



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF ATTORNEY GENERAL HENRY McMASTER
STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

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Silent Witness Ceremony Honored 2007 Victims of Fatal Domestic Violence

Ceremony Held On First Monday Of National Domestic Violence Awareness Month

Columbia, SC – Attorney General Henry McMaster led participants through the annual Silent Witness Domestic Violence ceremony that was held today on the South steps of the State House in Columbia.

The ceremony marked the first week of National Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

During the solemn ceremony, Attorney General McMaster called the names of twenty-eight (28) women and four (4) men from across the state who lost their lives as the result of domestic violence in the previous year, including an additional thirty-third (33rd) silhouette representing the potential unknown victims.

Victims' family members, friends, or volunteers carried a life-sized silhouette representing the victim to the State House steps as a bell was rung for each victim.

"This is a sad and solemn occasion to commemorate the lives of women and men which were lost to domestic violence," said McMaster. "We must remain focused in our efforts to break this tragic cycle of violence for all the people of our state, especially the children."

Domestic violence survivors, officials and victims' advocates made special remarks to highlight the problem of violence against women.

A statistical breakdown for each county is available at
<http://www.scattorneygeneral.com/fraud/cdv/index.html> .

The Silent Witness ceremony will be available in its entirety online at <http://www.myetv.org/>.

2008 SILENT WITNESS ROLL CALL

Anderson County

Talia Ashley (16 years old) Ms. Ashley was killed due to blunt force trauma to the head on April 23, 2007. Police reports indicate that Ms. Ashley was struck and killed in her home with a large rock wielded by her boyfriend, Stanley Dehart III. Mr. Dehart then set Ms. Ashley's residence on fire. Mr. Dehart is charged with murder and is currently awaiting trial.

Josephine Estrich (34 years old) Ms. Estrich was stabbed and killed on January 22, 2007. According to reports, Ms. Estrich's boyfriend, Shawn Williams, stabbed her in the chest. Ms. Estrich was approximately 5 weeks pregnant at the time. Mr. Williams has been charged with murder and is currently awaiting trial. Ms. Estrich is survived by a daughter.

Denise Lucas (36 years old) Ms. Lucas was shot and killed on June 2, 2007. Ms. Lucas was killed by a single gunshot wound to the head by her ex-husband, Luther Lucas II. Afterwards, Mr. Lucas committed suicide. According to reports, Mr. Lucas had prior criminal domestic violence charges, and Mrs. Lucas had obtained an order of protection. Ms. Lucas is survived by a son.

Beaufort County

Catherine Herrera (43 years old) Mrs. Herrera was shot and killed on September 16, 2007. Mrs. Herrera was killed by a single gunshot wound to the head by her husband, Jose Herrera. Witnesses established that Mr. and Mrs. Herrera had been engaged in an argument throughout the afternoon. Mr. Herrera has been charged with murder and is currently awaiting trial. Mrs. Herrera is survived by a daughter and son.

Berkeley County

Thomas Hoffman (42 years old) Mr. Hoffman was shot and killed on September 21, 2007. Mr. Hoffman was shot three times in the back of the head by his wife, Marjorie Hoffman. According to police reports, Mrs. Hoffman had a history of drug abuse that led to financial and domestic problems between her and her husband. She attempted to cover up Mr. Hoffman's murder by burying his body behind their privacy fence in the woods. Mrs. Hoffman is charged with murder and is currently awaiting trial.

Charleston County

Michelle Edwards (38 years old) Mrs. Edwards was shot and killed on February 3, 2007. According to reports, Mrs. Edwards' husband, James Edwards, shot his wife in the parking lot at her workplace. Mr. Edwards then turned the gun on himself and committed suicide. The couple was separated at the time of the shooting. Mrs. Edwards is survived by two daughters.

Elaine Humbert (62 years old) Mrs. Humbert was stabbed to death on September 24, 2007. Mrs. Humbert died as a result of multiple stab wounds to her upper chest by her boyfriend, John Ignieri. Mr. Ignieri is currently awaiting trial. Mrs. Humbert is survived by a son and daughter.

James Kelly (57 years old) Mr. Kelly was shot and killed on October 20, 2007. Mr. Kelly and his wife, Joyce Kelly, were in a hotel when Mrs. Kelly shot and killed him. Afterwards, she turned the gun on herself and committed suicide. Mr. Kelly is survived by a son.

Leslie McCravy (25 years old) Ms. McCravy was shot and killed on July 14, 2007. Police reports indicate that Ms. McCravy died as the result of a gunshot wound inflicted by her boyfriend, Deshawn Wright. Mr. Wright then committed suicide.

Latoya Pendergrass (24 years old) Ms. Pendergrass was shot and killed on July 8, 2007. Ms. Pendergrass died as the result of a gunshot wound to the head from her ex-boyfriend, Jake Wilson. Ms. Pendergrass's two young children were in the apartment at the time of the shooting. According to police reports, the couple had a history of arguments and police had been called to the residence numerous times. Mr. Wilson is currently awaiting trial for murder. Ms. Pendergrass is survived by a son and daughter.

Chesterfield County

Maria Hernandez (41 years old) Mrs. Hernandez was stabbed and killed on July 6, 2007. Mrs. Hernandez died due to multiple stab wounds inflicted by her estranged husband, Rafael Sanchez. The police had responded to several calls involving the couple prior to Mrs. Hernandez's death, and reports indicate Mr. Sanchez had assaulted and intimidated his wife while they were separated. Mrs. Hernandez had also obtained an order of protection. Mr. Sanchez pled guilty to her murder and was sentenced to life in prison. Mrs. Hernandez is survived by her son.

Clarendon County

Theresa Johnson (19 years old) Ms. Johnson was shot and killed on November 29, 2007. Police reports indicate that Ms. Johnson's ex-boyfriend, Charles Junious, came to her house and refused to leave. After forcing entry through the front door, Mr. Junious argued with Ms. Johnson's mother, Barbara Johnson, and then shot and killed both Theresa and her mother. Ms. Theresa Johnson's child was also in the residence at the time of the shooting. Mr. Junious was charged with two counts of murder and is currently awaiting trial. Ms. Johnson is survived by her daughter.

Dorchester County

Cary Malphrus, III (37 years old) Mr. Malphrus was shot and killed on November 26, 2007. According to reports, Mr. Malphrus was shot by his wife, Carolyn Malphrus. Mrs. Malphrus is awaiting trial for murder. Mr. Malphrus is survived by two sons.

Edgefield County

Alecia Arangilan (34 years old) Ms. Arangilan was shot and killed on October 30, 2007. Ms. Arangilan died as the result of multiple gunshot wounds to the head and chest by her husband, Robert Herring. Mr. Herring also shot and killed Ms. Arangilan's seventeen-year-old daughter, Jade. Mr. Herring then turned the gun on himself and committed suicide. Ms. Arangilan is survived by two children.

Georgetown County

Kelly Taylor (26 years old) Ms. Taylor was strangled to death on May 12, 2007. Ms. Taylor was killed by her boyfriend, Brian Gilliard. Mr. Gilliard pled guilty to voluntary manslaughter and was sentenced to 25 years in prison. Ms. Taylor is survived by two sons.

Greenville County

Judith Barth (64 years old) Ms. Barth was stabbed to death on March 27, 2007.

Reports indicated that Ms. Barth died as the result of multiple knife wounds to the neck by her common-law husband, Gary Cunningham. Mr. Cunningham is currently awaiting trial for murder. Ms. Barth is survived by her daughter.

Lisa Schad-Baldwin (41 years old) Ms. Schad-Baldwin was shot and killed on May 25, 2007. Police reports indicate that Ms. Schad-Baldwin died as a result of a gunshot wound to the head by her common-law husband, William Palmer II. Mr. Palmer is currently awaiting trial for murder. Ms. Schad-Baldwin is survived by a daughter and son.

Vanessa Vance (31 years old) Ms. Vance was killed by blunt force trauma to her head and chest on April 8, 2007. Ms. Vance was killed in a car accident caused by her ex-boyfriend, Elder Potlow, after he rammed his car into hers. Mr. Potlow had also been shooting at the car as he pursued it. One other passenger was also killed in the accident. Ms. Vance was three months pregnant. Mr. Potlow has been charged with two counts of murder, two counts of assault and battery with intent to kill, and the death of a child in utero. He is currently awaiting trial.

Greenwood County

Susan Edens (40 years old) Ms. Edens was strangled to death on August 16, 2007. Ms. Edens was beaten and strangled by her boyfriend, Derek Anderson. He then hid her body under a porch at a deserted house in his neighborhood. According to reports, Ms. Edens and Mr. Anderson had a prior history of domestic abuse. Mr. Anderson is currently awaiting trial. Ms. Edens is survived by her three sons.

Terry Hawes (30 years old) Mrs. Hawes was shot and killed on April 4, 2007. Mrs. Hawes and her estranged husband, Alonzo Hawes, were having an argument when Mr. Hawes shot Mrs. Hawes several times. The couple's three children witnessed the shooting. Reports indicate that Mrs. Hawes had obtained both an order of protection and a restraining order against Mr. Hawes. Mr. Hawes is charged with murder and is awaiting trial. Mrs. Hawes is survived by two daughters and a son.

Horry County

Jill Dean (39 years old) Mrs. Dean was stabbed to death on October 16, 2007. According to reports, Mrs. Dean's husband, Charles Dean, returned to the home and killed her just hours after he ran away when she called 911 to report that he had hit her. The Deans' minor daughter was present when the stabbing occurred and tried to come to the defense of her mother. Mr. Dean is charged with murder and is currently awaiting trial. Mrs. Dean is survived by her son and daughter.

Lancaster County

Aretha Cunningham (35 years old) Ms. Cunningham was strangled to death on June 8, 2007. Ms. Cunningham and her boyfriend, Calvin Gaddy, were having an argument when Mr. Gaddy strangled Ms. Cunningham to death. Mr. Gaddy pled guilty to voluntary manslaughter and was sentenced to 25 years in prison. Ms. Cunningham is survived by her son.

Laurens County

Catherine Tollison (47 years old) Ms. Tollison was strangled to death on October 15, 2007. Ms. Tollison and her boyfriend, Michael Higgins, were having an argument when Mr. Higgins strangled Ms.

Tollison to death. According to police reports, Mr. Higgins had a history of violence against Ms. Tollison. Mr. Higgins is charged with her murder and is awaiting trial. Ms. Tollison is survived by her son and daughter.

Lee County

Kenneth Wilson (30 years old) Mr. Wilson was shot and killed on December 25, 2007. Mr. Wilson was killed in his home by his girlfriend, Tippy Retana. Police reports indicate that Ms. Retana tried to make it look like an unknown suspect had forced entry into the house and shot Mr. Wilson. Ms. Retana was convicted of murder and sentenced to life without parole. Mr. Wilson is survived by his son.

Lexington County

Vikki Marcus (50 years old) Ms. Marcus was shot and killed on October 8, 2007. Ms. Marcus was killed by her ex-boyfriend, Roger Cochran III. According to reports, Mr. Cochran came to Ms. Marcus's house and argued with her and her new boyfriend. When asked to leave, he pulled out a gun and shot and killed both Ms. Marcus and her boyfriend. Mr. Cochran is charged with two counts of murder and is awaiting trial. Ms. Marcus is survived by two sons and a daughter.

Newberry County

Sharon Harris (55 years old) Mrs. Harris was shot and killed on January 8, 2007. Mrs. Harris was shot by her husband, Daniel Harris. Reports indicate that Mrs. Harris had filed for and received an order of protection. Mr. Harris is charged with her murder and is currently awaiting trial. Mrs. Harris is survived by a son and two daughters.

Orangeburg County

Ruby Thompson (31 years old) Ms. Thompson was shot and killed on February 6, 2007. Ms. Thompson was shot by her boyfriend, Oscar McDowell. According to reports, Mr. McDowell killed Ms. Thompson and then set her body on fire. Mr. McDowell is a registered sex offender. He pled guilty and was sentenced to 40 years in prison. Ms. Thompson is survived by her son.

Richland County

Lucy Branham (45 years old) Ms. Branham was severely beaten on September 15, 2007 and died five days later from her injuries. Ms. Branham and her boyfriend, Chris Arant, were having an argument when Mr. Arant beat her unconscious. According to reports, Mr. Arant hit Ms. Branham multiple times with his fists and rammed her head through the window of a truck. A neighbor found Ms. Branham later that morning. Mr. Arant was charged with murder and is currently awaiting trial. Ms. Branham is survived by her son.

Spartanburg County

Chamaiporn Chongpatana (27 years old) Ms. Chongpatana was shot and stabbed to death on September 10, 2007. Ms. Chongpatana was shot and stabbed by her husband, Xao Vang. Afterwards, Mr. Vang turned the gun on himself and committed suicide. Reports indicate that Ms. Chongpatana had obtained an order of protection prior to the incident. Ms. Chongpatana is survived by two sons.

Erika Horton (26 years old) Mrs. Horton was killed on January 2, 2007.

According to reports, Mrs. Horton's throat was slashed by her husband, Larry Horton. Mr. Horton was found guilty of her murder and was sentenced to life in prison. Mrs. Horton is survived by her two daughters.

Kimberly Murphy (20 years old) Ms. Murphy was stabbed to death on September 7, 2007. Reports indicated that Ms. Murphy and her boyfriend, Larry Casey, were having an argument when Mr. Casey stabbed Ms. Murphy with an ice pick. He then buried her body in the woods. Mr. Casey is charged with murder and is awaiting trial.

Sumter County

Quanna Cooper (23 years old) Ms. Cooper was shot and killed on March 16, 2007. Reports indicate that Ms. Cooper was shot several times with an assault rifle by her boyfriend, Derrick Harriott. He is charged with her murder and is currently awaiting trial.

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