

Van Deusen...

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for a few days. I told him to just leave everything, that I didn't want him there in the house with her and the guns.

"He told me, 'Well, I'll go on over there and see you in a bit.' I said, 'Please be careful, Daddy; I'm so afraid she is going to kill you.' He said, 'Don't worry, Baby Girl, it's all right; she's not going to hurt me. I'll be OK. I love you and I'll see you in a bit.' I got off the phone with him at 6:10 pm, and she called 911 at 6:23 and told the dispatcher she had shot him."

According to her testimony to police, Julie Young Van Deusen had gone to the gun cabinet after Jerry left the house that day, got a pistol, hunted until she found bullets, loaded it and placed it under her mattress. She then moved a chair to the hallway going to the bedroom so he couldn't reach her. When he returned home, they argued about the divorce, she retrieved the pistol and shot him in the chest from five feet away. He tried to phone for help, but she took the phone from him, dialed 911 and said, "I've just shot my husband."

When Julie hadn't heard from her dad by 9 o'clock that night, she was frantic with worry. He didn't respond to her calls and the messages she left, so at ten her husband said, "Let's go see about him." When they turned onto Collins Road, Julie got out her pistol and loaded it. Weeping, she stated, "I had it in my hand because I didn't know what I was walking into - I just knew that Daddy needed me. We turned the corner and I saw the big media trucks with satellite dishes on top, then I saw police cars and crime scene tape.

"The police would not tell me anything, just that a woman had been taken to jail and a gentleman was transported to the hospital in an ambulance. I called April and told her what I knew, and she phoned Shands Hospital to check on him. They told her Jerry Van Deusen had been there but had been released. Relieved, she called me and said Daddy was fine. But it didn't make sense, because who would have picked him up from the hospital?"

"About that time a van pulled up and Julie Young's four sisters jumped out and ran to me, screaming and crying, wanting to know if Jerry was dead. I didn't know what they were talking about, but they said they saw on the news that a woman in the 5400 block of Malaga had shot her husband, and they recognized the address. So that was how I learned that Daddy had been shot.

"I asked police to make the women leave, then said to the officer, 'That [***] shot my daddy, didn't she?' He asked, 'Who's the [***] and who's your daddy?' When I told him, he identified himself as a homicide detective. At that point, I just lost it. I fell to the ground screaming."

Julie learned that her dad was still alive when paramedics reached him - seven minutes after the 911 call was made. They had to wait for police to secure the scene before entering the house. Because Jerry was on blood thinners, he bled out quickly and they couldn't save him.

When asked why Julie Young would shoot her husband, knowing she would go to prison for the crime, Julie Sander

explained that her father's wife had told several friends and family members that she loved to be in jail, that "she had all the [sex] she wanted, three square meals a day, free medical care and a roof over her head. To her that was like having a \$35,000 a year job."

A world of grief is in her voice as Julie says with disbelief, "She shot my daddy just so she'd have a place to live."

On February 20, 2009, Julie Young Van Deusen was sentenced to 40 years in prison, with 25 years minimum mandatory time. Following are excerpts from April Van Deusen Pannone's impact statement on the day of sentencing:

April Pannone

A father of two daughters, my dad loved his girls. When I was in kindergarten, he and I joined a father/daughter group called Indian Princesses. I remember him making our vests and feathered headbands and how proud I felt walking with my daddy in a parade. Our family had great times at St. Augustine Beach, swimming, playing in the sand, fishing, flying kites and even trying to surf. He would point out various constellations and planets to my sister and me; we loved to use his binoculars and telescope. He bought me a softball glove and helped me practice my catching skills when I joined the church softball team.

A proud Paw-Paw, my dad loved his grandbabies. His health had declined over the years so he was unable to spend as much time with them as he would have liked, but there's no doubt they

were his pride and joy. Every phone conversation with him ended, "And you take good care of those grandbabies." He bought my daughter a pair of tiny diamond earrings, so her first diamond would be from her Paw-Paw, reminding me how he bought me a diamond ring for my 16th birthday.

My dad loved to eat and was quite the cook. He could spend a half hour describing a tasty meal he had prepared and exactly how he made it. He was not afraid to experiment and concocted plenty of his own recipes. He enjoyed watching cooking shows on TV, gaining new ideas and making mental notes for future recipes. I remember being a moody, sick teenager and how his homemade chicken soup told me how much he cared.

I miss my dad more than words can express. I miss phone calls where he'd call me his "Baby Girl" and I'd call him "Big Daddy." So many times I've thought I really needed to call someone; it's been months since I last talked to him and then I have to remind myself that he's gone.

This was a senseless, horrific murder. I HATE the act that took my father's life, but because I am a Christian, I must forgive the one who took my father's life. I pray that she can truly know the depths of God's love, finding forgiveness through the blood of Jesus Christ, and discovering hope and purpose for the rest of her life.

But this crime deserves just punishment. I respectfully request that she be sentenced to a minimum of life in prison with no chance of parole.

Letter to the editor

I read your paper every month and enjoy the articles and information it contains. The article in the March issue about Mable Clyatt being attacked by a woman named "Jeanie" was disturbing. It's awful to know there are people in our city who would do something like that to an elderly citizen.

Another disturbing thing to me about this article was that the attacker's name was Jeanie, and that she cleans houses. My name is also Jeannie and I have a house cleaning service. I'd appreciate it if you would let your readers know the woman who attacked Mable Clyatt is Jeanie Simmons so no one will think that individual is me.

Thank you.

- Jeannie Townsend
Jacksonville

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