



CLARENCE BRANDLEY REQUIEM FOR A HERO

Clarence Brandley died in September of this year at the age of 66. Centurion's founder, Jim McCloskey, called him "one of the bravest men I've known" because of the strength he exemplified in the face of an impending death sentence. It was this fortitude that inspired Clarence's Centurion-led team to fight to stop his execution.

Clarence was the supervising janitor at a Conroe, Texas, high school in 1980 when a white sixteen-year-old girl was raped and murdered at the school during a volleyball tournament. No evidence linked Clarence to the crime, but the Vietnam War veteran was accused and put on trial because the four white janitors covered for each other; Clarence did not have an alibi, as he was in his office alone at the time of the crime.

His first all-white jury could not reach a verdict because of one courageous juror who held out for an acquittal. However, the second all-white jury had no problem convicting him and giving him the death penalty.

When Jim went to Texas in February of 1987, Clarence had an execution date scheduled for the next month. Six days before the execution, working with Clarence's attorneys and another investigator, Jim managed to bring forward one of the janitors who told the truth about that fateful day. With this revelation, the case against Clarence began to unravel. A combination of heightened publicity and the imminent execution compelled other key witnesses to tell what they knew. Enough new evidence was gathered to warrant an evidentiary hearing that resulted in the judge ordering a new trial. The judge stated that in his 30-year career, "no case has presented a more shocking scenario of the effects of racial prejudice, perjured testimony, witness intimidation and an investigation the outcome of which was predetermined."

In January of 1990, Clarence walked off of the Texas Death Row Ellis Unit accompanied by his attorney, Mike DeGuerin, and Jim McCloskey.

While Clarence testified and spoke all over the world about his case for the anti-death penalty movement, at his core he was a quiet and private man. Shamefully, Texas never compensated him for his wrongful conviction. His story was told very well in a book by Nick Davies: *White Lies: Rape, Murder, and Justice Texas Style*.

He was much loved by the Brandley family and his Centurion family and he will be greatly missed at our Family Gatherings. He's finally found peace, and no doubt he and Gerry Conlon have tossed back a few as they look after us from above.

CENTURION

seeking freedom for the innocent in prison

november 2018

issue thirteen



2018 Autumn Auction & Dinner



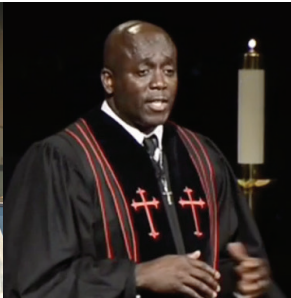
RECENT CELEBRATIONS

On September 14, more than 140 Centurion friends and supporters gathered at Springdale Golf Club in Princeton, NJ to honor Judy Scheide and recognize her and Bill Scheide's longtime commitment to our mission. We remain truly grateful for the Scheides' decades of support. Many thanks to our event committee (pictured above) who helped us create a wonderful evening and raise valuable funds to enable us to continue our fight for justice for wrongfully imprisoned men and women.

*We hope to see you at our Family Gathering in the Spring of 2019!
Look for your invitation in the coming months!*



DARRYL BURTON CELEBRATES 10 YEARS OF FREEDOM AND INTRODUCES MIRACLE OF INNOCENCE!





A NOTE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends:

Looking back on the past few months, I'm reminded of how every gift you send is vital to our ability to fulfill our mission of exonerating from prison those people who are factually innocent. Thank you for your generous support of our organization.

I am incredibly proud of the work you will find highlighted in this newsletter – work you made possible. For example, in October in Hartford, CT, two different oral arguments were made before the Connecticut Supreme Court on behalf of our client, Shawn Henning. Shawn has been incarcerated for 30 years, starting when he was just 20 years old. It's almost impossible to wrap your mind around spending that much time in prison as an innocent person. He and his co-defendant were convicted of a heinous murder in Litchfield, CT. They are both absolutely innocent and Jim Cousins, Shawn's capable attorney, argued unequivocally before the court that the flawed "evidence" presented at the original trial, as well as the results of recent DNA testing, clearly placed someone else in the house at the time of the murder. You'll be learning more about Shawn and his fight for freedom in our Spring 2019 newsletter – stay tuned!

It was exciting to sit in a courtroom listening to the Court energetically ask cogent questions and seem to come around to Jim's representations concerning both the false evidence and the new evidence. Of course, until their decision comes down, we won't know their actual thinking, but it was refreshing to leave the courtroom with optimism.

I am not sure I have the facility to explain how critical it is that when we take on a case, we are able to fully investigate it and do whatever is required to prove our client's innocence. I think prosecutors, albeit begrudgingly, have to admit: whatever our arguments and whatever evidence we bring into court, the case is a thorough, honest one. There is no trickery or sleight of hand, no grasping at a technicality or loophole. Again, your investment in our work allows us to wholly bring a case to court.

I will keep you updated on our progress. We know that next year a number of our cases will be actively litigated and it's not unrealistic to hope that one or more of our folks will walk free.

In appreciation,

Kate Germond, Executive Director

DONATE ONLINE



centurion.org/donate

A Salute to an Intrepid Investigator

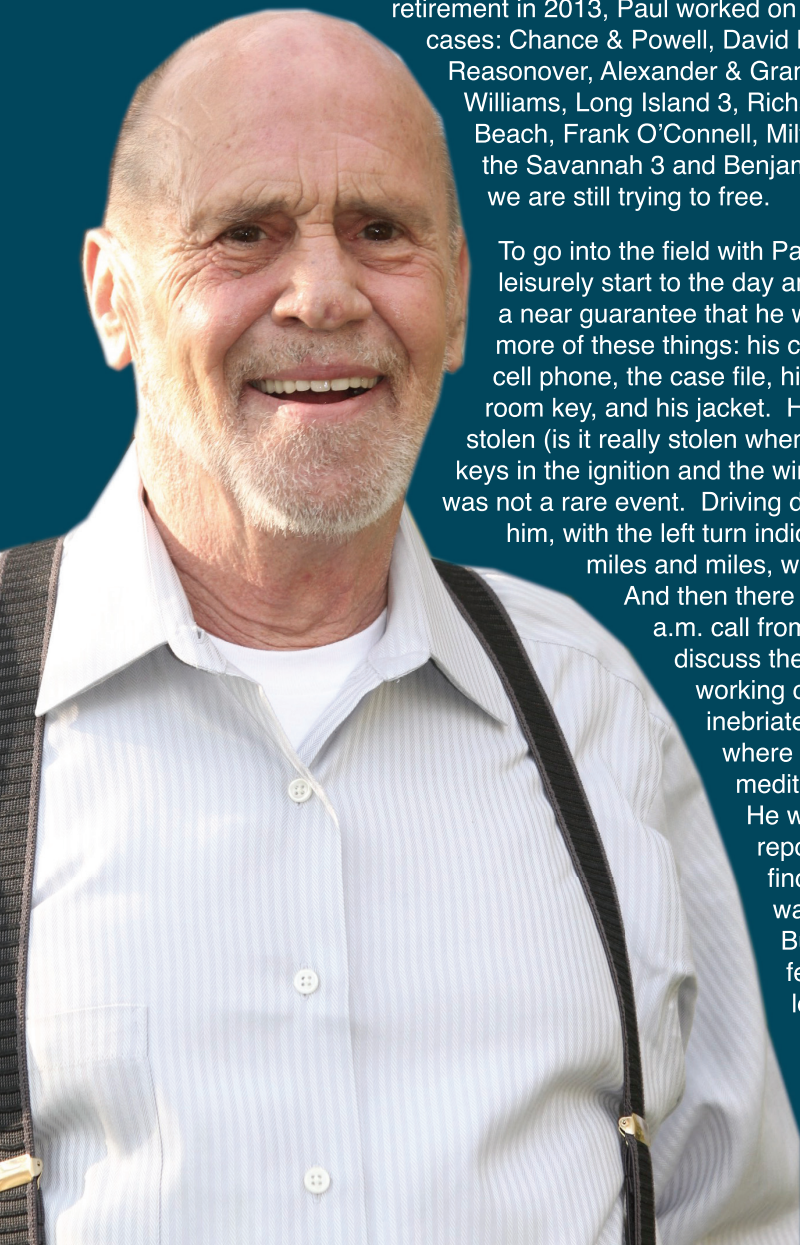
In 1982, Paul Henderson won the Pulitzer Prize for his investigative journalism at *The Seattle Times* about an innocent man, Steven Titus, who had been convicted of a series of rapes he did not commit. Paul's work garnered journalism's highest honor and prompted a judge who heard the Titus post-conviction case to quote Paul's articles in his decision reversing Titus' conviction. Jack Olsen, a true crime writer and friend of Paul's, wrote about the case and Paul's investigation in his book, *Predator*.

Paul reached out to Jim McCloskey in 1988, wanting to work with Centurion as an investigator. Jim took him up on his offer. And from 1988 until his retirement in 2013, Paul worked on 12 of Centurion's cases: Chance & Powell, David Milgaard, Ellen Reasonover, Alexander & Granger, Kevin Williams, Long Island 3, Richard Miles, Barry Beach, Frank O'Connell, Milton Scarborough, the Savannah 3 and Benjamin Spencer, who we are still trying to free.

To go into the field with Paul meant a leisurely start to the day and at some point, a near guarantee that he would lose one or more of these things: his car key, the car, his cell phone, the case file, his note pad, his room key, and his jacket. Having a rental car stolen (is it really stolen when you leave the keys in the ignition and the windows down?), was not a rare event. Driving down the road with him, with the left turn indicator blinking for miles and miles, was his signature.

And then there was the nightly 1 a.m. call from the hotel bar to discuss the case we were working on. He was not inebriated, it's just that's where he did his best meditation on a case.

He wrote beautiful reports but struggled to find exactly where it was in his computer. But for us, he was fearless and people loved him, and we are crazy about him. It honestly doesn't get any better than working with Paul Henderson.





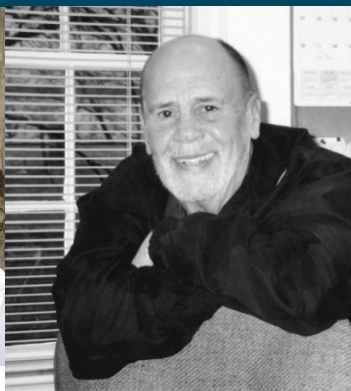
Barry Beach release in Montana 2011

Jim summed up Paul best: "For 25 years, from 1988 until he retired from Centurion in 2013, Paul, working from his home in Seattle, was a key investigator for 18 of our clients throughout the U.S. and Canada. We freed 17 of them. With the guts of a burglar he would go anywhere and talk to anyone in his indefatigable search for new evidence. He had a heart as big as the Grand Canyon. Paul loved people and people loved him right back. With his deep and gravelly voice, but untimidating and affable manner, he convinced many a witness to come forward with the truth. With his many quirks but undeniable charm, Paul ranks right at the top as one of the most unforgettable characters we have ever met."

Paul is a Centurion treasure who we will always hold dear in our hearts.



Jim McCloskey (Founder), Kate Germond (Executive Director), Paul Henderson



CENTURION HAS FREED 63 PEOPLE

51 cases were resolved by findings from field investigations.

10 involved DNA testing.

5 of **10** DNA cases still required an investigation.

2 cases employed serology as proof of innocence.

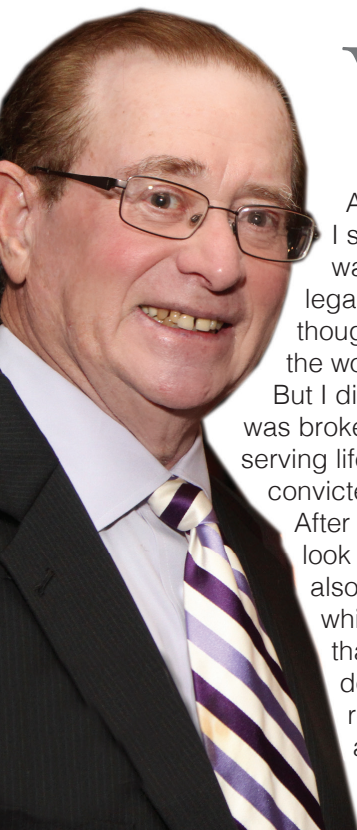
Volunteer Spotlight...Alan Medvin

When retired NJ Supreme Court Justice Virginia Long learned that Alan Medvin was one of our volunteers, she was very impressed. She told the Board we were lucky to have him as he was the top litigator in NJ of Medical Malpractice and Personal Injury cases. He, like all of our volunteers, has an interesting and esteemed background.

When Alan joined Centurion, he quickly became someone we could rely on to grasp the intricacies of case development. He could write comprehensive, comprehensible reports that help in the decision-making that is part of the process of assessing a case. Alan's realization that investigations and post-conviction litigation could be expensive caused him not only to make donations, but to take the extra steps of reaching out to colleagues and friends for support, and raising money on social media. Recently, he helped us obtain Broadway tickets to popular shows to raise funds at our annual auction. Alan's investment in our mission is truly meaningful, and his commitment to case work is priceless. Alan is the first of our volunteers we look forward to introducing to you!

HOPE . JUSTICE . FREEDOM.

Innocent men and women need our help



Why I give

After I retired in 2013 from a 42-year career as a lawyer, I started volunteering at Centurion developing cases. I was very fortunate to have had a rewarding career in the legal profession and I wanted to give something back, even though I had never practiced criminal law and even though the work I'd be doing for Centurion would not be legal work. But I did realize that in many ways the criminal justice system was broken and that as a result, innocent men and women are serving life sentences in prisons all over the country after being convicted for crimes they didn't commit.

After I began volunteering at Centurion, I got a very close look at the extraordinary work done by everyone here, and also got a close look at how important our funding was, which comes only as the result of donations. I had no idea that a typical exoneration costs hundreds of thousands of dollars, and how few cases we could actually pursue as a result. So I felt an obligation to help out in a financial way as well. It's that simple.

~ Alan Medvin

Many companies will match your donation to Centurion.
Check with your company to increase your gift!



A NEW HOME FOR RALPH LEE

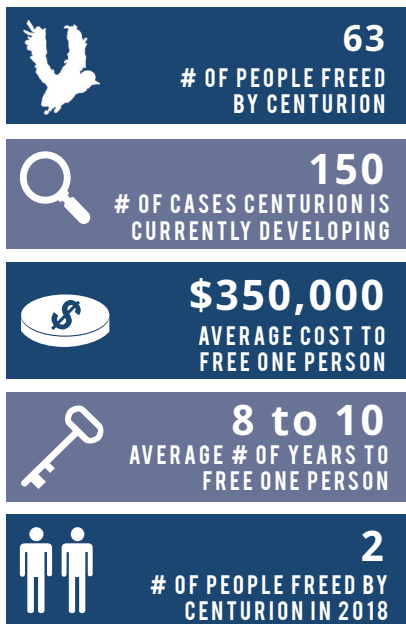
Ralph Lee is busy making his new apartment a home thanks to the love and support of his Centurion Family. Lori Freedman, our volunteer social worker, helped Ralph find a wonderful place to live. Then it was off to Target with Executive Director Kate Germond and crew to pick up some essentials and set up a gift registry. Tyler Spikes, Exonerree Support, and his buddy, Renaldy Smith, picked Ralph up in a U-Haul and rounded up some incredible donated furniture! With the items rolling in from the Target registry, Ralph is already cooking dinner for his grandchildren!



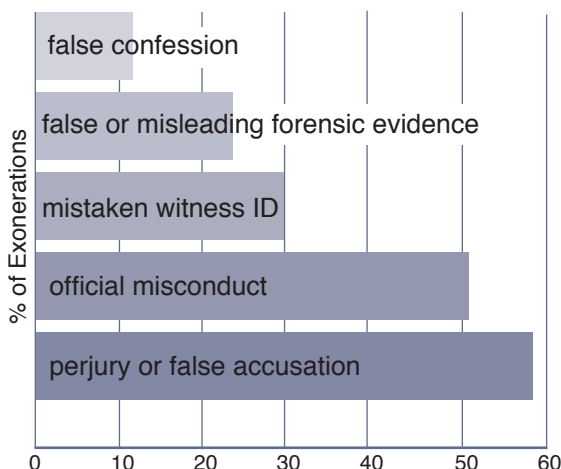
Photos clockwise: Renaldy Smith (volunteer), Tyler Spikes (Exonerree Support), Heather Kunkel (volunteer), Ralph Lee | Kate Germond (Executive Director) | Ralph Lee | Ralph Lee Sr., Ralph Lee | Ralph Lee, Lori Freedman (volunteer Social Worker) | Quoron (Ralph's son), Kayson (Ralph's grandson), Ralph, Myouri (Ralph's granddaughter), Tyler Spikes, Renaldy Smith

Follow us





*EXONERATIONS BY CONTRIBUTING FACTOR



*National Registry of Exonerations
October 22, 2018 Total = 2285



IN THE FIRST THREE QUARTERS OF 2018, CENTURION RECEIVED 935 NEW REQUESTS FOR ASSISTANCE FROM ACROSS THE U.S.
IS YOUR STATE AT THE TOP OF THE LIST?

