

Disabled grandfather beaten to death

By Shirley Shaw

What Amy misses most are the early morning phone calls from her father. "Good morning, time to wake up and go to work," he would sing. "Get up and stretch, put your hands above your head, get ready for work."

She will never hear his voice again, for he died last May as the result of a beating by three drug addicts.

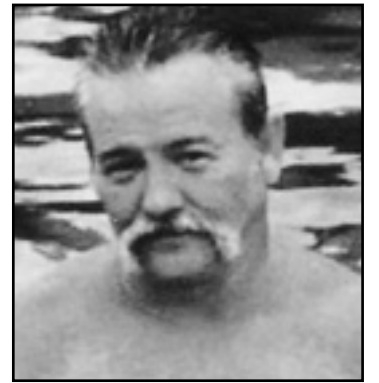
The first indication that something was amiss came on Sunday, May 7, as Amy was driving out of town for a visit. Her father, Randall Eugene Griffin, called and told her he was in the Orange Park hospital, that three people had beat him up and he was in bad shape.

Rushing to his side, she learned that he had multiple broken ribs and other injuries, but doctors told her they thought he would be all right. They said he had an

younger brother were stunned by this turn of events. Their father was still quite young, and although he had multiple medical problems, he seemed to

thinking he would be all right, or if there was some other cause for the delay. Whatever it was, it cost him his life.

Police were notified when



Randall Eugene Griffin

"Get up and stretch, put your hands above your head, get ready for work."
"Good morning, time to wake up and go to work."

infection and it would take time to know.

But within two days the 54-year old man couldn't eat or swallow and was not talking, and four days later doctors said he was dying. His lungs were filled with fluid and they could do no more for him – the family should call hospice. He died May 15, six hours after being transferred to a hospice facility.

Amy, her older sister and

be doing fairly well. A long-time diabetic, Griffin had lost several toes and part of a heel to infections, and just a few months earlier had undergone three open-heart surgeries for six bypass procedures. His sternum had disintegrated in the process.

He told Amy he was visiting a friend when three teens – two males and a female – came into the house and demanded his money. When they began beating him, he said he curled into a fetal position to protect his chest. Finally, another man who was living there came from his room and made the attackers leave, but they took Griffin's money (he had just cashed his disability check), wallet, Bible, watch and a boom box Amy gave him when he was hospitalized earlier.

For some reason, however, he did not go to the emergency room for three days. Amy doesn't know if he refused to go,

Griffin died and JSO detectives began investigating the events leading up to his death. The three people named by the victim as his attackers said they didn't beat him, that they had held him down and searched his clothing for drugs. An older man at the residence corroborated their story and indicated he and the victim had gone out socially afterward. Griffin's whereabouts remain unknown from that point until he was dropped off at the emergency room by an unknown person.

While detectives question the credibility of the suspects' and witness's statements, they lack sufficient evidence to make an arrest. They did not have the opportunity to interview the victim, there was no crime scene to process, and Griffin's location during the 48-72 hour period after the attack remains unknown. There is no evidence

to present to the State Attorney for a successful prosecution.

Meanwhile, Amy and her family mourn the loss of a loving father, a doting grandfather. Griffin helped his daughters whenever they needed him; he babysat with their children and they trusted him implicitly. Everyone liked him. He would do anything for anybody.

Amy misses her dad every day and is very angry that heartless thugs mercilessly killed her father and are walking around as if nothing happened. But someone knows what happened to Randall Griffin – the assailants themselves or people who know them. If YOU are the one who knows details about this incident, please do the right thing and call JSO Homicide at 630-2172.



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