

The Heartbreaking Murder of a Dedicated Social Worker

I want to introduce you to social worker Brenda Yeager from West Virginia. Brenda loved her job working with high risk pregnancies along with the elderly. She provided services to many clients throughout West Virginia during her career.

Brenda was brutally killed either July 30th or 31st, 2008 while making a home visit. This is her story.

Brenda was visiting a young couple, Steven Foster, Jr. and Rosemary Forney who were the new parents of twin babies. One of the twins had died in the hospital and Foster and Forney went home with the remaining baby.

Brenda had visited this family before the babies were born to offer services and there were no reported problems between Brenda and the family. Rapport had been established.

Brenda was scheduled to go back out to the residence and had in her possession a box of diapers that she was going to give to the couple.

Brenda was not a child protective service (CPS) worker however; for reasons unknown the young couple knowing that Brenda was coming thought that she was going to take the surviving baby. The couple talked and planned the attack on Brenda prior to her arrival.

The plan was that Foster was going to hide behind a curtain with a frying pan and Forney was going to open the door and stand on the far side of the living room with the baby in her arms. She invited Brenda in the living room and as Brenda walked across the room to see the baby Foster struck Brenda in the back of the head hoping to render her unconscious. After repeated blows to Brenda she did not black out so Foster ordered her to sit up holding her at knifepoint.

The couple then planned out the second half of the attack by tying Brenda's nearly unconscious body to a mattress and sexually assaulted her. The couple then decided that they would suffocate Brenda by placing a plastic bag over her head and at some point both Foster and Forney both held it until she died. Her body was removed and placed it in her car and set the car on fire.

The questions arise about accountability, why couldn't someone save Brenda? In this case it surely wasn't that people didn't try!

This agency had an outstanding accountability policy that the workers would call in after each visit. Brenda did call in before heading to this residence however; she never had a

chance to call after the visit and this alerted her supervisor. Brenda's next client called in to state that Brenda had not shown up. Brenda's supervisor then went the house to check on Brenda. She knocked and Forney answered the door stating that Brenda never showed up and she would contact the supervisor if she saw her. (Brenda was more than likely dead in the bedroom) The supervisor left to track down some other leads and the State Police were notified that Brenda was missing. Later in the afternoon the Supervisor revisited the residence and Foster answered the door. He claimed that Brenda was never there and that he had been at the Department of Social Services earlier (he did go after the murder thinking that this would throw everyone off) State police also visited the residence and were told the same.

Many people were now looking for Brenda. On August 1st after a 2 day investigation law enforcement discovered the burning car and Brenda's body and the arrests of Forney and Foster were made. (They are both serving 2 life sentences)

Social workers need to always play the "what if" game. Put yourself in situations and prepare your mind of what you would do. Never let your guard down, especially if you have visited the same client 100 times and nothing has ever happened, NEVER LET YOU GUARD DOWN!

I commend this agency for their accountability policy. They did everything they could do in trying to find where Brenda was. What does you agency have? Would someone be looking for you?

Brenda loved helping other people; in this case all she was going to do is give free diapers away! Sadly though there are people for whatever reasons are capable of violence. Be prepared!!

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