

# PARENTS OF MURDERED CHILDREN

FOR THE FAMILIES AND FRIENDS OF THOSE WHO HAVE DIED BY VIOLENCE

2021

## GREATER ORANGE COUNTY CHAPTER OF POMC

Message Phone: (714) 999-7132

Email: [gocpomc@yahoo.com](mailto:gocpomc@yahoo.com)

Website: [www.gocpomc.org](http://www.gocpomc.org)



Supervisor-Homicide Victims  
Services

Melissa Melgar

Phone: 714-347-8494

Email:

[Melissa.Melgar@da.ocgov.com](mailto:Melissa.Melgar@da.ocgov.com)

### POMC®

#### National Headquarters

635 West 7<sup>th</sup> St. Suite 104

Cincinnati, OH 45203

Toll Free:

(888) 818-POMC

Website:

[www.pomc.org](http://www.pomc.org)

#### MISSION STATEMENT

POMC® makes the difference through on-going emotional support, education, prevention, advocacy, and awareness.

#### VISION STATEMENT

To provide support and assistance to all survivors of homicide victims while working to create a world free of murder.

#### MEMBERSHIP

Membership is open to those who have been cruelly bereaved by the murder of a loved one. Professionals who are in frequent contact with grieving families are also welcome to join.

## March

### Encouragement

*March comes with people searching four-leaf clovers, leprechauns, rainbows, and pots of gold. As you search for four-leaf clovers, look up and smile at your loved one and when you get to the end of the rainbow, allow your heart to be filled with love.*

### Selfcare

- *Take a walk and get some fresh air. You never know who you might run into.*
- *Take a nap- Studies show that a 20-30 minute nap can improve mood, alertness and performance.*
- *Listen to your favorite music.*

## 2021 Candlelight Vigil

*This year we will commemorate our 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Candlelight Vigil a Name Dedication Ceremony (It will be our 2<sup>nd</sup> virtual vigil.) Each year during National Crime Victim Rights Week (Support Victims Build Trust Engage Communities.) We remember victims who have died in violent crimes and honor them across the country with a memorable ceremony that shows they are forever remembered.*

## *Always in Our Hearts March Birthdays*



*Jesse Lyal Aguilar  
Michael Ray Avila  
Christine Lauren Bennett  
Rebecca Ann Binkowski  
Johnny Blunt  
John Lee La Bord  
Randy Bozarth  
Scott Edward Bushey  
Carl Dan Claes  
Barry Clark Cope  
Lori Mcinory Curler  
Virginia L. De Anda  
Stewart W. Fenton Hartzell Jr.  
Matthew Flores  
Richard Flores  
David G Foster  
Miquel Angel Gonzalez  
James Donald Hartzell Jr.  
Cherilyn A. Hawkley  
James Casanova Heron  
Angela Hill  
Lance Holloway  
Sherry Lynn Jewell  
Dillion Ray Keyes  
John Lee La Bord  
Patrice M. Liebelt  
G. Wesly (Wes) Luker  
Matthew Maldonado  
Deputy Dave W. March  
Jason Miller  
Donna Marie Morgan  
Marsalee Ann Nicholas  
Nicole Parker*



*Always in Our Hearts  
March Birthdays*

*Travis R. Parker  
Susanmarie "Bunny" Pascale  
Malaikye Thomas Payne  
Sgt. Jan Pietrzak  
Myron Pittman  
Adam J. Rodriguez  
Joshua Steven Rodriguez  
Steve Sanchez  
David Sanchez  
William M Seiler  
Zachary Brian Snider  
Frank Russell Solis Jr.  
Sunny Adrienne Sudweeks  
Leah Natalie Tadeo  
Cathy Ann Tameny  
Frank G. Teplansky  
Ralph Valenzuela  
Armando Eduardo Villagomez  
Kevin L. Weller  
Allen Anthony White*



*Forever Remembered  
March  
Anniversaries*

*David Barrios  
Faye Lavonne Butler  
Randy Bozarth  
Robert "Bobby" Austin Bukey  
Sharon Butler  
Faye Lavonne Butler  
Baby Jo Jade  
Pedro (Pete) Cabrera Jr.  
Daniel Castro  
Terry Clodfelter  
Philip G. Cousins  
Lee Denmon III  
David G. Foster  
Terence Unity Frietas  
Naghi Ghoraishy  
Dax Xenos Gonzalez  
Troy Allen Gorena  
Brian S. Gregorio  
Ann Marie Harrison  
Greg Hebdon  
Lance Holloway  
Kevin Bruce Iossi  
Jacob Eric Jackson  
Nathan Lawrence  
Philip Lawrence  
Timothy Michael Lynch  
Chad Allan MacDonald  
Derek Lee Mattingly  
Vincent Paul McKinney  
Brian Gene McNamara  
Linda Ann Meter  
Linda Marie Newman  
Dayle Y. Okazaki  
Andrew Pacheco  
Michael Peckham  
Jim Ramos Husband  
Anthony Eric Smith*

*Justin A. Soto  
John A. Stoddart  
Brenda Emery Summers  
Blake Thorvaldsen  
Mickey Thompson  
Trudy Thompson  
Jazmin A. Toledo  
Savannah Jeanne Walker  
Ronald W. Weiss  
David Alan Wigle  
Ardell Love Williams  
Tina Regina Williams  
Matt Wolf  
Joseph Anthony Yawn*

“If there ever comes a day when we  
can't be together, keep me in your  
heart, I'll stay there forever.”  
- Winnie the Pooh



Every effort is made to honor all our loved ones on Special dates. They are listed alphabetically and dates are not included in order to protect personal privacy.  
If you do not see them in this newsletter, or there is a correction needed, please contact us. (714)402-3171 email [gocpomc@yahoo.com](mailto:gocpomc@yahoo.com).  
Please help us be accurate on these lists.

# *March Announcements and Information*

**MONTHLY SUPPORT MEETINGS:** Wednesday March 10, 2021 at 6:30pm. Please come join us. This step in your journey will be one of the toughest. We are here to support you as you go - because we understand. POMC provides the on-going emotional support needed to help families and friends of those who have died by violence facilitate the reconstruction of a "new life" and to promote a healthy resolution. Not only does POMC help survivors deal with their acute grief but also helps with the criminal justice system. LOCATION: ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH (no affiliation) 222 N. East Street Anaheim, CA 92805

## *Advocate Information*

Advocates will not be attending support group meetings due to COVID work restrictions and comfort level. Below are a couple of tips from Melissa:

\*OC Courts continue to practice social distancing measures and access to attend hearings in person is limited. Check in with the assigned DA/advocate for livestream link or clearance to attend hearings (deputies at the door may not allow you in the courthouse if you are not on a list to attend a hearing). Livestream link provided:

<https://www.occourts.org/media-relations/LiveStream.html/>

\*If the defendant has already been sentenced and is serving time in state prison ALWAYS give CDCR your current contact information. Due to recent legislation that passed as well as the covid pandemic, some inmates are being released early and notifications will only be given if they have your correct contact info. This can be done electronically on their website:

<https://www.cdcr.ca.gov/victim-services/>

## *Support Greater Orange County POMC*

**Donations:** When seeking a place to donate monetarily this year please consider a donation to Greater Orange County POMC.

**Help support GOCPOMC with your Amazon purchases:** Amazon Supports GOCPOMC Go to: smile.amazon.com. Select: Greater Orange County Parents of Murdered Children Remember a portion of your purchase is donated to our chapter.

## *Need to Talk:*

All are board members and bilingual. Mary Bennet 714-264-2690 Please send text first. Martha Dewar 714-306-9166 Letty Gutierrez 714-601-9699 Please be mindful of times as these lines go directly to the members above.



## Board Members

Chapter Leader- Debra Dizon-Hernandez Email: Debraus22@gmail.com In memory of Jonathan  
Secretary: Letty Gutierrez Email:lettygutierrez2017@gmail.com In memory of Bryan  
Treasurer: John Maldonado Email: mrjmolonado@yahoo.com In Memory of Matthew

Anita Lewis Email: alewismary@yahoo.com In memory of Mary and Lester  
Mary Bennet Mebennet4@gmail.com In memory of Cathy  
Martha Dewar marthad@roadrunner.com In memory of Sarah  
Glenda Faye Williams-Jenkins gsmommy@yahoo.com In memory of Quiana & Jan

## Homicide Article

*Each month I search for something meaningful, I struggle. I want each newsletter to touch you in some way. I want you to be able to take something small with you. This month I came across this article. It appears to describe how each of you feel. This is a four-part article.*

### **A Four-Part Article on Homicide Loss (Part I & II) Written by: Katja Faber December 2017 & January 2018; Still Standing Magazine**

**Part 1 - The challenges faced by homicide loss families I am a co-victim of homicide, a murder survivor.** Some refer to me as the mother of the boy who was killed. At times, it feels as if I don't even have a name, such is the stigma surrounding homicide. Whatever the term, the fact is that my wonderful, funny, bright, handsome 23-year-old son was murdered by someone he knew and trusted. It's exactly three years today since Alex was killed between the hours of 5 am and 6:45 am. We will never know exactly when he died and I suppose it doesn't much matter because it's the manner of his death and the fact that he is gone that hurts beyond anything I've ever known or could have imagined. In this time, I've also learned that it's a very lonely and frightening place to be because the chasm between where I am in my grief journey and where the majority of people stand is too wide to bridge. **Friends and kind strangers simply fail to comprehend the extent of the devastation left behind after a child is murdered. The myriad of legal, financial, physical and psychological problems homicide parents face for years afterward make this a very misunderstood form of grief.** It's not surprising that people can't conceive of what I and others like me have gone through following the killing of our child or loved one at the hands of another. Why should they be able to? Let's face it, nothing prepares any of us for this sudden harrowing loss, this obscene affront to decency, this wanton act of cruelty. **I had no skill set to help me when my son was killed, any more than my friends had experience of how to support me.** Most people are frightened by the violence of homicide and are utterly lost as to how to deal with the emotional trauma the victim's family endures. It's therefore understandable that only those who find themselves in the same devastating situation can relate to the horrors of my experience and I theirs. So, I have decided to do something about it, in a small way, in the only way I know how. To put pen to paper, to type out my thoughts, to open a small window to our world. In this four-part article, I attempt to convey the reality of homicide-loss and the problems and vulnerability experienced by the families of victims. Firstly, in **Breaking the Silence** I seek to explain the emotional upheaval of homicide loss. The second article, **Murder as Entertainment and the Psychology of Fear**, looks at why society seems to struggle in helping co-victims and the effect this has on families affected by the loss. In the third piece **Crisis, Trauma and the Justice System** I cover the main difficulties faced by survivors during the legal process and the financial burden faced by families, and how best to meet their needs. In the final article, **Emotional Support in the Initial Stages and Beyond** I address the unique psychological challenges faced by survivors

of homicide. Read together, the four articles give an overview of the impact of losing a child or loved one to homicide and the argument for inclusive informed support. My hope is that in allowing for greater understanding our communities will be kinder and more compassionate places for us all. **Breaking the Silence - the homicide co-victim** So, let's look at some basic facts. Data on exact numbers in each country vary from year to year, so for ease of statistical understanding I have taken the USA, and England and Wales as examples of western countries. On average, each year, there are 15,000 homicides in the USA, which includes both criminal homicide (intentional killing or Manslaughter) and vehicular homicide (e.g., homicide through drunk driving). In the England and Wales, it's about 900 per year. These numbers represent the children and adults who lost their lives at the hands of another. In most cases, the victim was killed by someone they knew. Each homicide leaves behind, on average, 5 to 10 close relatives, who are categorized as 'survivors of homicide', 'cosurvivors' or 'co-victims'. These numbers do not include extended family, friends, neighbors, or co-workers. Stop to think about that. Just the numbers are mind-boggling. And if this happens, will you approach them? Will you know how to support them? Years after the event, will you comprehend the enormity of their trauma and reach out to them? Certainly, in my case, I would have answered 'no' to all these questions - that is until I learned the hard way. Co-victims' life post-loss is harsh. Even after controlling for demographic and gender variables, the statistics point to a significantly higher risk of PTSD and depression as well as a deterioration in physical health. Additionally, alcohol and drug dependence can become a problem. Financial difficulties following the loss of income or legal costs are commonplace. Co-victims are often diagnosed with mental health issues following the homicide. Suicidal thoughts are not uncommon. **The reality is that survivors of homicide are victims of violence, in the same way as other victims of crime are victims of violence.** The term 'survivor' I find unsettling because it somehow insinuates that we have survived and are doing ok. Nothing could be further from the truth. We are not ok. We are hanging on by the skin of our teeth. We are just about coping with every day if that. **The psychological trauma lasts a lifetime and so does the grief.** And there's the crunch. **We not only mourn our children but simultaneously are also forced to deal with the violence of the killing and the suffering inflicted upon them at the time of their death.** And then there's the legal aftermath that can last for years. Is it, therefore, any surprise that co-victims commonly describe themselves as 'going crazy'? Feelings of helplessness, rage, injustice, and devastation throw their world into such turmoil that they can barely function. **Psychologists use terms such as 'complex' and 'traumatic' to describe this type of grief.**



**Part II - Murder As Entertainment And The Psychology of Fear:** In this the second article in the series on homicide loss I look at the challenges faced by co-victims in dealing with society's response to their loss. Our society is fascinated by crime. Murder sells, violence sells, drama sells. Photos and films repeatedly glamourize the action and thrill of police and detective stories, as well as the lives of the criminal themselves. Documentaries and news reports depict real live crime scenes and carnage before moving onto the next violent incident. So long as the violence is kept at arm's length, it certainly seems that society enjoys a staple diet of blood and guts where the perpetrator of the crime is the repulsive yet devious, fascinating villain. The more violent or heinous the crime, the more the accused will become a cult figure, fed by society's morbid curiosity and its need for controlled excitement and fear. **Yet what about the victim and those directly affected by a homicide? Aren't they, in fact, the real heroes and heroines?** To my mind, if the quiet courage needed to keep living after your child is murdered were publicly understood and acknowledged, governments would have no option but to honor covictims with a Medal for Valor. Yet the difficult and complex stories of survivors following a crime rarely, if ever, make it into the news. Entertainment is one thing but the destruction of innocent families' lives through murder quite another. **Co-survivors are the**

**invisible victims. We have suffered the loss of a loved one in the most brutal and violent way imaginable yet for the most part, we as individuals are shunned by society because homicide stigmatizes.** Co-victims of murder and homicide often feel abandoned by the difference of the police, the justice system and the community they live in. Victim's Rights Acts are a relatively new development - for example, victim impact statements are now accepted as part of the sentencing process and in some cases, co-survivors can apply to know about parole hearings - but these changes feel like having absolutely no rights at all. I would suggest that we, as a society, need to reframe violence and homicide and turn our approach on its head. I admit that's no mean task. It's not the murderer, the carnage, the violence that needs to be plastered across our screens, but instead the dignity, sorrow, connection and love displayed by the co-survivors as they mourn their loved one and try to rebuild their lives. Instead of repeatedly hearing about a murderer, could we not remember the victim and honor their life? Is that not the community we wish to live in, a place that respects victims of crime and homicide and openly acknowledges the loss of the parents and family members? I am certain that people can be encouraged to look behind a murder story instead of reducing it to a mere spectacle. They simply need to be shown how. Yet this does not answer the question as to why individuals keep their distance when a homicide occurs. Why does the average person instinctively ignore the inner disquiet they feel when they hear of a homicide and turn away? Fear. Pure and simple. Co-survivors act as a stark reminder of each and every individual's impotence in the face of evil, of violence, of innocence, smashed. We, the co-victims, complicate the narrative - we are the messy suffering left behind by homicide. And this is the part society does not want to see.

**Basically, no one wants to think homicide could happen to them.** The thought that any of our children, our loved ones, could be the next victim of a shooting, a stabbing, a strangulation is too terrifying to process. So we don't go there. I get that. If we lived in a permanent state of fear, we would never let our children out of our sight. We instinctively remain in denial about the risk and reality of murder. **Somewhere deep inside of us, we believe that homicide is something that happens to other people.** So friends and strangers turn away and pull up their inner defenses. Avoidance and detachment resulting in even more loneliness and hardship for the co-victims. And tragically, this "other people" attitude can go even as far as victim blaming. **In blaming the dead (at least in part) for getting killed, strangers manage to maintain the illusion that murder could not happen to them.** To this day I am disturbed and saddened at the finger pointing and rumors spread by those who seek to reassure themselves in this way. Even after a guilty verdict, people may still shake their heads and gossip, suggesting that 'it's not the whole story' as if by magic they know something the Court does not. I've been there, I know. **Not only that, but co-victims themselves can become the target of abuse and internet trolling.** The parents of children murdered in the USA at Sandy Hook school who have suffered abuse and death threats may be an extreme example of this, but they are sadly not the exception - there are many cases of co-victims being singled out for criticism and being verbally attacked or threatened. I myself have received nasty mail with no return address or legible signature. My crime? That the man who killed my 23-year-old son was found guilty of intentional homicide. Continued Summer 2021 Newsletter (Part III & IV)



*You are always in our heart.*

Our monthly support meeting is held on the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 6:30PM

At Zion Lutheran Church, 222 N. East Street, Anaheim, CA  
92805

**From the North:**

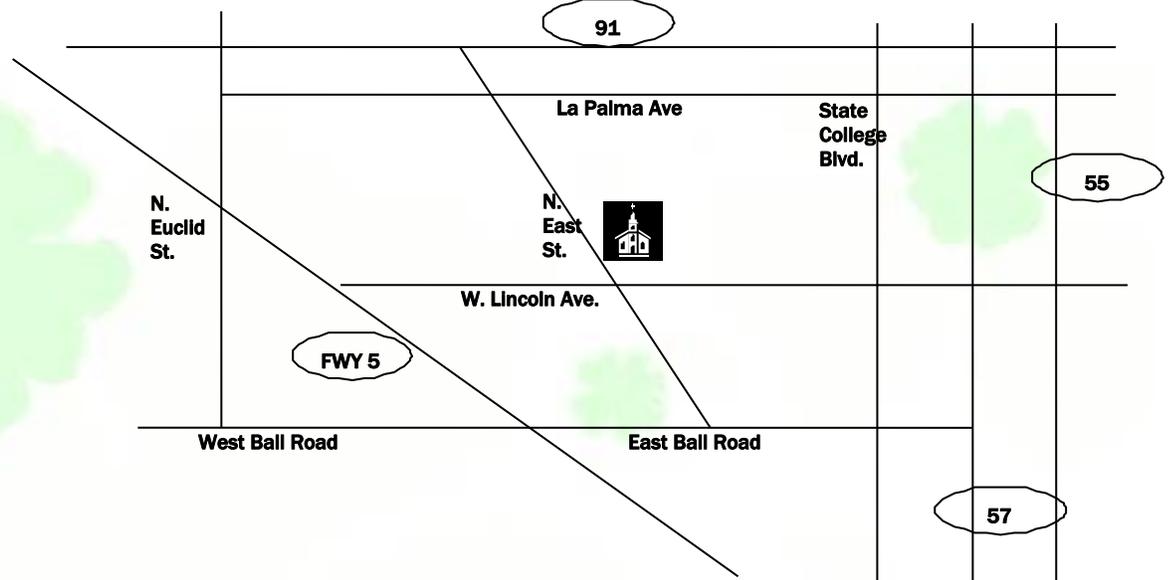
57 FWY, 55 FWY,  
or St. College Bl. South,  
Right on Lincoln Ave.  
Right on East St.

**From the South:**

57 FWY, 55 FWY,  
or St. College Bl., North  
Left on Lincoln Ave.  
Right on East St.

**From the East or West:**

91 FWY  
Exit East St., south



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