

Victims to be remembered in county center

Representative of Mike Thompson, Yamada, Reisig to be present

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The Yolo County District Attorney's Office, in conjunction with the Yolo County Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Center, will host a ceremony today honoring the county's "crime victims" during National Crime Victims Week.

The ceremony is scheduled from 12:10 to 1 p.m. today in the atrium of the County Administrative Center, 625 Court St., Woodland.

A representative for Congressman Mike Thompson will present a flag flown at the U.S. Capitol on behalf of crime victims.

Jonathan Raven, assistant chief deputy district attorney, said the flag will be flown in the county each year during National Crime Victim's Week.

Additionally, Mariko Yamada, chairwoman of the Yolo County Board of Supervisors, will present a resolution honoring crime victims.

District Attorney Jeff Reisig is scheduled to present the keynote address with the theme, "We must shift the focus back to the victims where it belongs."

Reisig will be talking about the message of Peter Read, father of Mary Karen Read, who was killed in the massacre at Virginia Tech, in Blacksburg, Va., this past week, Raven reported.

Read's statement "We want the world to know and celebrate our children's lives, and we believe that's the central element that brings hope in the midst of great tragedy" is the most appropriate message during this week when we remember and honor crime victims, Raven stated.

"We will honor Cynthia and Manuel Islas of West Sacramento," Raven stated. "Richard, Manuel's son and Cynthia's brother, was heinously murdered in 1989 in his home. He had been bound in duct tape and beaten to death with the claw end of a hammer by his roommate. The killer received a life term with the possibility of parole. This case is still very much alive for both Cynthia and Manuel as they now have to attend regular parole hearings to try to keep the killer behind bars."

Additionally, Raven continued, "we will honor a mother and child who would like to remain anonymous and who are still in such pain and anguish that they have chosen not to attend the ceremony."

"The victim was brutally beaten by her husband," Raven reported. "Although mother and child knew the risks they faced in testifying against the suspect, they both courageously told their story to a jury which convicted the husband. They have started a new life."

Finally, Raven added, "we will honor Teresa Serrano Woodland husband, Jose, was killed by a drunk driver on a county road last year."

"Teresa's children also lost their father," Raven continued. "The passengers in the car were also seriously injured and were transported by Lifeflight and ambulance to local emergency facilities. The defendant was sentenced to 11 years in prison. The Serrano family has endured extreme physical and emotional pain as well as financial hardship."