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DISTRICT ATTORNEY
Jefferson and Gilpin Counties

For Immediate Release – April 13, 2004

Contact: Pam Russell
Public Information
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RE: National Crime Victims' Rights Week April 18-24, 2004

Golden, CO – During the week of April 18th through the 24th, 2004, crime victims and survivors, victim service providers, criminal justice and allied professionals, and community volunteers will join together across America to commemorate the 24th anniversary of National Crime Victims' Rights Week. This year's theme, "Victims' Rights: America's Values," reminds us that when we value equal rights for all Americans, safety and protection for those who have been victimized, and justice for all, we value crime victims' rights.

Since 1972, those in the victim assistance field have worked to ensure that crime victims are treated with compassion and respect; that they are informed of their rights and involved in justice processes as more than just witnesses; and that they are aware of victim assistance and compensation programs that can help them cope with the aftermath of crime. And today, there are over 10,000 organizations that provide help and hope to victims of crime in our community, and throughout our criminal and juvenile justice systems.

Jefferson County District Attorney Dave Thomas recognizes these values and has long been a crusader for victims' rights. He was a vital part of the movement to pass an amendment to Colorado's Constitution guaranteeing the rights of crime victims in 1993.

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“As Albert Einstein said, ‘Try not to become a person of success, but rather try to become a person of value’,” Thomas said. “In America today, a ‘person of value’ is aware of the threat of violence and victimization, and is prepared and willing to respond to its impact on individuals and communities by offering to provide a kind word, support, or assistance in accessing victim services to crime victims and survivors.”

In Colorado, a number of activities have been planned to recognize victims of crime and those who serve them during 2004 National Crime Victims’ Rights Week. A kick-off rally will be held on Monday, April 19 at Civic Center Park at 11:30. Here in Jefferson County, the 11th Annual Courage Walk will be Saturday, April 24th at the Courthouse.

Everyone is encouraged to join together during 2004 National Crime Victims’ Rights Week, and honor not only victims of crime, but also those who bring honor to victims on a daily basis. For additional information about 2004 National Crime Victims’ Rights Week, go to www.colo.org.com/vrw.html. For questions on the Courage Walk, contact Pam Russell, First Judicial District Attorney’s Office, at 303-271-6905.

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