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Immediate Release

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Daughter of woman stabbed 31 times to share mother's story at local event

ATLANTA, September 30, 2010 - Heather Mendenhall, daughter of Cathy Lorraine Mendenhall McNaughton, attended PADV's Silent No More Candlelight vigil last year, just eight months after her mother was brutally murdered by her stepfather. At the time, she had no idea that her mother's name would be read among the victims of domestic that night during the vigil. Touched that PADV had honored her mother, along with the fact that her stepfather was convicted on August 11, 2010, of malice murder, Heather Mendenhall is eager to tell her mother's story at PADV's 10th annual Silent No More Candlelight Vigil. The event is scheduled for Thursday, October 7, 2010, from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site Visitor's Center, 450 Auburn Avenue. The event is free, open to the public and is being held to observe National Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

"I've lived with my own guilt for not contacting the police when I learned that my mother had been physically abused by my stepfather," said Mendenhall. "No amount of regret, remorse or sorrow will bring her back or change the outcome and final demise of my mother, my best-friend. But I take comfort in being able to share my mother's story at PADV's event with the hope that I can encourage others to help their loved ones break their silence and get help."

"Many women may be in denial about intimate partner violence. Minimizing their experience, they don't have a name for it," said Cathy Willis Spraeetz, president and CEO for PADV. "But if friends and family help identify the warning signs, then they can speak up, ask questions and express concern. They just may be able to save a life."

Some domestic violence warning signs include 'whirlwind' relationships, being monitored or followed by your partner, and feeling isolated from friends and family because of your partner's behavior. For a complete list of the warning signs, [click here](#).

Intimate partner violence is widespread. In 2009, there were 125 domestic violence related homicides in Georgia, which was a 12 percent increase over the previous year.¹ Georgia is 10th in the nation for its rate of men killing women. There were 72,185 crisis calls to Georgia's certified domestic violence agencies in 2009. One in four women will experience intimate partner violence.

¹ Georgia Commission on Family Violence

Activities at the vigil will include survivor testimonials, live performances and an interactive candlelight vigil. The Clothesline Project, consisting of more than 200 T-shirts made by adult and children survivors depicting their personal experiences, will be on display. For more information about PADV's Silent No More Candlelight vigil, please click [here](#).

About PADV: Celebrating our 35th anniversary, PADV is the largest and one of the oldest nonprofit domestic violence agencies in Georgia. Serving metro Atlanta, PADV helps to transform the lives of approximately 18,000 women and children every year through violence prevention, emergency intervention and long-term advocacy. PADV's mission is to end the crime of intimate partner violence and empower its survivors. Visit padv.org or follow us on Facebook and Twitter.

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