

An Elderly Woman's Cry for Help!!! Laura Moses Nobody is SAFE from D\$\$!!! Reprinted from 1995 article by Robert A. Williams

Editor's note: History forgotten repeats itself. This article was originally published by me in 1995. This same kind of stuff happened in Cleveland County, again, just last week. Where is the oversight of the rogue agency-the Cleveland County DSS?

This article provides an update of the original article as well as sounding the alarm for another family/person being destroyed by the DSS. Right under everybody's noses.

Original article:

A 78 year old Casar woman, Laura Moses, had worked all her life to pay for her home and a few acres of land. All she wanted to do was live out her remaining years at home. She didn't owe anything to anybody and her gardening hobby not only kept her busy, but filled her freezer in the process. Her future plans would include deciding where she wanted to be buried and what songs she wanted played at her funeral. That was before DSS got involved.

Somebody called DSS about Mrs. Laura Moses. Somebody wanting her property was the story. DSS came out and decided they didn't like the way she kept her house. They had Mrs. Moses to sign a paper that she would clean up her house better. Mrs. Moses signed figured she would sign their paper and they would just go away. But they kept coming back until she finally told them to leave her alone. She locked DSS out.

DSS went to Mental Health.

Mental Health and DSS cooked up a plan to take carte of "ornery" people like Laura Moses who didn't like the snobs out of DSS and Mental Health telling her what to do. So DSS and Mental Health decided to have Laura Moses committed to a mental ward. Sheriff's Department Deputies were dispatched that night and Mrs. Laura Moses was removed from her home and imprisoned in the Gaston Memorial Hospital's psychiatric ward.

Mrs. Laura Moses' own words tell her story best. The following is the text of Mrs. Moses' letter to NC State Senator David Hoyle dated October 28, 1994. After spending 93 days in Gaston Memorial Hospital Mental Ward (Gaston Memorial only released her when her Medicare money ran out.) and another 13 months in DSS Custody. All this because DSS, with the help of Clerk of Court Linda Cline Thrift ruled Mrs. Laura Moses incompetent in a phony hearing where Mrs. Moses had no legal representation.

The horror story you are about to read could just as easily happen to you.

From Mrs. Laura N. Moses to Senator David Hoyle.

Dear Senator Hoyle;

The reason for my writing to you is to ask for your help. I am Laura Newton Moses from Golden Valley Road, Casar. The problem has been going on problem with the Cleveland County Department of Social Services. The Department of Social Services is supposed to help people and support them and not to harass them. They should encourage people to live independently when they are capable.

I will to the best of my knowledge list the incidents and situations.

On January 3, 1994, I was removed from my home by an armed Cleveland County Sheriff's Deputy and transported to the Gaston Memorial Hospital and placed in their Psychiatric Unit where I was held for 93 days against my will. During my

hospitalization, I received no medication for anything related to nerves of mental illness and rarely saw a doctor. I was dismissed after having a hearing at the hospital and given transportation back to my home by the Cleveland County Sheriff's Department with a paper from the hospital stating I was capable of living alone.

In the meantime, while I was still in the hospital, the Cleveland County DSS petitioned the Court to have me found incompetent. Dina Foster was my court appointed lawyer. I was served papers as to the date of the hearing. Dina Foster was prepared to go on with the hearing even though she had never met me. My nephew asked Dina Foster why I was not at the hearing that day and she said it was not uncommon for those in the hospital to not be present at their hearing. At my nephew's request the hearing was postponed to a later date so I could be present.

At this later scheduled hearing, the Clerk of Court could not make a decision. John Church who represented DSS gave the excuse that the doctor's evaluation had been faxed to him and was not readable. Instead of asking for another copy to be faxed or mailed to him, he requested that I be taken to the Cleveland County Mental Health for their evaluation. The Clerk of Court granted this request.

I was taken back to the Gaston Memorial Hospital. Jerry Utt, a social worker at the hospital, said they would accept me back but they actually needed the bed for someone who actually needed the bed. Sometime later I was taken to Cleveland County Mental Health and given a test.

My brother went to the Clerk of Court and volunteered to be my co-guardian along with my nephew. AS I understand it, because of their decision to be my co-guardians, the Clerk of Court decided to declare me incompetent. Because of all the legal responsibilities, my brother backed out and the Clerk of Court gave guardianship to the Cleveland County DSS.

1This caused many problems for me. I wasn't present. I had no decision in it and above all, housekeeping has nothing to do with incompetency.

We are now back to the point of when I was dismissed (from Gaston Memorial) on April 3 to my home.

When I arrived at home I found there was no electricity because the heat had been turned up and never down. The electric bill was in excess of \$600 so the power company cut my electricity off. By their cutting my electricity off, I lost everything in my freezer that I had worked so hard to freeze. I had made my own large garden with only a hoe. Everything was spoiled in my refrigerator. I had no groceries in my house so I went to a nearby store to get groceries.

While I was gone to the store Diane Stanley (CCDSS) and a Cleveland County Sheriff's Deputy came to my house for me. Diane Stanley was seen coming out of my trailer. She had no authority to be in my home.

Fearful that they would come back for me later, I went to the Cleveland County Commissioner's meeting that night and explained my situation and asked for help. Several commissioners were sympathetic, especially Mr. Sam Gold. Mr. Robert Williams, Cleveland County Board of Social Services member, has also been very helpful. Several other commissioners said it was a confidential matter.

After the Commissioner's meeting, Janice Ware and Teala McSwain of the CCDSS tried to get me to go with them to the Autumn Years Rest Home against my will. I refused. I did agree to go with a friend, Mr. Roy Lee Dedmon, who has helped me in this matter. I am temporarily staying in private living quarters separate from a rest home he owns.

I told the commissioners that I was going to appeal the decision the Clerk of Court made. Dina Foster did appeal and I had a trial by jury. Dina Foster disappointed me greatly. She did not represent me well and I felt she was on the side of the CCDSS. It ended in a hung jury.

I later hired my own attorney, Mr. Rob Deaton. and he filed for it to be dismissed because of the hung jury. The day the new trial was to be heard , October 10, Dina Foster appeared at the hearing (which she had no right to do since she was no longer my attorney). and requested that I be re-evaluated by

the Cleveland County Mental Health. John Church, CCDSS Attorney, also argued against dismissal. The Judge, Jesse Caldwell, would not dismiss the appeal. I refused another evaluation.

Attorney Karen C. Wright was appointed as guardian of my estate. I should have received \$450 a month Social Security. I have received none of this beginning with the January check. I should have over \$4,500 from these checks. At the last hearing I asked Karen Wright how much money I had left. After a long period of time, she said I had \$1,400 and I was debt free. I never was in debt to start with. There are records. \$400 went to Cleveland County Mental Health for the first evaluation. Some money went to Dina Foster. Why are they allowed to spend my money on a court appointed lawyer I don't want and who did not represent me.

I know my letter says a lot, but there is still a lot that is going on. The harassment from the CCDSS has been uncalled for and ridiculous. I own my home, I worked for it, and I deserve to live there if I choose. My trailer has been cleaned up by me and some of my friends. I have a statement from two different doctors who know me well, that I am capable of living alone.

In closing, I ask for your help. I wonder how many other people have been treated this very same way and have no one to turn to for help. Thanks you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Laura N. Moses

Update to this article:

Well, Mrs. Laura Moses had her appeal trial by a jury of 12. Mrs. Moses Attorney Rob Deaton fought both the DSS attorney John Church and the Guardian ad litem Attorney, Dina Foster, who tried to help the DSS instead of Laura Moses. The trial

lasted a full week with Dina Foster and John Church trying every trick in the book to cover-up the abuses by DSS. They failed. For every DSS lying witness, Deaton put up two witnesses for Laura Moses. For the five day trial, it took the Jury less than 10 minutes to reach the verdict that Laura Moses was competent and could go anywhere and do anything she wanted. Then the jury lined up to shake Mrs. Laura Moses hand and wish her well. The Judge, Jesse Caldwell from Gaston County got in the line too. He also shook Mrs. Moses' hand and wished her well.

DSS was totally PO'd. They had Karen Wright pay Dina Foster and perhaps others all the rest of Mrs. Moses' Social Security money, leaving Mrs. Moses without one red cent in her account. All before the ink on Court Order of Competency for Mrs. Moses had time to dry.

But that was not the end of the story.

Once Mrs. Moses was allowed to go home she discovered that the front door to her home had been left open and rain had ruined some flooring. The rotted food was still in the freezer and refrigerator. And every drawer in her house had been pulled out and emptied on the bed and floor.

It was then that we figured out what had happened. Mrs. Moses had been raised during the Depression and didn't trust banks. She never had a bank account until DSS and Karen Wright opened an account so they could get to her Social Security checks. What Mrs. Moses had done all had all life was to cash her pay checks, pay her bills in cash and save what she had left in Mason Jars.

Although Mrs. Moses always worked minimum wage jobs, she was thrifty. She never learned how to drive and never owned a car. When she cashed her paychecks, she would get "big money" as she called it. 50 and 100 dollar bills. over her lifetime she had saved two half-gallon fruit jars stuffed full of big

money. And now all of it was gone.

Mrs. Moses had been robbed. By DSS regarding her Social Security checks and either DSS or whoever called out the DSS to begin with for her jars full of big money.

Anyway, friends and acquaintances (including me) helped repair the floors, install some new carpet and clean the rest, cleaned out the freezer and refrigerator and generally got the place in good order. We went around and collected food and donations for Mrs. Moses to get her started again. We had the power restored and the phone service started again and all of that. Mrs. Moses, who it never took much to survive in the first place, lived at home for many years until she actually came to need assistance with her living arrangements. She passed away several years ago.

As for DSS, the same old crowd then are in control now. And they have not learned their lessons. The DSS Board and County Commissioners have never disciplined anybody at DSS for the wrong doings they have done.

And, now there are presently other situations where DSS have wrongly taken families apart and picked them clean of every red cent that they had. And are laughing about it.

Stay tuned all you good people and Churches in Cleveland County and elsewhere, My very next article will contain information about another case similar to Mrs. Laura Moses. Similar in that a 23 year old autistic man was declared incompetent so DSS could steal his disability check and destroy his family support unit in the process. Get ready to open your pocketbooks, Credit Cards and checkbooks to help this family unit pull themselves together again after a full year of torture by the Cleveland County DSS and the "system" that refuses to oversee the CCDSS. Hopefully you will donate until it hurts for YOUR failure to see such things as this never happen again. Otherwise, it could very well happen to

you and YOUR family..

Stay Tuned.