

MIRIAM FIFE VICTIM ADVOCATE A LEGEND IN HER TIME



Prosecutor Dennis Watkins was saddened to learn from Miriam Fife's family Saturday she had passed away. Members of the Trumbull County Prosecutor's Office joined him in mourning the loss of Miriam, who suffered the unimaginable tragedy of losing her 12-year-old son, Raymond, who was brutally raped and murdered.

After enduring forty years of appeals and strategies to evade the death chamber, Miriam will not live to see justice served for one Raymond's convicted murderers. A tireless advocate for victims of crime, Miriam devoted much of her life to helping other families through the Trumbull County Prosecutor's Office Victim-Witness Division. She died on Saturday, October 17, her family announced. She was 86.

Prosecutor Watkins, who worked alongside Miriam for decades to see justice served in the case against Raymond Fife's murderer, Danny Lee Hill, paid tribute to her courage, dignity, and unwavering commitment to others. Watkins said: "Miriam was truly a larger-than-life person who will live on in our memories because of her deeds. She was firm, fair, and always there for people. She made the world a better place for victims."

Following Raymond's death, Miriam began volunteering in the Prosecutor's Office before Prosecutor Watkins hired her and Mary Jo Hoso to help strengthen Trumbull County's Victim-Witness Division, one of the first in Ohio. Throughout her career, Miriam continued to advocate

for victims, while remaining steadfast in her pursuit of justice for Raymond. Accompanied by her husband Ike, until his death, she attended nearly every legal proceeding and challenge pursued by her son's killer. Miriam served the office for more than 25 years, from 1989 until her retirement in 2015.

Watkins also noted that Miriam's daughter, Paula Lazzari, promised her that she would "carry the torch" for her in continuing the efforts "to see justice done and the law enforced" for her younger brother Raymond.

First Assistant Christopher Becker recalled: "Miriam was a shining example of what a person can do and can become after suffering a personal tragedy. She was able to channel her grief to help others who suffered similar tragedies. She was always positive, caring, and loving to the hundreds of victims she helped. I'm sure she was given VIP entry into Heaven."

Appellate Chief and Assistant Prosecuting Attorney, Charles L. Morrow, who is currently handling Hill's appeal, remembered Miriam's compassion for families who also had suffered similarly at the hands of cold-blooded murderers. He also recalled "Miriam's ever-positive attitude, endearing smile and keen sense of humor. Drawing on her own painful experiences, Miriam offered comfort and support to other families, while advocating for justice for their loved ones."

Miriam Fife's life was defined not only by the profound tragedy she endured, but by the compassion, strength, and determination with which she turned that tragedy into a lifetime of service to others. Although she did not live to see the final resolution of the case involving her son's murder, her unwavering commitment to victims and the pursuit of justice leaves a lasting legacy in Trumbull County.

Prosecutor Watkins concluded with this tribute: Life is a journey Miriam's was to help others with all her heart. God bless Miriam and Raymond