

HISTORY OF THE TREE OF ANGELS

In 1991, in Austin, Texas, a memorable tradition was initiated by Verna Lee Carr, State Director of People Against Violent Crime (PAVC). Working as a volunteer victim advocate, it became very obvious that the holiday season was especially difficult for victims' families. PAVC wanted to do something special for these victims, so the organization began the tradition of having a statewide "Tree of Angels" ceremony that would honor all victims by having family members bring an ornament to be placed on a special Christmas tree in hope of bringing them comfort through the warm spirit represented by the season.

Thanks to the foresight and hard work of Marie Martin, this year marks the 19th Tree of Angels Ceremony in Rusk County. It has become a meaningful tradition, touching the hearts and encouraging the minds of many through the years. It is our hope that this time together will allow us to remember, include and support surviving victims whose families have been touched by violent crime.

Many years ago, Verna Lee Carr had a vision. Marie Martin, partnering with the Rusk County and District Attorney's Office, brought that vision to Henderson. It is a vision of families who have suffered loss coming together around the holidays to lean on each other and show their respect. Tonight we remember and honor those lost to crime and hope to offer comfort to their families. We have a unique opportunity tonight. We find ourselves among many others who have suffered similar loss. As we gather here in this moment, may we draw strength from one another.



**Victims & Survivors
Against Violent Crimes
&
Rusk County & District
Attorney's Office**

Welcomes you to the Annual

TREE OF ANGELS

**Thursday, December 11, 2025
6:00 P.M.**

**Rusk County Justice Center
210 Charlevoix, Henderson, Texas**

