

REVIEW

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE KLAASKIDS FOUNDATION

A mile a minute....
that is how fast your child can disappear



A MESSAGE FROM MARC

It has been a summer of conflicting emotions and fast-paced events. I'm sure that you have heard about the case of Michelle Le, who disappeared early this summer from a Hayward, CA, parking garage.

When I first met the Le family, they seemed isolated, desperate, and hopeless. Their precious Michelle had disappeared. The Hayward police said she was a victim of murder, yet she was nowhere to be found. Ultimately, the family, led by brother Michael, cousin Krystine, and uncle Eric rejected that premise and promised to spare no resource in rescuing or recovering Michelle.

What began in isolation quickly morphed into collaboration, first with our KlaasKids Foundation and law enforcement; ultimately with the Buddhist Temple, Safeway, Websleuths, countless local vendors, media representatives, and a dedicated cadre of volunteers. One might wonder what drove these diverse groups and individuals to reach out to a family who had gathered in solidarity from all over California and whom most of us had just met.

Was it their refusal to go quietly into the night? Was it their willingness to unblinkingly look the devil in the eye? Or, was it the face of a seemingly lost soul smiling angelically from missing flyers on telephone poles, storefronts, and media reports? Perhaps it was all of these things, but maybe it was something even more. Maybe, just maybe, we were nurtured by the grace of angels.

Events were scheduled and searches were organized. Michelle's family found strength in fellowship and resolve in the solidarity of purpose. Timelines were established, evidence analyzed, and strategies devised. Search teams were dispatched, time and again, with little regard for personal comfort. We looked and looked and looked yet again.

But it mattered not, for we had climbed onto the wings of angels, and the bright



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BIG REWARDS FOR BAD BEHAVIOR

Recently, I sat in a satellite uplink studio in San Francisco with an earpiece in my ear and a microphone clipped to my lapel, staring at a camera lens during a taping of the *Nancy Grace Show*. Almost 3,000 miles away in Orlando, FL, Drew Kesse, the father of Jennifer, a 24-year-old woman who has been missing since Jan. 24, 2006, was sitting in a similar room. The topic of the program was Dr. Phil's interview with Casey Anthony's parents, George and Cindy.

Drew and I have some things in common with George and Cindy. Like the Anthonys, we both experienced the loss of a loved one. My daughter Polly was missing for 65 days before her remains were recovered. Drew still doesn't know what happened to his daughter. However,

he does know that she was taken against her will and remains missing to this day.

That's pretty much where our commonalities with the Anthonys end, because from the moment that both of our daughters disappeared, we had only one goal: To pursue the truth in recovering them. We didn't pursue celebrity or wealth. We were willing to do whatever was necessary to get our children back –

MISSING
Since January 24, 2006



NAME:
JENNIFER KESSE
AGE: 24
DESCRIPTION:
5'8"
Shoulder Length
Sandy Blonde Hair
Green Eyes
125lbs.
CAR FOUND:
2004 Black 4 Door
Chevy Malibu at
Texas & Americana
Orlando, FL

REWARD
www.FindJenniferKesse.com
321-235-5300 or 1-800-423-TIPS
Orlando Police Dept. Crimeline

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A MESSAGE FROM MARC

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light of informed choice overwhelmed the darkness of despair.

Searches continued and an arrest was made. The Hayward PD provided us with new information, fueling hope, but the truth continued to elude our grasp. And then, seemingly, another angelic intervention. On the last afternoon of the last scheduled search for Michelle, a dog with the namesake of another stolen child, owned by the mother of that child, led us to a tragic conclusion. The search for Michelle was over. She can now be put to rest with the dignity and respect that all good people deserve.

It is now autumn, and soon the leaves will be falling from the trees.

My heart breaks for the Le family, because I understand the agony of losing a child to the forces of evil. However, I understand that time

gives the gift of being able to recover a life of purpose, meaning, and love. Michelle's family sufferings have the ability to sharpen their focus and make them stronger, better people than they might have been, because now they are guided by the spirit of angels.

From my own experience, I know these things to be true: The angel on *my* shoulder tells me that the angel we sought was guiding us all along.

You too can be an angel helping the search for a missing child. I encourage you to make a donation to KlaasKids as part of your holiday giving. Especially in these hard times, your gifts, concern, and willingness to care makes all the difference in bringing our children home. You can donate at our website at www.klaaskids.org, or by using the form at the end of this newsletter. ■

INTRODUCING THE POLLY CENTER FOR ABDUCTION RESPONSE

The KlaasKids Foundation strives to remain on the cutting edge of child safety. To that end, on July 23, 2011, we inaugurated a revolutionary



approach to child abduction and exploitation response. The Polly Center, located in Pensacola, FL, is a proactive missing child resource center created to provide a preemptive response network that serves families of missing persons. This regional resource center will also provide abuse prevention programs for children and services for victims of exploitation.

Responding to a missing person case is similar to responding to natural disaster. When a 911 call is placed reporting a missing person, a response must be made quickly, as time is critical. Currently, most communities have an emergency disaster response plan that includes pre-planning and identifying necessary resources. The Polly Center will mirror that approach in missing person and human trafficking cases.

The concept behind the Polly Center is based on events that surrounded the 1993 case of Polly Klaas. The entire city of Petaluma—business, churches, individuals, and fraternal organizations—came together to assist in building the search effort. For the past 18 years, KlaasKids has been responding to communities grappling with predatory or highly suspicious missing child cases.

However, each time we respond on a new case, the organization has to reinvent the wheel in terms of locating relevant resources. With the Polly Center, much of the work in Florida will already be in place and resources put on alert to

respond much more rapidly. This preemptive response plan includes creating key partnerships with law enforcement, businesses, civic organizations, and churches. These organizations identify themselves as willing to participate in the search for a missing person or to assist in the rescue and recovery of victims of exploitation. These partnerships create a response framework prepared to initiate any missing response or rescue attempt.

In Pensacola, we already have the support of local authorities including the Escambia County Sheriff. Agreements have also been established with key organizations. The California-based BeyondMissing organization provides parents with an easy-to-use flyer tool. They will be able to upload pictures, fill out forms, and quickly create professional English or Spanish language missing child flyers that can be shared via fax or email.

The Florida Coalition Against Human Trafficking has also agreed to assist in identifying and placing victims. The Gulf Coast Kids House, a Children's Advocacy Center, offers services to child abuse victims. Area Search and Rescue teams will provide services in the search for missing persons.

The Polly Center is the brainchild of Brad Dennis, the KlaasKids Foundation National Director of Search Operations. Brad, who has more than 25 years of experience in search and rescue and crisis management, has managed search efforts for more



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BIG REWARDS FOR BAD BEHAVIOR

even if the perpetrator turned out to be a family member.

The contrast with the Anthonys is remarkable. Their daughter Casey had been convicted on several counts of lying to police during the investigation – even at the times when she told the truth, how could you believe her? Yet in the Dr. Phil interview, George and Cindy were not only unable to acknowledge that Casey had committed any fault in the situation, but continue to excuse and justify their daughter's behavior.

During the interview, Cindy stated that grand mal seizures, a brain tumor, and possible postpartum schizophrenia could potentially explain Casey's behavior. Of course, people suffering from seizures are in fact generally more fragile and less aggressive, not more so; and, according to the psychologist on the *Nancy Grace Show*, "postpartum schizophrenia" is a mental disorder that doesn't even exist. No, the similarities that Drew and I share with the Anthonys begin and end with the disappearance of our daughters.

Generally, too, the families of missing or murdered children struggle financially. In our single-minded determination to recover our lost children, we put worldly considerations aside. Families give up incomes, or become too depressed to work. Medical and psychological costs can devour huge amounts of our savings. Failure or inability to attend to mundane bookkeeping can result in home foreclosures and or mounting debt. I am not complaining; I am simply stating the truth as I understand it.

While Dr. Phil did not pay the Anthonys for the interview, he supposedly donated nearly \$500,000 to a "charitable organization currently being formed to honor their granddaughter called Caylee's Fund." However, the fact is that

Caylee's Fund does not yet exist, and therefore it is not a charitable organization.

The Anthony family is being handsomely rewarded for this abysmal behavior. Many people believe that Casey Anthony literally got away with murder, and that George and Cindy lie and parry and deny the truth. Yet they receive a huge payoff from a daytime TV program seeking sky-high ratings.

How do we feel about this as a society? Millions of people watched the Dr. Phil interview, so apparently the media feels that such an interview is worth it. But in all honesty, I can't help but agree with Drew's position that the Anthonys are "a disgrace and an insult to every missing person and their families," and Dr. Phil "a pimp for (airing) this garbage." The Anthonys have long outstayed their welcome. Caylee is still dead and the truth be damned. ■

THE POLLY CENTER

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than 180 missing and exploited children throughout the United States, including the community assisted search effort following Polly's kidnapping. Most of the current volunteer search protocols were originally developed by Brad during the search for Polly.

If the Pensacola Polly Center is successful we intend to replicate this model throughout the United States, with the goal of reducing response times and improving the chance of bringing our loved ones home safely. This major project will take time and a great deal of community support to implement. However, we are confident that this new resource can make a major difference to protecting our children. ■

MEDIA AND THE DEATH PENALTY

On Oct. 1, Marc Klaas took part in a New Yorker Festival panel debating the pros and cons of the death penalty. The other panelists included Joshua Marquis the district attorney in Astoria, OR; Danalynn Recer founder of Gulf Region Advocacy Center; and Barry Scheck founding director of the Innocence Project. This article is a first of a three-part series outlining the arguments presented during the panel event.

I am unapologetic about my support of the death penalty because I do not believe that a majority opinion or the law of the land in 37 states and the Federal government requires an apology. Unfortunately, in recent years abolitionists and other death penalty apologists have been incredibly successful in subverting the law and undermining public confidence in the administration of ultimate justice.

Abolitionists have found many friends in the mainstream media. Together they have concocted a public relations campaign that has convinced many that our death rows are filled with innocent men and women who are denied due process as they are being led to the slaughter. Ever since the days of Perry Mason, television has fed the public a diet of citizens accused and convicted of capital murders that they did not commit. Currently, the plethora of CSI series would have us believe that forensic evidence miraculously and regularly exonerates innocents as they rot in prison cells.

The wrongful accusation, conviction, imprisonment and execution of innocents is a staple of *The Good Wife* on CBS, which recently featured Innocence Project co-founder Barry Scheck and the case of Cameron Todd Willingham. The elegance of that particular case is that it is impossible to prove whether Willingham truly was innocent, or was the remorseless arsonist



Barry Scheck, Marc Klaas and Jeffrey Toobin prior to a panel discussion at the New Yorker Festival

executed in 2003 for torching his three young daughters. The point is that on these television programs, forensics are always definitive, defense lawyers are never wrong, and innocent people are convicted, imprisoned, and executed.

Of course, print media is complicit as well. Convicted killer Roger Coleman made the cover of Time Magazine on May 18, 1992, with the caption, "This Man Might Be Innocent: This Man Is Due To Die." Fourteen years after his execution, DNA evidence proved that Coleman had been guilty of murdering his sister-in-law all along.

Then again, the June 12, 2000 cover of *Newsweek Magazine* featured death row inmate Ricky McGinn. Again, the suggestion was made that an innocent man was about to be executed. McGinn stated that DNA testing would prove that he didn't rape and murder his 12-year-old stepdaughter. Under intense media pressure, Texas Governor George Bush ordered a 30-day reprieve. When DNA testing proved that McGinn was guilty beyond any doubt, he was finally executed.

The truth of the matter is, that as of the end of 2009, 1,613,740 prisoners were under state and federal jurisdiction. However, the total number of DNA exonerations – for *any* type of felony – was

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AMBER ALERT GETS A BIG UPGRADE IN 2012

Imagine yourself on an ordinary morning, stopped in traffic on your way to work. You're sipping coffee, listening to the morning show, and thinking about the in-box that awaits you. Suddenly you receive a text message on your cell phone: "AMBER ALERT – MISSING 4 YO BOY THIS AREA. 4 FT, LION KING T-SHIRT. TAKEN BY MAN IN GREEN VAN W/ DC TAGS."

By the time you get to work an hour later, the lobby TV is showing a tyke with a cartoon Simba on his chest in the arms of his happy dad. A reporter is describing how the Amber Alert prompted several diners at a nearby McDonald's to call police when they saw the child with a man who had just pulled up in a green van with DC plates.

A "future-vision" pipe dream? Yes, but this time we'll only have to wait till April 2012.

Back in 2006, President George W. Bush mandated a new Public Alert and Warning System to replace our outdated Emergency Alert System (EAS). Called the Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS), the new system's goal is to distribute presidential messages, NOAA weather warnings, and Amber Alerts out to the public as fast as possible.

With IPAWS, customers with enabled mobile phones and devices can receive geographically targeted messages alerting them as to imminent threats in their area. If a child goes missing on the 16th Street Mall in Denver, for example, the Amber Alert can be sent specifically to cell towers that cover the city of Denver. Likewise, if a tornado is spotted in Kansas, cell towers on the path of the tornado will be alerted.

Wireless companies are also volunteering to participate through a system called the Commercial Mobile Alert System (CMAS). With 98% of

Americans today carrying a cell phone, you can imagine how beneficial this will be toward getting Amber Alerts out to a lot of people quickly.

As long as your phone supports cell broadcast, you will automatically start receiving the IPAWS alerts - you don't need to sign up. Alerts are free. Customers of participating carriers are automatically signed up for free CMAS alerts as well.

You won't receive thousands of messages a day: Alerts are only used in critical emergencies, and consist of:

- Alerts issued by the President
- Alerts involving imminent threats to safety or life
- Amber Alerts

When you receive an alert, your phone will make a unique sound and vibration, which is helpful to people with hearing or vision disabilities. It then appears as a pop-up text on your phones screen much like a text message. Alerts are transmitted via a different technology from regular text messages, however, and they cannot be delayed as with standard texts. Those with prepaid phones can receive alerts as well.

Currently, participation by your wireless carriers in CMAS is voluntary, and most have announced that they will do so. The FCC requires all non-participating wireless carriers to notify customers. However, you might have to check with your carrier to make sure they are going to offer the service and see if they are covering the entire service area. As a final tip, it is wise to also make sure your phone is compatible. ■

Ben Levitan is a telecommunications expert with more than 30 years experience in cellular networks and system design. Learn more at www.BenLevitan.com.

WILL YOUR NEXT HOME HELP PROTECT OTHERS?

Home means everything to a family: Love, togetherness, and safety. When a child goes missing, all those values are put in jeopardy. What if there was a way your next home could support the KlaasKids Foundation's efforts to protect those values? Well, now there is.



Our partnership with My Broker Donates empowers supporters to create big donations— at zero cost— when they buy or sell a home. Such donations can be significant: A \$500,000 home creates a \$2,000 donation. Wouldn't that supercharge your support of the KlaasKids Foundation?

You know how important that funding is to our work: It can bolster our Print-A-Thon efforts, advance our legislative campaigns, and support other programs to prevent crime against children.

So how does it work? My Broker Donates connects KlaasKids supporters with pre-screened real estate professionals who agree to donate the majority of their referral fee to the KlaasKids Foundation. They handpick agents who have expertise in just the sort of transaction you are planning. My Broker Donates only works with agents who have a demonstrated history of supporting their community.

Once you choose the agent you like best, the transaction is like any other, only you'll work with a professional who has been vetted and who is happy to help you support the KlaasKids Foundation. You can visit My Broker Donates at their website at www.mybrokerdonates.com, or call them at 888.488.7188.

We think it's a great match: Why shouldn't the joy you feel at buying or selling a home help

preserve the love and togetherness in other homes? (Particularly when it doesn't cost you any more than you would normally pay for a home). Please take a moment to consider who might be thinking of buying or selling a home, and tell them about My Broker Donates.



You can scan the above QR Code to your Smartphone which takes you to our custom landing page.

With the holidays coming up, imagine how much good work we could do together if every supporter of the KlaasKids Foundation bought and sold their homes through My Broker Donates. Please join us in our common cause! ■

MEDIA AND THE DEATH PENALTY

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less than 300. And, despite years of parading remorseless killers as innocent victims, it cannot be demonstrated that an innocent man has ever been executed in recent times.

The decision to end a man's life is a serious one, and should be treated as such. Obviously, the penalty should only be enacted in cases where there is rock-solid evidence as to guilt. However, one gets the sense that some abolitionists are just waiting for the execution of an innocent man so that they may be properly indignant about it. Those of us who believe the death penalty is necessary, on the other hand, pray that an innocent is never executed, preserving our fragile system of ultimate justice to appropriately punish the ultimate crime. ■

WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT - HELP FIGHT CRIME!

Contributions to the KlaasKids Foundation are tax deductible.

There are four convenient ways to donate on www.klaaskids.org:

1. PLEASE MAKE YOUR SECURE DONATION ONLINE @
<http://www.klaaskids.org/pg-help.htm>
2. Donate your car to: <http://www.klaaskids.org/cardonate.htm?x=75&y=40>
3. MyBroker Donate: www.mybrokerdonates.com
4. Checks can be made payable to KlaasKids Foundation and sent to:
KlaasKids Foundation ~ P.O. Box 925 ~ Sausalito, CA 94966

Please provide us with your e-mail address to receive the Klaas Action Review

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Thank you in advance for your contribution and support!

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