is a time to help heal those wounds that have been deeply inflicted upon our hearts. Music is always a healing medium that allows our souls to express love and remembrance of those we lost. We have two very special groups performing for us this year at our annual vigil. Sons of Orpheus will be joining us again for their third year of providing their rich sound. We are pleased to announce that we will also be joined by the remarkable All Nations Singers who will add another dimension to this powerful service. We would like you to know more about these two extraordinary groups that will be providing beautiful music for us this year.

Sons of Orpheus

The Sons of Orpheus choir was founded in 1991 by the distinguished American tenor, Grayson Hirst. It is a not-for-profit, non-sectarian, non-affiliated, community-based choral organization comprised of men from all walks of life. Members include professional and amateur musicians, businessmen, retirees, scientists, scholars, students, engineers, teachers, and others.



The Mayor of Tucson proclaimed the Sons of Orpheus to be Tucson's Ambassadors of Song in 2008. He stated: "Sons of Orpheus reaches out to the diverse communities of our city, building bridges of understanding between people of different ethnicities and backgrounds, enriching the lives of thousands through its benefit concerts performed for various charitable community support organizations such as PICOR Foundation's work with children's groups, the Primavera Foundation, Welcome Wagon, Junior League, the Community Food Bank, Save the Children and Casa de los Ninos." They have graciously donated their talents to Homicides Survivors in years past and have added a beautiful aspect to our candlelight vigil, this is their third annual year of participation with our candlelight vigil.

All Nations Singers

The All Nations Singers have been in existence for approximately 9 years. They describe themselves as normal, everyday people who love to sing. Their group consists of retired and prior service military, local businessmen, PhD, supervisors, civil servants, nurse practitioner, phlebotomist, and even a homemaker. Our music appeals to people from all different backgrounds and all ages. They perform a variety of Christian music, in the form of anthems, hymns, contemporary and traditional gospel, and spirituals.



They participated in the Remembrance service the St. Augustine Cathedral for the January 8th Tucson Tragedy with their beautiful music. The All Nations Singers share a rich blend of harmony into a sound that is absolutely exciting. Every concert is uplifting with little in the way of background instrumentals, since the "main objective" is to hear the group sing. This will be their first time performing at our candlelight vigil, but we certainly hope this phenomenal group will become a staple of the vigil.

2011 Candlelight Vigil



The 'So Cool' Mom: Yolanda Pronko



We have all seen the stereotypical strained mother-daughter relationship play out time and time again in books and movies. Yolanda Pronko was a mother who had a different relationship with her daughter. According to her daughter, Colleen, when she spoke about her mom in an email she stated: "she was my best friend." They had a close mother-daughter relationship that can be difficult to find, but they were both blessed with this special bond.

On August 27, 2010 that bond was broken after Yolanda was brutally stabbed by her ex-boyfriend who then called 911 to report that he had killed Yolanda. A subsequent SWAT standoff ensued after the offender barricaded himself in the house. Eventually, he emerged armed with a hammer and a knife. After making aggressive movements towards police, they had no choice but to fire upon the suspect. He was taken to the hospital where he succumbed to his wounds. Colleen did something many survivors are not able to face; she read the police report on the entire incident. She said, "It wasn't as bad as what I expected... There were still a few things in there that hurt to read, but now that I have a more clear picture I feel a little more at peace. I know it's weird, but it stops my head from going places and creating scenarios that are not true."

For Yolanda's family there would be no lengthy trial, no plea deals, and no fears the perpetrator would evade justice because he chose "suicide by cop" to end his life. Consolation in a horrific situation can be evasive but it is possible as Colleen discovered while reading the police report. "I will never know what caused this to happen, or what led up to it, but at least I got to see that at one point [the offender] showed remorse for what he had done. That was important for me. Just knowing that he realized what he did, and that it emotionally hurt him... I needed that", Colleen reported at one point.

Yolanda continued to touch Colleen's heart with her love even beyond the grave. One night not long after that horrible night Colleen was talking to her aunt, Yolanda's sister, who told Colleen how much her mother loved her and that made Colleen smile. "I think this is my first genuine smile ear to ear since this happened." Colleen stated. She was also surprised when she was able to get her mother's phone back from police, "... her ringtone for me was "Hero" by Enrique Iglesias. It was so sweet, I had no idea... I thought it was Beavis and Butthead." It seems that it is true Yolanda was "so cool" as reported by Colleen and she is greatly missed by her family and friends.

"GRIEF IS THE PRICE WE PAY FOR LOVE"
ELIZABETH II

Living Day by Day with the Unknown:

James Noriega



It was a Saturday in Tucson on an autumn night when two best friends decided to go to a house party and have a fun night of hanging out with friends. At 2:24 am on Sunday, November 2, 2008 an altercation occurred, but nothing serious; a short time later, shots rang out at the party. After the eruption of chaos, the two young friends lay in the front yard area of the house. One lay paralyzed from bullets that struck his spine and the base of his neck. The other young man, James Noriega, lay barely hanging onto life; he would later die from his wounds at the hospital. To this day, there have been no arrests made in this murder and the case is now classified as a cold case – all viable leads have been exhausted and no new evidence has surfaced.

Victoria Soto misses her brother terribly and is haunted by the unknown identity of her brother's killer. She told a reporter in 2010, "I try to live day by day...but it's hard not knowing who killed my brother and that person is still out there." This is a fear that many survivors of unsolved homicides face on a daily basis. Will they come back and hurt more family members? Will they commit murder again? Will justice ever be found? We chatted with Victoria about her thoughts today about the murder of her beloved brother and how it continues to affect her. She said: "Losing a loved in general is a heartbreaking experience and unfortunately in life at some point you will experience this. When you lose someone due to old age or illness you can grieve with somewhat of an understanding. When someone's life is taken from them by another person and you lose someone the way we lost James Noriega with no answers and no justice; it's hard to stand and it's hard to breathe." Victoria continues to remember the memory of her brother and concluded by sharing some insight to a young man that continues to be a missed member of the family: "James was a fun, outgoing person who loves to be around his family. His demeanor was quite humorous and impossible to forget. Everyone remembers James as funny and loving. His absence has caused a tremendous heartbreak amongst his family."

*In love longing
I listen to the monk's bell.
I will never forget you
even for an interval
Short as those between the
bell notes.
~ Izumi Shikibu*



Mother's Day: The Double Edged Holiday

By: Carol Gaxiola, Director

Each year Spring time brings the world the promise of something better to come. Out of the cold and dreary winter come the new blossoms, green leaves (weeds included!) longer days – more light. But spring also brings us many reminders of our loss. The month of May each year presents me with a painful dilemma as Mother's Day and my daughter Jasmine's birthday usually fall within days of each other. Since Jasmine's murder in 1999 at 14, I have struggled with how to respond to questions that pop up around Mother's Day. Jasmine's murder left me childless as her older sister, Anna, died 5 years before, in 1994. The days before Mother's Day bring the "Happy Mother's Day!" greeting and questions such as: "Do you have any special plans for Mother's Day?" "Do you have any children?" or "Are your children going to be with you on Mother's Day?" I have struggled with how to answer these questions. I cannot say that I have no children. My children will always be a part of me and I am their mother, if separated by death. If I say, "Yes, I have two children," other questions arise in the course of conversation like "How old are they?", "What are their names?" etc. If I don't answer or say, "Mother's Day isn't a happy day for me," or "I don't have plans", the person I'm talking with is put in a difficult spot. Explanations often bring too much information for the casual nature of the conversation. Explanations can also bring up emotions that are painful, both for me and for the listener. I'm still amazed at the ripple effect of murder and how difficult a simple question, kindly asked, can create such dilemma. Each holiday or celebration day in our lives can put us in this position. We live with the double-edged sword of showing the world our socially acceptable self while feeling the cut deep inside. I have learned that if I make a plan and choose how I'm going to acknowledge these days: the anticipation anxiety leading up to the day is diminished. I choose to remember my children on Mother's Day and to say, Yes, I am a Mom." By choosing: be it to stay inside all day, go on a picnic, go to a movie that my girls would have loved, write them letters or eat cake all day; I take control. For a time, making any decision was almost impossible. Each time I choose, make a plan: I begin to reclaim control in my life that the murder of my daughter blasted into pieces. The out – of – control spiral slows and control slowly regains its place, piece by piece.



The Magic Carpet

When you hear a child's voice, laughing with glee
 Just look in the sky and imagine it's me.
 This carpet has carried me so far above,
 Yet I still feel the warmth of your unending love.
 I share with all the children who soar with me here
 A beautiful life without pain, without fear
 In a safe place, a warm place, lofty and bright
 Always secure in God's holy light.
 For I am the child, the child of your heart,
 And it is only a moment that we'll be apart.
 My heart's filled with joy, for a secret is mine.
 I'll be back in your arms when God says it's time.
 -- Connie Thomason, 2001

Competency vs. Guilty Except Insane

By: Karla Avalos-Soto



Unfortunately, survivors of homicide are thrust into the criminal justice process with no prior experience or warning about how difficult this experience will be. Not only are survivors forced into a process they are not familiar with but they also encounter new terminology and legal jargon. Needless to say this can all be stressful and confusing. Survivors are not only grieving the loss of their loved one but are now forced to translate and retain the legal information given to them.

There are two specific areas of law that can be quite confusing and, to some, even outrageous. These two areas are Incompetence to Stand Trial and pleas of Guilty Except Insane.

This article is intended to briefly clarify these two often perplexing legal concepts.

Incompetency

Incompetency? What does this mean?

A defendant who is incompetent to stand trial has a mental illness, defect, or disability that makes him/her unable to understand the nature of and purpose of the proceedings or to assist in his/her own defense. A.R.S. 13-4501. If the defense lawyers believe that the defendant is incompetent to stand trial, they will file a motion with the court asking for a competency evaluation. The court will then appoint two qualified experts to examine the defendant. After the evaluation, the experts will write reports about their findings, and may even testify about the evaluation process and the conclusions each expert reached.

Who pays for this evaluating by a "mental health expert"?

The defendant is ordered by the court to pay the costs associated with the evaluation, however, if the court finds that the defendant is indigent (cannot afford to pay); the county must pick up the tab.

What happens after the evaluation?

The mental health expert must submit a report to the court about their findings within 10 days of the defendant's evaluation. Within 30 days of the submission of the report the court will have a hearing to determine the defendant's competency.

If the court determines that the defendant is competent to stand trial, after reviewing the mental health experts report, the criminal proceedings will continue without delay.

If the court determines that the defendant is **not** competent to stand trial, or incompetent, the court must determine, based on the mental health experts report, if the defendant can be restored to competency within 21 months or if the defendant will never regain competency. If the defendant is found incompetent, but is believed to be eligible for restoration within the statutory time period, he/she will be sent to a restoration to competency program.

Who pays for this "restoration to competency"?

Once again the defendant is ordered to pay the costs associated with restoration. However, if the court determines that the defendant is unable to pay, the state will pick up the tab.

If the defendant is found incompetent and it is believed that he/she will not regain competency within 21 months of the finding of incompetency there are 3 things that can happen:

The defendant can be civilly committed, either to an outpatient program of treatment and some supervision or, in rare cases, to the state hospital,

A guardian can be appointed to the defendant,

The defendant can be released from custody and the charges dismissed without prejudice (meaning they can be re-filed).

All of this is so overwhelming and can feel re-victimizing. Why is the defendant afforded so many privileges and rights when our loved one was not? While there is no suitable answer to this question, what I can tell you is that measures are being taken by state legislators to tighten the language on these statutes.

Our office has worked with survivors who have had to endure criminal proceedings such as this. We understand how upsetting it can be and are here to provide support, advocacy and as much knowledge on this as possible. We care and you are not alone.

(ARS, Title 13, Ch41, 13-4501 thru 13-4517)

Guilty Except Insane



How can someone be guilty except insane?

There is no simple answer to this question but I hope that the information I provide is helpful.

According to Arizona law a defendant can be found guilty except insane if, at the time of the crime, the defendant did not know right from wrong. You may wonder what “guilty except insane” means, and how someone can commit a crime without knowing it was wrong. If the defendant has a mental disease or defect that is so severe he is deemed incapable of knowing right from wrong, he/she can submit a plea of guilty except insane.

If the court decides there is “reasonable basis” to support the plea, the court may decide to place the defendant in a secure state mental facility for as many as 30 days for mental evaluation by experts. The mental health experts must produce a written report on the defendant’s evaluation to the court, defense attorney and prosecutor. This does not mean that the defendant has been determined to be guilty except insane, unless the State offers to allow the defendant to plead guilty except insane.

If the State does not offer such a plea, and the defendant proceeds to trial with a defense of insanity, the defendant must prove his/her legal insanity to the jury by “clear and convincing evidence.”

Who pays for this process?

Surprisingly, when a defendant who is pleading insane and is facing criminal charges is committed to a state hospital, costs associated with the defendant’s transportation to and from the state hospital and the costs associated with confining him/her to the state hospital are the responsibility of the county indicting him/her or in which the charges are filed. A clause is added about how the county can recover said expenses later.

If a defendant is proven to be guilty except insane he/she must be committed to a secure mental health facility and the defendant shall be placed under the jurisdiction of the Psychiatric Review Board for a length of time equal to the sentence he/she could have received had he/.she not been guilty except insane per Arizona Revised Statute, ARS.

Potential Release

If the defendant is convicted as guilty except insane of a crime that caused the death of or serious physical injury to another person, there are four possible outcomes:

- If the psychiatric review board decides that the defendant still has a mental disease or defect AND is dangerous, the board will order the defendant to remain in the secure mental health facility.
- If the defendant can prove by clear and convincing fact that he/she no longer has a mental disease or defect AND is not dangerous, the psychiatric review board can order his/her release to the community. Since he/she will remain under the supervision of the psychiatric review board, he/she can be ordered back to the state mental health facility if at any time it appears he/she is not following conditions or if their mental health is deteriorating. A victim will be notified if the defendant has been returned to the secure mental health facility because a hearing will take place within 20 days of the defendants ordered returned.
- If the psychiatric review board decides the defendant still has a mental disease or defect BUT he/she is no longer dangerous, the defendant can be released with conditions including a supervised treatment plan for the mental illness. He/she will still be under the supervision of the psychiatric review board. Since he/she will remain under the supervision of the psychiatric review board, he/she can be ordered back to the state mental health facility if at any time it appears he/she is not following conditions or if their mental health is deteriorating. A victim will be notified if the defendant has been returned to the secure mental health facility because a hearing will take place within 20 days of the defendants ordered returned.
- If the psychiatric review board decides that the defendant no longer needs treatment for the mental disease AND the person IS dangerous, the defendant will be transferred to the department of corrections to complete the presumptive sentence for the crime of which they were convicted as guilty except insane.

Before any release or hearings for release occur:

- * The public’s safety and protection are considered the most important.
- * The person applying for release has the burden of proof by clear and convincing evidence.

3 of the 5 psychiatric review board members must vote for release or conditional release after reviewing a report on the defendant’s mental health.

We here at Homicide Survivors understand how difficult this all can be and are here to support and advocate for you. You are not alone!!

(ARS Title 13, Ch 5, 13-502 & CH 38, Article 14, 13-3991 thru 13-3994)



Battle Fatigue: The War for Peace

By: Todd Blumhorst

We have been thrown blindly into a war in which we never wanted to fight. They entered our lives like a thief in the dark; they not only took our loved one, they also made a declaration of war upon our souls. Did they not expect us to react when they took our loved one from us? Did they think we would sit idly by and watch justice slip away? This was your Pearl Harbor, a blind attack from nowhere. You weren't prepared for the horror, but you were forced to fight.

Sometimes it is a short battle for justice where someone is caught and the criminal justice system is able to secure a conviction and the person is sent away for a long time. Other times, it can be a very long and drawn out ordeal for those survivors seeking justice for their loved ones. For those cases that go unresolved for years, the toll on the survivors is devastatingly painful to endure. These battles can also have multiple fronts and you may feel like you are fighting in many directions. The perpetrator may be free and you battle the fear of retaliation. You may have a case that simply lacks any viable physical evidence; a battle with frustration can wear on one's soul. In some cases, the police don't work the case as they should for a myriad of reasons; the battle of apathy can be one of the most vicious on the survivors. How does one engage in these battles for months and years? How does one find peace when justice is absent? How do you maintain sanity in an insane situation? These are questions many survivors have asked many times before.

My war started on Thursday, September 20, 1990 in Mendota, Illinois when my sister vanished without a trace. She disappeared in a 25 foot span of space from our garage, where she parked upon returning home from work, to our home. In the initial investigation it was found that her boyfriend made self-incriminating statements that indicated he had murdered my sister. His comments could not constitute a confession because no body was found and there were no signs of struggle. The first front in my war was established. As her case made its way through the trenches of the legal system many mistakes were made and her case became political. Her case suffered further battle wounds as did the hearts of those who loved Veronica. Now I had 2 battle fronts going in this war. The case drug out for an inordinate length of time and we often went years with no word from the police but they would always say her case was being investigated actively when they were questioned about the progress. In 2004 a new investigator was placed in charge of her case, my 3rd battlefront was established. The new investigator dated my sister at one point and we as a family felt there was a conflict of interest since there was a relationship between the victim and the investigator. Rumors had spread around town that he was possibly involved in her murder which added to the stress of this war. I am still in the trenches of this war 21 years and six months later, I continue in my fight for justice for my sister.



Today, I consider myself a battle scarred veteran of this 21 year war. The devastatingly sad part is that I am not alone; there are tens of thousands in my position. We suffer from battle fatigue from our individual wars. Our scars are not visible on the outside; but if you could see our souls, then the scars would be blatantly obvious. We walk around as wounded warriors and many walk past us with no awareness of our wounds. How do we survive? How do we survive this war? How do we find peace when there is no justice? Survivor battle fatigue can wear one out both physically and emotionally. It can manifest into physical ailments and a high percentage of survivors suffer from chronic illnesses. The psychological trauma often has the power to change thought patterns and beliefs as well as the increase of psychological disorders such as PTSD and a state of constant hyper vigilance.

There is no easy answer to these quandaries many survivors face. The trenches of this war are filled with perils and obstacles. The only way to really get through this war is one day at a time. You are going to have many bad days, but you will also have good days. Realizing you don't have a lot of control at this point is difficult to face, but it is the reality. Adding to your battle wounds by beating yourself up over areas you cannot control is a common survivor problem. Letting go of things out of your control will help you manage emotions much easier and it will reduce stress on your mind and body. Nature can be an effective healer to the human spirit; immersing yourself in the tranquility of nature will allow your mind to rest some from the busy world around you and give you a moment of peace. Cherishing those brief moments of peace is beneficial to your soul because it keeps hope for longer periods of peace alive. Helping others can help rebuild that human connection and trust; it can even be small acts of kindness that help ease your mind.

There is no magic trick that will ever totally erase the pain you feel from the devastating loss you have experienced. It is truly a battle in which you have been forced to face, but peace is possible. You will never be the same person and you will have a new reality to live in, but building new bridges and connections are essential for survival. If you are having debilitating psychological issues years after the homicide, you may also need to seek a professional for help. It is not a sign of weakness to see a professional; it is a sign of strength. Time alone will not heal your wounds; it is what you do with that time that matters. Your life was changed forever on that date but you made it through the ordeal, you may be badly scarred, but you have survived. Abraham Lincoln once said: "I am not concerned that you have fallen; I am concerned that you arise." Mustering the strength to rise can be monumental, but it is possible.

"I come into the peace of wild things who do not tax their lives with forethought of grief... For a time I rest in the grace of the world, and am free."

Wendell Berry

REFLECTIONS

*"Tears are the silent
language of grief."
Voltaire*

**"The sorrow which has no vent
in tears may make other organs
weep."**

Henry Maudsley

**"Everyone copes
differently; some cry for
the loss of a loved one
others smile because they
know they'll see them
again."**

Unknown

**"If tears could build a
stairway,**

**And memories a lane,
I'd walk right up to Heaven
And bring you home again."**

Unknown

**"Grieving is a necessary
passage and a difficult
transition to finally
letting go of sorrow - it is
not a permanent rest
stop."
Dodinsky**

**"WHILE WE ARE MOURNING
THE LOSS OF OUR FRIEND,
OTHERS ARE REJOICING TO
MEET HIM BEHIND THE
VEIL."
JOHN TAYLOR**

**"Grief knits two hearts in
closer bonds than happiness
ever can; and common
sufferings are far stronger
links than common joys."**

Alphonse De Lamartine

**"WHEN SOMEONE YOU
LOVE BECOMES A
MEMORY, THE MEMORY
BECOMES A TREASURE."
UNKNOWN**

**"I am tired, Beloved,
of chafing my heart against
the want of you;
of squeezing it into little ink-
drops,
And posting it."
Amy Lowell**

**"The deep pain that is felt at the
death of every friendly soul
arises from the feeling that there
is in every individual something
which is inexpressible, peculiar to
him alone, and is, therefore,
absolutely and irretrievably lost."
Arthur Schopenhauer**

**"These days grief seems like walking on a frozen
river; most of the time he feels safe enough, but
there is always that danger he will plunge through."
David Nicholls**

**"Oh that it were possible, Af-
ter long grief and pain, To
find the arms of my true
love, Around me once again!"**

Alfred

Support, Information, & Assistance Resources

Homicide Survivors

Office (520)740-5729

1-800-775-7462 x5729

Fax (520)740-5773

homicidesurvivors@pcao.pima.gov

www.azhomicidesurvivors.org

Carol Gaxiola, Director/ Victim Advocate

(520) 240-6300—mobile

Karla Avalos, Bilingual Victim Advocate

Intercesora Bilingüe para Víctimas

(520)349-0362—mobile

Todd Blumhorst, Victim Advocate/Cold Case Advocate

Pima County Attorney's Office

(520) 740-5600

Toll Free 1-800-775-7462 x5600

Pima County Victim Services Program

(520)740-5525

1-800-775-7462 x5525

Pima County Superior Court Calendar

(520)740-8721

<http://www.sc.pima.gov>

Crime Victim Compensation

(520)740-5525

You may be eligible for financial assistance for medical, counseling and funeral expenses

Arizona Attorney General's Office of

Victims Rights & Services



The National Victim Center

1-800-FYI-CALL

Toll Free Information & Referral

Help On Call Crisis Line

323-9373

Information & Referral

(520) 881-1794

Phone Friends

Tucson Area (all 520 area code)

Debbie Curry	298-6117
Hosea Barnett	829-8160
John Prunty	721-0257
Karen Colvin	883-7377
Kathi Rice	296-6349
Kathy Ross	889-8525
Mary Ann Christensen	906-4405

Amigos Telefónicos - En Español

Carlos Castro	624-4965
Gabby de la Cruz	704-1277
Hope & Johnny Valenzuela	574-3139
Rick & Yoli Villelas	419-6138

Phoenix

Jayne Treen	(602)995-1584
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Southern Arizona

Dan & Darlene Berry	(520)515-0115
Karen Teeters	(520)384-2765
Sue Dupee	(520)586-2618
Victoria Thacker	(520)826-3018

Arkansas

Joan McKinstry	(501)228-9849
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Email Friends

Homicide Survivors Office:

homicidesurvivors@pcao.pima.gov

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Julie Williams	julie.williams@msn.com
Kathi Rice	azstormy@aol.com
Mary Ann Christensen	Maryann.Christensen@ltaz.com
Sharon LaPlant	dlaplant@new.rr.com
Toni Schneider	Doctor85711@yahoo.com

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Tucson, Arizona 85701

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