

The Tragedy and Miraculous Healing Of TAMMY BAITER SWITZER

At approx. 4 a.m. on the 18th of August, the day of Elvis' funeral, Alice Marie Hovatar, Juanita Joanne Johnson, and Tammy Baiter, all from Louisiana, had come to mourn at the gates of Graceland along with hundreds or other mourners who were holding an all-night vigil in front of the mansion. They were standing together talking to a police officer.

Treatise Wheeler, black, 18 years old, was driving south on Elvis Presley Blvd. in a 1963 white Ford. He turned off into some lots on the right, obviously to backtrack, and turned around, headed back north.

Suddenly, Wheeler barreled through the crowd going about 40 or 50 mph. Officer F. M. McCann, who was standing nearby, said he had "heard the noise of his [Wheeler's] tires screeching and turned just in time to see his car hit the three bodies."

One of the bodies flew up in the air about five feet landing on the windshield while the second victim was pinned against the front of the car. The third victim, Tammy Baiter, was caught and dragged under the car for about twenty yards. Said the officer: "The car kept going, dragging the Baiter girl, but began sputtering from the impact of the bodies and slowed to a halt about a block away."

Wheeler jumped from the car and started to run but was apprehended by officers. There were three 16-year-old girls in the car with him. The officers said Wheeler was staggering, incoherent, and legally drunk. The victims were taken to City of Memphis Hospital. "

Tammy Baiter was the only survivor. She recently wrote a book about the tragic event. Her survival may have been nothing short of miraculous, however, she spent many days in Methodist Hospital recuperating from her injuries. Not many know that all of Ms. Baiter's medical bills and hospital stay were paid for by Vernon Presley, whose concern for Ms. Baiter ran deep despite his own suffering and heartbreak over the loss of his son. Vernon's generosity had gone unnoticed, but not by Tammy Baiter whose gratitude was overwhelming and whose second chance at life was further inspired by a lasting friendship she had formed with Vernon.

There are many stories out there with regard to Vernon's and his so-called "tightness" with money, however, some who knew Vernon knew a different side of him that not many fans got to see; a side of him that some who knew him refused to speak about only after Vernon caught on to their malingering.

They know who they are. Elvis' daddy had a good heart and the love and respect he showed for his son's fans can never be denied.

NOTE: *This article came from an undisclosed source.*