

Wounds that time can't heal

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**10 years later,
survivors still grieve for
triple murder victims**

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It was the sort of horrific crime that made parents warn their children to stay away from the lake and then wait up anxiously for them to come home.

Time has eased the terror many Central Texans felt for years after the infamous Lake Waco triple murders. People no longer are as afraid to drive into the lake's parks

after dark.

But for Nancy Wiser of Waxahachie, the pain is just as intense as it was the night 10 years ago when her daughter, Jill Montgomery, didn't come home.

"It's been 10 years, but it is just as hard today as it was 10 years ago," Wiser said. "It still feels as fresh, and maybe that is because all the wounds that are there are still open because there are so many things yet that haven't been taken care of. This year may be the hardest, to realize that it has been 10 years and the feelings are still as strong as they are."

Fishermen discovered the bodies of Montgomery and Raylene Rice, both of Waxahachie, and Montgomery's friend, Kenneth Franks of Waco, dumped at Speegleville III Park at Lake Waco on July 13, 1982.

It was a crime that shocked the state. The numbness in Waco lingered for almost two years before arrests were made. Once the defendants were brought to trial, the drama was played out before packed courtrooms.

Now when Wiser gets a telephone message from someone associated with the case, her mind

races, wondering what new development the caller will tell her about next.

Has David Wayne Spence gotten a new execution date? Is there a new trial date for Muneer Mohammad Deeb? Did Gilbert and Anthony Melendez finally get paroled? They are questions that trouble her deeply and ones she lives with daily, she says.

"I am facing the possibility that not all of them will be taken care of," Wiser says. "If Tony and Gilbert get out on parole — this soon

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Long after the infamous Lake Waco triple murders in July, 1982, many people were afraid to drive into the lake's parks after dark.

Staff photo —
Rod Aydelotte

