

St. Mary's murder victims remembered at memorial

Posted by [Dick Myers](#) On 12/08/2014

Eileen Bildman (l) hands angel ornament to relative of Drew Thompson who was killed on June 1, 2009

Lexington Park, MD -- One by one, 71 angel ornaments were placed on a lighted tree at the Bay District Volunteer Fire Department in Lexington Park. The ornaments represent 71 St. Mary's County murder victims going back more than 40 years. The solemn occasion on Sunday was part of the 13th annual Silent Angel Memorial sponsored by the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office.

According to the Silent Angel website www.thesilentangel.org -- "The Silent Angels Memorial was founded in 2002 by Mrs. Eileen Bildman whose son Kevin was tragically murdered in St. Mary's County in November of 2001. During the ceremony an angel ornament is placed on a Christmas tree by the family members, and the names are read aloud of each homicide victim in St. Mary's County, Maryland. Each ornament has the name of the victim and the date they became a 'Silent Angel.' Our hope has been to bring the community together with a memorial service that provides comfort and support to the survivors of homicide. The foundation is non-profit, supported solely by the community and sponsored by the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office.

Bildman personally greeted the family members and handed them the ornament with their loved one's name and they then placed it on the tree. Ornaments for victims who did not have family members in attendance were placed on the tree by members of the Criminal Justice Class at the Leonardtown Technical Center.

St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office Accreditation Manager Pam McKay provided the introductions at the event open.

Invocation was led by Pastor Lawrence Crabtree of SAYSF Bible Church. He noted that the Christmas season can be an especially trying time for the survivors of the homicide victims. He observed that all but one of Christ's disciples died at the hands of another, as did Christ himself. He said, "Christ died for all of us."

Sheriff Tim Cameron praised Bildman for starting the project. He said, "As each ornament is placed on the Christmas tree, let us remember."

As the names were read, slides were shown with the victims' pictures and remembrances from their families. The most recent murder victim was Moneta Jo Strickland on August 9, 2013. Cameron expressed the hope that at next year's Silent Angel Memorial there would not be a new name added to the tree.

In addition to the annual event there is a Silent Angel Memorial on Route 5 in Great Mills just south of the Great Mills Road intersection.

If you have questions about The Silent Angels Memorial please contact Jodi Irwin of the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office at Jodi.Irwin@stmarysmd.com.

Copyright © 2020 thebaynet.com. All rights reserved.