

Joan Benefield
SOCW 407
October 18, 2007
Interview

The interview that I had today, Saturday, October 6, 2007, was with my uncle, Hershel Crittenden, who was more than happy to share his story of his human rights being violated. He and his son, David Crittenden, were interviewed by Kim Chapman of Channel 9 News when they heard of his story.

In February of 2006, Hershel's wife, Betty, who had Alzheimer's disease, passed away in their Hixson, Tennessee home. As they were getting ready to do some shopping as they often did, Betty did not feel well. She sat down in a chair in the living room and passed out. Hershel tried to call 911 three or four times but could not get an answer. When he couldn't get a response, he called a neighbor who is a physician for help. The doctor came and instructed Hershel to call the operator. After the operator was contacted, it took 18 minutes for the emergency team to arrive, but it was too late; Betty had passed away. It remains unknown if the operator for 911 had answered the call and sent someone immediately if Betty would be alive today. It took 45 minutes for the emergency team to arrive from Hershel's initial call. The answer that Hershel was given by the 911 service was that they did not have enough people to cover the phones. Hershel found out that another person died the same day because 911 services could not be reached. What he has found out since then is that different suburbs are trying to pool their resources of personnel to cover the emergency calls coming in. Hershel knows that his human rights have been violated and nothing can bring back his beloved wife, but he just wants to see that the situation is rectified. He wants to rely to our panel at UTC if anyone is interested in pursuing this, he can help in getting the video coverage from

Channel 9 news. There was video coverage of him, his son, and the doctor who came to help that morning.

Joan Benefield
SOCW 407
October 18, 2007
Interview

The family that I interviewed on Saturday, October 6, wished to remain anonymous. The grandmother is a former school teacher who had a stroke and is disabled; her son who suffers from emphysema lives with her and is also disabled. This past weekend, a granddaughter died from injuries in a car accident. She was 31 years old, pregnant, and lived with her grandmother and uncle. She was poor and was going to school at Chattanooga State in order to get an associate's degree in hopes of being self-supporting. When she died in the car accident, there was no means of giving her a proper burial; her body was taken and kept at the Police Service Center on Amnicola Highway for a week. After a week, a funeral home and church in Soddy-Daisy pulled together and buried her body. Her grandmother and uncle would have helped if they could, but they simply didn't have the finances. It is good, of course that her body has finally been buried, but it is such a shame and a violation of human rights to know that her body was kept for a week at a police station before help could be found.