Sondra Better’s killer left a trail of clues — blood, fingerprints and DNA — and eluded detectives for two decades.

“Our detectives worked years trying to find the killer in this case,” Acting Delray Beach Police Chief Javaro Sims said Wednesday. “We had fingerprints, we had blood, we even had a possible description from a witness. But the person responsible for this heinous case seemed to just disappear.”

But two months ago, Delray Beach police got a huge break in the cold case that had frustrated two generations of detectives. Todd Barket, 51, of Brandon made the mistake of applying to the state to become a certified nursing assistant, a job that required him to undergo a background check and submit his fingerprints, police said. In January, those prints matched evidence Delray Beach police had submitted to a national database at the time of the August 1998 killing. Barket was arrested Wednesday and faces a first degree murder charge, the department said during a news conference.

Sondra Better and her husband, Seymour "Zeke" Better. (Courtesy of Delray Beach police)

Better, who was 68 when she was killed, didn’t need her job selling used furniture and knickknacks in a strip mall consignment shop. But she wanted to keep busy. And that Monday afternoon, she was at work at the Lu Shay store, which used to be at 3175 S. Federal Highway. The coming Friday was to be her last day, and she and her husband Seymour “Zeke” Better were to travel from their Highland Beach home to New York to renew their vows. Instead, Better fought against an attacker who repeatedly stabbed her neck, and beat her head.

A heavy glass ashtray was shattered around her, and decorative marble balls were by her corpse, an arrest report said. “She was violently killed by an unknown assailant,” Sims said. “She was stabbed, she was bludgeoned, and no one deserves to die in that manner.” Better’s body was found on the bloodied floor of the shop. She had defensive wounds on her hands and one of her fingers was nearly severed. One of the decorative marble balls held Barket’s prints, police said.
Suspected Killer Eluded Cops For 20 Years Until He Applied For A Job Cont’d
Written and reported by Linda Trischitta from South Florida Sun Sentinel

Barket was 29 and lived in Lantana at the time of Better’s killing. Since then, police believe, he may have worked in a nursing home and avoided trouble. “He has had no contact with law enforcement, getting arrested or anything,” Capt. John Crane-Baker said. “He had a minimal criminal history, mostly traffic citations. So he flew under the radar, even for 26 years before this occurred. It was quite surprising.”

After police said they matched to their evidence to the fingerprints Barket had submitted for the job application, special agents from the West Palm Beach office of the Florida Department of Law Enforcement and detectives tracked him down, police said. FDLE agents began surveilling Barket and police obtained his DNA. On Tuesday, the Palm Beach County Sheriff’s Crime Lab matched Barket’s sample to DNA evidence gathered from the consignment shop, police said. Detectives don’t know whether money was taken from the store, or if robbery was the motive behind the violence.

Delray Beach Police Detective Robert Stevens investigated Better’s killing for a decade until he retired. He got to tell Better’s surviving adult daughters that there had been an arrest. “It felt really good,” Stevens said. “There were some tears, there was some joy and of course now it’s gonna bring some closure to them.” He said one of the couple’s daughters kept a file of newspaper stories from across the country that described how DNA helped solve other cold cases. “She was hoping that one day she would get that call,” Stevens said. “And today was the day.” Better’s husband, who volunteered at the police department for 15 years, is dead. “He was a really nice guy,” Stevens said. “He was devastated by the loss of his wife. They were just getting ready to redo their vows. That’s a tragic way to end a marriage.” Stevens said the couple’s children are in shock with the news, but will be involved in the case.

“Hopefully it goes through the courts smoothly and we get a conviction,” he said. Barket faces a charge of first degree murder. He will be brought from a jail in Hillsborough County to Palm Beach County to face trial. Sims, the acting police chief, and Crane-Baker thanked the FDLE and sheriff’s departments in Palm Beach County and Hillsborough County for their teamwork and assistance in the case. “It took us 20 years,” Sims said. “Twenty years is a long time to want and ask for justice for a loved one.” Crane-Baker said that for victims whose cases remain unsolved, “This just goes to show that police departments don’t give up. Even if it’s 20 years later, we’re still actively working the cases. So that should give hope to every victim out there.”

Correction: Based on information provided by police, an earlier version of this story misstated where Todd Barket had applied for a job.

Unsolved Magazine-Become Part of the Investigation… And the Solution

Exciting News! POMC was sponsored in the above PI Magazine. The link to the article is below:
file:///C:/Users/drooney/Downloads/Unsolved%20Magazine%20summer%202019.pdf

Also, PI Magazine has stated they might do a feature on an unsolved case. If you would like your loved one’s case to POSSIBLY be featured in the magazine please contact Jim Nanos at James@PIMagazine.com. There is no guarantee that your loved one’s case will be featured but there is the possibility.

***Disclaimer: As the National Orgainization of Parents Of Murdered Children, we are not involved in any way with the promotion or distribution of this magazine or any publication other than those listed in our National POMC Catalog.***
SAVE THE DATE FOR OUR
2019 POMC NATIONAL CONFERENCE!

The POMC National Conference Committee members are excited to invite you to join us for the 2019 National POMC Conference in Denver, Colorado!

What:  33rd Annual POMC National Conference

Where:  Denver Marriott Tech Center
        4900 S. Syracuse Street
        Denver, Colorado 80237-2725

When:  August 8-11, 2019

This year some of our Speakers will include Survivors and Heroes of Columbine and Aurora, Colorado.

Here is a list of some workshops covered this year:

Mother’s Grief, Father’s Grief, Sibling Grief, Grief of Other Family and Non-Family Members, Left Childless, Grief of Children, Grief in Relationships, Bi-Lingual Support Group, Trauma and Self Care, Healing with Dance, Music, Yoga, Aromatherapy, Journaling, Therapy Dogs, Ask the Forensics Expert, DNA Database, Ask the Investigator, Victim Advocacy, Victims’ Rights, Domestic Violence Homicide, LGBTQIA, Victim/Offender Dialogue, Parole Hearings and Prison Life.

For more information, contact Bev Warnock at bwarnock@pomc.org or by phone at (513) 721-5683
The Courage to Grieve, Grief Retreat Weekend

The National Organization of Parents Of Murdered Children's third Grief Retreat Weekend was held in Cincinnati, Ohio, April 26-28, 2019. There were 8 attendees from all over the Midwest. One of the attendees wrote “All the good information we received was right on point. This was something that I needed. If I could spend a week in a place like this I believe I could be made whole again.” Other attendees said, “The program was very educating and had a positive effect on me.” and “It was so good to be able to spend a whole weekend with fellow companions on their journey.”


Beckie Miller, Chapter Leader of the Valley of the Sun Chapter in Phoenix, Arizona also hosts a Grief Retreat Weekend twice a year. Once in the spring and once in the fall, both located in Pine, Arizona. For more information on these retreats, contact Beckie Miller at 602-254-8818 or beckierose@aol.com.

Standing, left to right: Frank from Indiana, Cornelius from Indiana, Angeli and Todd from Ohio, Mandi from Ohio, and Shelby from Kentucky

Sitting from left to right: Staci from Indiana and Deana from Kentucky

Annie McCann Dedication

After more than 10 years, Annie McCann’s murder remains unsolved. Only by the Grace of God are we, her parents, able to put one foot in front of the other. Our Dear Annie had a beautiful soul that brightened lives every day. She was humble and would only smile shyly after making 24 foul shots in a row at a regional basketball competition. Annie always helped others and would always stick up for what was right. We found a school homework paper of Annie's where a friend wrote “Annie, My Hero!” Annie called home every day before coming home from school. We never asked her too, she just did it. When we didn’t get that call on Halloween afternoon 2008, we immediately tried to reach Annie. From there, the horror began, and still remains. Annie's body was found stuffed behind a dumpster in Baltimore. Ten years later, we are on our 6th Baltimore police commissioner, 3rd disgraced mayor...a deputy police commissioner who oversaw a mockery of a cold case investigation into Annie’s death just resigned in haste, after press reports alleging he had coached police officers how to lie and cover up crimes, including murder. Annie’s murder? It’s not simply unsolved. It’s unexamined. Annie life was a joy. Her death, like that of any murdered child, is a never-ending tragedy. Please pray for justice for Annie, and peace for all parents of murdered children.

Annie’s site: JusticeforAnnie.com

Article by Annie’s Parents: https://medium.com/@maryjaneanddanmccann/the-color-of-puke-4284f44330d5
Greater Portland Area Chapter Leader, Mary Elledge Awarded
Written by: Oregon Crime Victims Law Center
March 5, 2019

Chapter Leader and long time POMC volunteer, Mary Elledge was awarded by the Oregon Crime Victims Law Center. Mary is so deserving of this award and we appreciate all Mary does for POMC and survivors of homicide. Below is the article that was published about Mary Elledge and her award.

After a decade of advocating for crime victims to ensure their voices are heard and legal rights are protected, Oregon Crime Victims Law Center hosted their Annual Hardy Myers Dinner on Wednesday, April 10 as a chance to come together and celebrate the victories and hard work that advance the mission of OCVLC.

Mary Elledge was the recipient of the Hardy Myers Victim Advocacy Award. Mrs. Elledge is the leader of the Greater Portland Area Chapter of Parents Of Murdered Children (POMC), an organization that provides support for those who have lost a family member to homicide.

For Mary Elledge, family tragedy was the force that turned her into an unparalleled advocate for victims. In 1986 Mrs. Elledge’s 21-year-old son Rob was murdered at their home. In the weeks after the murder she joined Parents Of Murdered Children, a group offering support and advocacy for those who have lost family members to homicide. Mrs. Elledge went on to become the Chapter Leader of POMC, a position she has held for 33 years, assisting countless others who have suffered great losses in their lives. She was the driving force behind the fundraising effort to complete the POMC Memorial in Oregon City, a stunning tribute to the Oregon and Washington lives lost to homicide. Mrs. Elledge is also a former president of Crime Victims United, working to change the justice system to ensure victims’ voices would always be heard. Her reach to victims goes beyond the Northwest. Mrs. Elledge was on site in the aftermath of the Oklahoma City bombing and in New York City after 9/11 to assist with crisis response for victims. She offers guidance to new advocates in Oregon by providing training at the State Victims’ Assistance Academy, and attends the National Parents Of Murdered Children Conferences where she provides guidance to other Chapters of the organization. Mrs. Elledge continues to advocate for Rob, appearing at and speaking at parole hearings for the men convicted of his murder. She offers her heart and her support to other victims of violence, and the community is greatly enriched by her presence.

Congratulations!
A Message from the Board Room

With POMC National Board of Trustees
President
Howard S. Klerk, Jr.

On 6 April 2019 the National Board of Trustees met at the Hampton Inn and Suites in Florence Kentucky. On Thursday 5 April, on behalf of the National Organization of Parents Of Murdered Children, CD’s were closed out at a local bank and reopened as new CD’s at a higher rate of interest and other accounts were re-organized for a greater return.

Among the many subjects discussed at the meeting was the loss of the OVC scholarship grant for attendees of the National POMC Conference in Denver, Colorado in August 2019. Fortunately, the scholarships will be covered through a donation received by National POMC with no changes noticed by the attendees.

Speaking of the National POMC Conference, if you haven’t registered for the Conference or made your Hotel reservations yet, we recommend you do so as soon as you can. Many of the Hotel rooms are already booked and we are nearing our number of rooms already blocked. It appears this year’s Conference will be well attended and we are excited by the response. We have been overwhelmed by the number of workshop presenters we have been contacted by. All workshop spots have been filled as of this writing.

We have been contacted by a firm in Glasgow, Scotland looking to attend the Conference and do some filming, and to interview a few of our attendees as part of their presentation to be shown on BBC and in movie theatres worldwide. This will give POMC International recognition and could be very beneficial to our organization. This Film Company, Glasgow Films, has made films in many countries around the world such as; Africa, South America, North America, Bangladesh, Germany, Austria, Scotland and many other Countries. Many of these films have won International awards, including in the USA.

The April 2019 POMC NBOT meeting was very difficult for this writer because the morning before the meeting I was informed that our murderer was granted parole by the New York State Parole Commission. As of the date this is being written, he is a free man. Of course, our Lisa is still in her grave.

We look forward to seeing you at the 2019 Conference. The Conference Committee is working very hard to make it a very memorable event. If you get a chance, please stop by and say hi. We can’t spell success without “U”.

All the best

Howard
A Message from the Executive Director

Hi Everyone!
Finally Summer is here and the Midwest is starting to have sun-shiny days. After a very rainy and cold Spring, I am welcoming the warm sunny days. I have seen such horrible weather that many states are having and I hope all the bad weather is done and every State will enjoy some beautiful, sunny days.

This is the first year ever that we have had so many workshops available. We filled up the schedule and then had more offered, so we had to add another room for six more workshops. We also have a beautiful memorial service planned for Friday night. I want to thank the Conference Committee for all of your help with the Conference. The Conference Committee is made up of eight volunteers from all over the U.S. and each are involved with their own Chapter. Each one gives up a lot of time and energy to putting this Conference together and they do it for the love that they have for their loved one and want to help all survivors. If you are a new survivor, please think about coming to the Conference. I know it can be a little scary to travel to another city by yourself, but I can assure you that once you get there you will not be alone.

In April, we had our 3rd Grief Retreat Weekend in Cincinnati. It was attended by 8 survivors from Ohio, Kentucky and Indiana. They all seemed to find comfort in the weekend and one of the attendees has attended all three of our Grief Retreat Weekends. All of the attendees shared so much and what was really neat was we had two sibling survivors and six parents and the two siblings bonded so much, even though there was a considerable difference in age. The parents learned a lot from listening to these two sibling survivors as they shared their feelings about their other children who are still alive and what their needs are. Also, remember Beckie Miller in the Phoenix Valley of the Sun Chapter holds Grief Retreat Weekends in April and October.

It seems that in the last month we have received an extremely high number of requests to do Parole Block Petitions from families. We need everyone to help these families by downloading the petition off the website www.pomc.org, get signatures, and send to the Parole Board, listed on the petition. Even just signing it, and putting a stamp on it and sending to the Parole Board, helps the Parole Board make their decision on whether the inmate gets denied. It is such an easy thing to do, sending petitions in, and it means so much to the families.

Also remember the Murder Wall. If you haven’t added your loved one on the Murder Wall yet, do it now if you can. The Murder Wall will be at the Conference and will be unveiled by the Honor Guard in Denver, Colorado on Thursday night August 8th. It is a powerful way to honor and memorialize your loved one.

Have a safe summer and hope to see you at the Conference.

Bev
When someone you love has experienced the loss of a child, it’s hard on everyone. They are engulfed in a sea of unbearable pain and grief and sorrow while you may be struggling to stand beside them, wondering what to say, what to do, and what they need. You love them dearly, but you don’t really know what they are going through and you don’t know what to do.

Maybe you’re grieving too. Maybe you’re suffering as you witness their suffering. Maybe you feel helpless. Maybe you find yourself saying all the wrong things because you don’t know what else to say.

Maybe you want to love them through this, but no one taught you how to do that. It’s ok.

Most of us don’t really know how to navigate this thing called grief. They don’t teach Grief 101 in high school (although, perhaps they should!).

In an ideal world, your heartbroken loved one would be able to say, “Here, this is what I need. This is how you can help me.” Unfortunately, that’s generally not how it works. They have been crushed by a devastating loss and, chances are, they’re giving everything they have to simply get out of bed in the morning. Trying to articulate what they need and what kind of support they want probably feels next to impossible.

Fortunately, loving a grieving friend or family member isn’t as complicated as it can seem. Generally, it’s simply about being a compassionate and kind human.

**Show Up**

First and foremost, show up. Be here.

Show up at their door. Run errands for them. Do their laundry. Make them meals and sit with them to ensure they eat (many times in early grief people lose their appetite and don’t eat regularly). Lay on the bed and hold them while they cry.

Continue to show up for months or years – this is a lifetime loss and they will need you for a lifetime. Text them. Call them. Send cards. Remember birthdays and anniversaries of their child’s life. Help them plan birthday parties and holiday remembrances and show up for death anniversaries. Mark them on your calendar so you don’t forget – because they won’t. And they won’t forget those who show up for them.

You will likely say or do the wrong thing at some point. It happens. But if you are willing to keep showing up and work through the discomfort, that’s what will matter. That’s how you’ll help.

**Be Patient**

Grief is not short lived. Nor is it linear or simple or logical.

Grieving a child takes a lifetime. We love our children for a lifetime and we will grieve them for a lifetime. Society likes to tell us that after a certain period of time, grief should be completed and we should be ready to find “closure” and “move on.”

To be quite honest, if you buy into that way of thinking, you will struggle to be able to support your loved one as long as they will need you to.

Your friend or family member will grieve far longer than you will want to hear about it or be around for it. This is where they will need you to be patient and understanding.

Those who grieve their child(ren) will eventually find a way to live with that grief and that aching hole in their life, but they will never stop missing their child or longing to hold them. Birthdays and holidays and anniversary dates may be painful and challenging for the rest of their life.

When you find yourself tiring of their grief or wanting them to “get over it already,” remember – they are far, far more exhausted and sick of grieving than you can even imagine. This is when they need you most to keep showing up.

**Listen**

While you might be struggling to know what to say, it’s likely your loved one really just wants someone who will listen.

Really, truly listen. To their fears. To their grief. To their doubts and guilt and regrets and questioning. To the part of them that feels like they’ve failed their children. To their anger and their rage at the injustice of their children’s lives being cut short. To the urges of grief that make them feel crazy and abnormal.

Let those you love simply talk with you and be heard without judgment or false optimism. Don’t try to fix it or to help them feel something different – just listen.

[Continued on next page]
Listen and when you want to object to something they are saying, or inject your own thoughts, stay silent and listen even more.

Listen and then simply tell them that you love them and you are here.

**Forgive**

Here’s the honest truth: For a while, your friend or family member isn’t going to be a terribly great friend or family member.

They probably won’t always show up for holiday celebrations or birthdays or fun outings. They’ll probably forget your birthday and anniversary and other special occasions. They may not feel up to attending baby showers and children’s birthdays or being around babies and kids at all (this particular thing might last for years).

In that first year after their child died especially, they will probably forget things you told them or make plans and either forget about them or cancel at the last minute because they just couldn’t get out of bed that day.

When you complain about every day matters like being tired or your child acting up or the co-worker you can’t stand, they may not engage in the conversation the way they used to or may tell you that you’re overreacting. It’s not that they don’t care about your difficulties, it’s simply that what they’ve experienced is so overwhelmingly huge everything else feels small and meaningless in comparison.

So, when they can’t be the friend or family member you remember or want them to be, forgive them.

They’re still learning how to navigate life after the entire landscape has changed – not unlike being dropped in a foreign land with no map and no way to communicate.

**Get to Know Them**

However long you may have known your loved one or how well you might have known them, be prepared to get to know them all over again.

The loss of a child changes us in irrevocable ways.

Your friend or family member isn’t the person they once were and they will never fully be that person again. Grief has forged them into someone new.

Don’t be surprised if they don’t respond to things the way they once would have or if they suddenly aren’t interested in things they used to love or if the beliefs about the world they used to hold so dear are ones they cannot abide by anymore.

No, they won’t be the person you remember and loved so very much. Grief will change and morph them into someone new – and even that will change and morph again over time.

But don’t give up on them too quickly. They may not be the person you knew, but you might really love the person they have and are becoming.

Take time to get to know the new post-loss them.

**Remember**

Finally, if you do nothing else, remember with them.

Help them remember their child through the years and comfort them with the knowledge that their child has not and will not be forgotten.

Share memories with them. Say their child’s name. Remember their child’s birthday. Honor them on the holidays and for Mother’s and Father’s Day. Donate in their child’s name.

Read articles like this one and discuss it with your friend or family member.

Give your loved one the gift of remembering their child. It’s the greatest gift you can give.

And above all else, love them. Love them so deeply and openly and clearly they can’t help but feel it radiating from you.

They need you and they need that love.

**Love them fiercely.**
Maintaining the Beauty of the MURDER WALL...Honoring Their Memories

Time and much travel have put stress on the many panels of the Murder Wall... Honoring Their Memories, and scratches, nicks, and dents need to be repaired. Many of the cases that are used to transport the Wall have split or broken, handles have fallen off, and the protective material inside each case needs to be replaced.

Currently, the Wall is made up of 33 panels, displaying over 4,000 victims’ names, dates of birth and dates of death.

In order to maintain the beauty of the Wall, POMC continues to seek donations to help make some of the repairs. To help, please use the form below.

Donations made in memory/honor of, will be in the next issue of Survivors.

POMC-Wall Repair
(Please Print)

Name:______________________________________
In memory/honor of:__________________________
Address:____________________________________
City, State, Zip:______________________________
Email Address:______________________________
Amount enclosed: $_________  Check:____
Money Order :____  Visa:_____   MC:______
Am. Express:______  Dis:_______
Card Number:_______________________________
Expiration date:________________
Security Code (back of card):________________

Return to:
Parents Of Murdered Children, Inc.
635 W. 7th Street, Suite 104
Cincinnati, Ohio 45203

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Donations to Maintain the Beauty of the Murder Wall... Honoring Their Memories

Thank you for your donation to maintain the Murder Wall:

- Henry E. Bosley Jr. & Audrey Bosley in memory of Robert J. Bosley
- Denise Coleman in memory of Timothy Staunton
- Mark & Tracey Holmes
- David & Patricia Kippert in memory of John E. Kippert
- Howard & Ann Klerk in memory of Lisa Marie Weaver
- LC & Sherry Nolan in memory of Shannon Marie & Alexandra Jordan Nolan-Broe
- Daniel & Helen Spurgin in memory of Jeff Spurgin

WALL BOOKLETS HONOR THEIR MEMORIES

POMC’s Murder Wall...Honoring their Memories is a beautiful memorial to the more than 4,000 murder victims whose names appear on the Wall. Behind each name there is a face and a story of a person whose life was taken prematurely. It is time to tell those stories.

Memorial booklets, which travel with the Wall, are compiled as an ongoing project of National POMC. Cost is $20.00 to include one page, front and back without a photo, or $30.00 if you wish to have a photo included. The photos are non-returnable and must be no larger than 2 1/2 by 3 1/2 inches.

Forms are available on the POMC Web Site at: www.pomc.org or by calling National at (513) 721-5683.
The names that appear in this issue of Survivors are those that have been submitted to the National Organization of POMC, Inc., with full or partial payment before May 31, 2019. Names after this date will appear in the next issue.

The Wall consists of solid walnut panels with each holding 120 brass plates inscribed with the name of the victim, along with the date of birth and the date of death. A donation of $75 is required before a name will be inscribed on a plate and permanently mounted on a panel. (See order form inside this edition.) Not only is this donation a tribute to the memory of your loved one, but it is a tribute that will guarantee that the memory of those we miss so deeply will survive forever. The Wall is a powerful statement of the violence in our society and of the numbers of loved ones senselessly killed by others. Not only does it give comfort, but also hope, because every name on it cries out silently for awareness, prevention and justice.

**Murder Wall...Honoring Their Memories**

Anyone interested in having their loved one’s name inscribed and permanently mounted on the Wall should fill out the order form below. Make checks payable to “POMC Wall,” or for your convenience, Discover, Visa, MasterCard, and American Express are accepted.

Send to: Parents Of Murdered Children, 635 W. 7th Street, Suite 104, Cincinnati, Ohio 45203

**LOVED ONES INFORMATION**

Loved ones name ____________________________

Date of Birth ____________________________ Date of Death ____________________________

**PAYMENT INFORMATION**

Choice of payment (check one): _____ Pay in full for $75.00 OR _____ 3 payments of $25.00 each

Payment type: _____ MC _____ Visa _____ Am. Express _____ Discover _____ Check

Card Number ____________________________ Exp. Date ________ Security Code ________

**SUBMITTERS INFORMATION**

Name ____________________________

Address ____________________________

City, State, Zip ____________________________

Phone Number ____________________________

Relationship to victim ____________________________

The name will be added to the panel upon payment in full. Once your plate has been permanently mounted on the panel, you will be notified. New panels join the Wall as they are completed.
**Parole Block Program**

With
Bev Warnock

---

**1,696**
Convicted murderers have been denied parole through POMC’s Parole Block Program!

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**Support for the Parole Block Program**

In memory of:
- Jarrod Chrisman from Susie & Rodney Chrisman
- Dwayne Chubb from Albert & Dorothy Chubb
- Carl Dan Claes from Danella George
- Elizabeth Foster from Helen Foster
- Timothy Staunton from Denise Coleman
- Lisa Marie Weaver from Howard & Ann Klerk

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**Hearing Results:**

Denied Petitions:
- Kenneth Eugene Patrick
- David Archer
- Jason Merritt

Houston Chapter
Denied:
Lisa Rene Kay

Released from Prison:
Matthew Solomon

Valley of the Sun Chapter Denied:
- Jeffrey Camper
- Shawn Jenson

Greater Portland Area Chapter Denied:
Raymond Lee Brandon

San Antonio Chapter Denied:
Mardie E. Swartz

Arkansas Chapter Denied:
3 Denied
1 Released

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**Letters from The Parole Block Program**

**Thursday, March 14, 2019**
Hello to all of you who wrote letters on behalf of me and my family. Your efforts to support us at our parole hearing to keep David Archer in prison, for the first degree murder of my brother, was very successful. The Board added an additional 5 years to his sentence. All seven family members attended, along with the retired district attorney who tried the case originally and a current assistant district attorney from Monterey County. Every letter was counted and the commissioner remarked that letters were received from across the country. Your willingness to take the time to write letters made a huge difference. The board became very aware that what they do is being watched.

If you need letters from me, I will be more than willing to do so on your behalf.

With sincere gratitude,
Marilyn

**Monday, April 22, 2019**
I was notified by the Nevada Parole Board that the murderer of my son Patrick Kelly was DENIED PAROLE and will not be reviewed again until 2024. I and my entire family, with grateful hearts thank you for your efforts in achieving this outcome. As a community, together, we are stronger and more effective.

Lily Kelly
**PAROLE HEARINGS TO BE HELD**

**Hearing Date:** August 2019  
**Carlos H. Allen**  
ID#: 45212

On December 22, 1981, 16 year old Carlos H. Allen murdered 31 year old Philip V. Whitmarsh at approximately 9:00 pm. Allen, armed with a gun, entered the downtown Columbia, MO, service station office where Philip was working his second job. Allen demanded and took the money in the cash register and shot Philip in the shoulder and heart on his way out of the service station. Allen fled the scene and was apprehended weeks later.

Allen pled to 2nd degree murder and he was sentenced to life in prison with the possibility of parole. He has been paroled four times for this murder returning to prison each time for parole violations.

**To protest, please write to:**  
OR  
Email to: Kimberly.Evans@doc.mo.gov

Department of Corrections and Parole  
Attn: Victim’s Advocate  
3400 Knipp Drive  
Jefferson City, MO  65109

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**Hearing Date:** August 13, 2019  
**Ronald D. Brook**  
ID#: B73494

On November 25, 1975, Susan Worthan and her boyfriend were driving around in his car when Ronald D. Brook, at gunpoint, forced them to drive to an isolated stretch of the highway. He ordered the boyfriend to pull over and he was ordered out of the car and locked in the trunk. After about 15 minutes, he was let out of the trunk and he escaped and ran to get help. Brook shot Susan in the back with a high powered modified 44 magnum handgun revolver and dragged her over a fence and left her half-clothed body in a muddy pasture and began searching for Susan’s friend who had escaped. Susan’s body was not found until the next morning.

Brook was convicted of first degree murder and two counts of kidnapping and was sentenced to life with parole. In 1978, Brook escaped from a California prison and was captured in Tennessee in 1983 and was extradited back to the California prison. He received an additional 16 months for the escape. He will have served only 43 years when he is considered for parole.

**To protest, please write to:**  
Board of Parole Hearings  
Attn: Pre Hearing Correspondence  
PO Box 4036  
Sacramento, CA  95812-4036

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**Hearing Date:** October 2019  
**Thomas Donald Miller**  
ID#: K-44845

On May 16, 1995, Thomas Donald Miller with a co-defendant, placed Carl Dan Claes, age 14, in a van telling him he was taking him to his stereo system and drove him to a remote area where he was marched down a dirt trail and shot in the back of the head execution-style. Miller and his co-defendant then left the scene, returned and put two more bullets in Carl Dan’s head while he laid unconscious bleeding to death. They took his wallet, his pager and a cross his Mother had given to him and then left to eat fast food all the while Miller was paging friends to brag that he committed a murder.

Miller was convicted of first degree murder with special circumstance and a 10-year gun enhancement for using a stolen gun to murder Carl Dan and was sentenced to Life Without Parole in prison. The conclusion of a Fitness Hearing in juvenile court was that Miller was fit to stand trial as an adult. He won an appeal and his sentence was changed to 35 years to life. He will have served only 24 years when he is up for parole.

**To protest, please write to:**  
Board of Parole Hearings  
Attn: Pre-Hearing Correspondence  
PO Box 4036  
Sacramento, CA  95812-4036
Hearing Date: August 2019
Theodore Sloan ID#: A169317

On September 28, 1980, in the middle of the night, Theodore Sloan broke into the apartment of 19-year-old Becky Reed. Sloan searched her apartment for things to steal. When Sloan discovered Becky in bed asleep, he found something to beat her with, and then he retrieved a razor from the bathroom. As Becky lay there sleeping, Sloan began beating her in the head; each individual blow was a fatal blow. As Becky lay there dying, Sloan cut off her underwear and raped her. Sloan was caught 18 months later after breaking into another apartment.

Sloan was convicted of two counts of aggravated burglary, one count of aggravated robbery, rape and aggravated murder and was sentenced to five life sentences. Sloan will have served 37 years when he is considered for parole.

To protest, please write to:
Ohio Department of Rehabilitation & Corrections
Victim Services
4545 Fisher Rd. Suite D
Columbus, OH 43228

Hearing Date: September 2019
David Edward Clark ID# 91CR2240

On April 28, 1991, Amanda Simpson (12) and her mom were sleeping when David Edward Clark and seven accomplices broke into their home to steal their microwave and a video cassette recorder. After they entered the Simpson home, Clark poured gasoline all over their house. He made the comment “let’ em burn”. Amanda’s mother was able to get out but Amanda died suffering burns to her scalp, face, larynx, the inside of her nose and elsewhere on her body.

Clark was convicted of aggravated burglary, aggravated arson, aggravated murder and attempted murder and was sentenced to 41 years to life in prison. He will have served only 27 years when he is up for parole.

To protest, please write to:
Madison Correctional Institution
1851 OH-56
London, OH 43140
Thank You

Thanks to all those who have chosen POMC as their charity of choice. Your donation has helped thousands of surviving family members; stopped the early release of 1,696 convicted murderers; assisted in POMC’s Second Opinion Services; provided the National newsletter, Survivors, to those who cannot afford it and so much more. POMC’s outreach would not be able to exist without your continued support.

In Memory of

Mary Ann Adler
from Kari Coughlin

Kevin Richard Bailey
from Mark & Catherine Bailey

Gertrude Bestor
from Susan Matson

Bryan Robert Biser
from Robert & Charlene Biser

Paul Stephen Blauvelt
from Leroy & Grace Ann Blauvelt

David Burgess
from Sylvia Weaver

Morgan Kelly Cameron
from Dr. Sheila Massoni

Jarrod Chrisman
from Rodney & Sasie Chrisman

Dwayne Chubb
from Albert & Dorothy Chubb

Krystal Rose Cook
from Lesia Kennedy & Family

Paula Danforth
from James & Paula Danforth

Linda Daniels
from Gary C. Daniels

In Memory of Daughter
from Leonarda “Vicky” Geiger

Dillon Ray DeCoster
from Claire DeCoster

Keara Elec
from Michelle Bishop/ KAES Family

Eric Jay Gelman
from Richard & Lynn Gelman

Howard Jay Goodman
from Lenore B. Freedman

In Memory of

Louis Innucci
from Nunzio & Rosalind Innucci Sr.

Amber Jones & Carolin
from Claire Martinez

Robert Lange
from David & Patricia Kippert

Scott Lewis
from John & Jean Lewis

Shauna Catherine May
from Zoe A. Codey

Emily Maynez
from Michelle Sepeda, Frederick & Barbara Van Rennesse

Shannon Marie &
Alexandra Jordan Nolan–Broe
from LC & Sherry Nolan

James Owens
from Lisa Marshall

Raymond Podell
from Marilyn Lipson

David M. Pottinger
from Carollee Hildenbrandt

John W. Powell
from Mrs. Holly Brians Ragusa

Lance Shell
from Lance I. Shell

Frances Ann Smith
from David & Patricia Kippert

Timothy Staunton
from Denise Coleman

James Treiberg
from Robert & Linda Treiberg

In Memory of

Tarak Underiner
from Todd & Angeli Underiner

Lisa Marie Weaver
from Howard & Ann Klerk

Julie Ann Woodward
From Mrs. Cecily O’Connor

Jack Stewert Wyman
from Dorothy Scott Wyman

In Honor of

Vinay K. Bhatia, son of Lucy Ann Kulincich Bhatia- recently deceased
from Mr. & Mrs. Cyrus Jilla, Suzy & John Schock, Mr. & Mrs. Irvin Clay Murray, Jan Spore, Miss Audrey Ward, Susan Robinson, & Shannon Doherty

Donations

Richard J. Gomez
Dorothy Leifheit
Srinivas Manne
Quaker Steak & Lube
Chris Reid
Regina Ruthven
Myles Sorensen

Chapter Donations

Central Illinois Chapter
Central Ohio Chapter
Maine Chapter
Queens Chapter
Valley of the Sun Chapter
There are hundreds of survivors across the U.S. who volunteer for the National Organization of POMC as Chapter Leaders, Co-Leaders, Contact Persons and State Coordinators. If you are at a point in your life where you are ready to reach out to others who have suffered the loss of a loved one due to violence, please contact me.

The following states need someone to offer support services through phone, email, support group meetings, & court accompaniment, etc.:

- Alabama
- District of Columbia
- Hawaii
- Mississippi
- Montana
- Nebraska
- New Jersey
- North Dakota
- Oklahoma
- Rhode Island
- Tennessee
- Utah
- Vermont
- Wyoming

Thank you to the following Chapters for dedication, compassion and selflessness shown through their continued efforts to provide on-going emotional support to others through phone calls, email, support group meetings, court accompaniment, local events bringing about awareness, education, and advocacy to victims of crime, and remembrance programs for the survivors family members whose loved ones lives were taken from them.

In this 2019 anniversary, POMC acknowledges those Chapters with Articles of Association that were signed between May 1 and August 31 of the year they became a probationary POMC Chapter:

- SAGINAW COUNTY CHAPTER/ MICHIGAN 6 YEARS
- SAN ANTONIO TEXAS CHAPTER/ TEXAS 30 YEARS
- TRUMBULL COUNTY CHAPTER/ OHIO 31 YEARS
- HAMPTON ROADS (FORMERLY VIRGINIA BEACH) CHAPTER/ VIRGINIA 14 YEARS
- DESERT OF HOPE CHAPTER/ NEVADA 3 YEARS
- CHICAGO AREA CHAPTER/ ILLINOIS 15 YEARS
- FORT MYERS FLORIDA-LEE COUNTY CHAPTER/ FLORIDA 3 YEARS
- CENTRAL ILLINOIS CHAPTER/ ILLINOIS 28 YEARS
- COLORADO FRONT RANGE CHAPTER/ COLORADO 36 YEARS
- GREATER VENTURA COUNTY CHAPTER/ CALIFORNIA 14 YEARS
- GREATER ORANGE COUNTY CHAPTER/ CALIFORNIA 14 YEARS

**CP/SC/CL UPDATES**

If you have a message of interest, a great fundraising idea, upcoming Chapter events, special awards or recognitions received or ideas that you would like to share with our “POMC family”, please mail them to my attention: Sherry Nolan at National POMC or email them to snolan@pomc.org. The deadline for receipt of the next newsletter articles is September 15, 2019. Please note: due to deadlines or overflow of articles, etc., we may not be able to include all of those received in the next SNL, but may keep them for future newsletters.
Volunteers are essential in fulfilling our mission!

Nothing teaches hope, kindness, courage, and compassion like helping others.

Volunteers do not necessarily have the time...they just have the heart.

We would also like to extend our thanks to the many Contact Persons and State Coordinators throughout the U.S. who also offer invaluable services to those survivors in their state who reach out to them for additional support, especially when there is not a POMC Chapter nearby. These volunteers are willing to spend time talking, and especially listening, to others about their loss. Let us recognize some of our Contact Persons who have offered continuous supportive services to others for more than 20 years.

We Honor...

Sherry Mitchell- Contact Person since 1998, FL
In Loving Memory of Her Son

Ronnie Chris Mitchell
Age: 31 Years

Barbara Bierman- Contact Person Since 1998, TX/ KS
In Loving Memory of Her Daughter

Syndi Sue Bierman
Age: 17 Years

Debbie Scott and Marcia Tucker
Contact Persons Since 1999, OH
In Loving Memory of Their Sister

Sharon & Kim Tewksbury- Contact Persons since 1993 & 2005, OH
In Loving Memory of Their Husband and Father

Mary Eileen Hughes Cornwell
Age: 23 Years

Monte Tewksbury
Age: 40 Years
ATTENTION:
NEW ONLINE SUPPORT GROUP THROUGH FACEBOOK.

Are you on Facebook? If so make sure to join our Facebook support group which is being used as a topic forum to talk among one another, share stories of your loved one and lean on one another for support. You can join the group at [www.facebook.com/groups/POMCOFFICIAL](http://www.facebook.com/groups/POMCOFFICIAL)

Please note, this is the ONLY official online POMC support group. If you belong to other groups claiming to be POMC please be aware that they are not affiliated with or representatives of POMC.

We still have our National page on Facebook as well which is used for updates within the organization and National Office as well as other important information. Again, this is the ONLY official page for POMC (besides Chapter pages) so please be aware if you are linked with other pages claiming to be a POMC Facebook account. You can access our National Facebook page at [https://www.facebook.com/National-Organization-of-Parents-Of-Murdered-Children-Inc-145164118873865/](https://www.facebook.com/National-Organization-of-Parents-Of-Murdered-Children-Inc-145164118873865/)

*REMINDER*
Has something changed? Please, let POMC know if your name, address, email or phone number have changed. Call us at 513-721-5683 or email us at natlpomc@pomc.org

POMC Catalog Available
POMC’s “Journey Through Grief” catalog is available by contacting POMC at: (513)721-5683. The catalog can also be downloaded from our website at [www.pomc.org](http://www.pomc.org).

The catalog provides color photos and a listing for all POMC items: books, bumper stickers, brochures, clothing, magnets, music, etc.

Information on items for POMC’s National Day of Remembrance for Murder Victims, special gifts, memorials, and tributes are also included in the catalog.

Contact POMC today for your free copy.

Our future depends on you!
Please remember the National Organization of Parents Of Murdered Children in your will and estate planning.

Thank you for keeping us in mind.

Dedication Page Information
Dedication Pages are included in each publication of the Survivors Newsletters. Not only is this a way to memorialize our loved ones, it also helps to defray the cost of publishing the newsletter. We offer this opportunity to pay tribute with poems, photos (black and white only), letters/loving thoughts or special requests.

The prices for dedication pages are as follows: $35.00 for a quarter page, $65.00 for a half page or $125.00 for a full page.

Send item and appropriate donation to “Dedication Page,” POMC, 635 W. 7th Street, Suite 104, Cincinnati, OH 45203. Please include your name and daytime phone number in case we have to contact you for clarification.

Did you know Amazon.com is a POMC sponsor?
POMC receives 4-13% depending on item of all Amazon.com purchases made through the amazon link on our webpage. The use of this link does not increase the cost of your purchase.
Survivors Newsletter Subscription

Please find enclosed $10.00 for my annual subscription (three issues) for the Survivors Newsletter ($25.00 outside the United States). Please consider adding an extra subscription fee to help defray the cost for someone who cannot afford to subscribe.

(Please Print)

Name:_________________________________
Address:________________________________

City, State, Zip:______________________________________
Email Address:_______________________________________
Phone number: (___)______________________
Amount enclosed: $________ for _______ year (s)
Payment method: ___Check ___Visa ___MasterCard
___American Express ___Discover
Card number:_______________________________________
Expiration date:_______________________________

Enclosed is an extra $__________ donation for someone in need and is given in:
Memory of:_____________________________________
Honor of:_______________________________________

All those donating an extra gift ‘in loving memory of’, or ‘in honor of’ will be listed in the next issue of the Survivors newsletter. To have POMC send a letter acknowledging your gift to the family, please provide family’s name, address, city, state, and zip code.

Return to:
Parents Of Murdered Children, Inc.
635 W. 7th Street, Suite 104
Cincinnati, Ohio 45203
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