



Office of the State Attorney
Twentieth Judicial Circuit, State of Florida
Proudly Serving
Charlotte - Collier - Glades - Hendry - Lee

Stephen B. Russell, State Attorney

The Russell Report

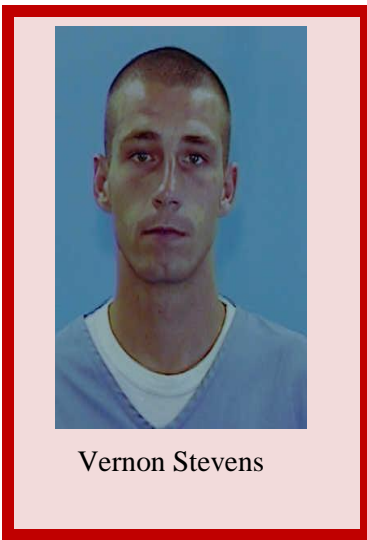


First Degree Murder Case

Vernon Stevens was found guilty of First Degree Murder, First Degree Arson of a Dwelling and Robbery with a Deadly Weapon. This was for the 2007 murder of Antonio Beltran. Following the guilty verdict was the penalty phase of the trial where the LaBelle jury recommended life in prison for Stevens.

The judge will have the final say in sentencing. Assistant State Attorneys Dan Feinberg of our Homicide Unit, Jennifer Gutmore and Denise Kiser handled the case.

Raymond Diaz, the co-defendant in this case has already pled to Second Degree Murder, Arson of a Dwelling and Robbery with a Deadly Weapon.



Vernon Stevens

Suspicious Person

Watson Lwellyn Lewing was found guilty of Exposure of Sexual Organs and Breach of Peace following a one day trial in Lee County. The case involved a suspicious man, Lewing, at Hancock Park in Cape Coral. Police were called to the scene by parents who were there as their children were having Pop Warner football practice.

One parent went to the suspicious person to see if they needed assistance. When they walked over, Lewing was seen sitting on a park bench with his erect genitals fully exposed.

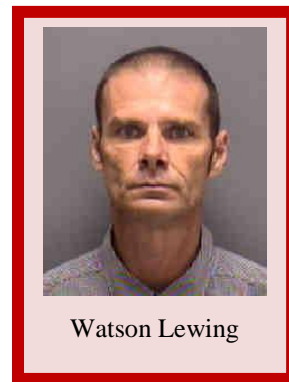
The jury took only 10 minutes to come back with a guilty verdict. Lewing was sentenced to a sentence of 30 days in jail followed by 18 months of probation. Assistant State Attorney Matthew Roepstorff handled the case.

Crime Against a Child

Brandon Church was found guilty of an Unnnatural and Lascivious Act following a 2 day trial in Lee County. Church was arrested after being found with his genitals exposed while hovering over a 9 year old girl who was laying in bed. The 26-year-old defendant is a Prison Releasee Re-Offender and an Habitual Felony Offender. Assistant State Attorney Tyler Lovejoy handled the case.



Brandon Church



Watson Lewing

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Mock Trial Teams

The Charlotte High School mock trial team participated in the regional mock trial competition recently. The team made it all the way to the final round before being defeated by just a few points. The CHS team won the following awards; professionalism, best prosecutor, best prosecution witness and best closing argument. This is the second year the team was coached by members of the Charlotte County office of the State Attorney and the second year that the CHS team won the county round allowing them to participate in the regional round. Assistant State Attorneys Stephanie Powers, Kate Horst, Molly Tandy and Kyle Stublen dedicated a tremendous amount of time, effort and energy into the mock trial team and we want to thank them for their efforts.

The Collier County mock trial competition was also held recently. Assistant State Attorneys Mara Marzano and Lisa Mead from our Naples office coached Lely High School's team. Lely won 4th place and this team of first timers won the Ernestine Cousineay Award for the most outstanding professionalism and ethics in advocacy during the competition. We also want to thank Assistant State Attorney Rich Montecalvo for volunteering as a judge in the Championship Round.

Learning About the State Attorney's Office

Staff members of the State Attorney's Office are available to speak to local students. Throughout the year we visit local classrooms and teach kids about what our office does and how the law works in Florida. We also invite local college students to volunteer at one of our offices throughout Southwest Florida. We have many volunteers who get to work closely with our prosecutors and get a real life education about the criminal justice system. If you would like to learn more about our programs, contact our Volunteer Coordinator, Nancy Cruz at ncruz@sao.cjis20.org or call her at 533-1000.





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Domestic Violence Case

Hector Jiminez Vasquez was sentenced to the maximum of one year in jail after being found guilty of Domestic Violence Battery. The victim had been punched, dragged, shoved under a vehicle, then kicked and punched while under that vehicle. Assistant State Attorneys Jennifer Toussaint and Will Grauel of our Naples office handled the case.



Hector Vasquez

Obscene Calls

Defendant Arthur Krell was found guilty of making Obscene Phone Calls following a one day trial in Punta Gorda. Krell said obscene things to a victim and a deputy over the course of 40 phone calls. The defendant was sentenced to 6 months of probation. Krell must also complete community service hours, an anger management class and write letters of apology to both the victim and the deputy. Assistant State Attorney Caitlin Sorenson handled the case.

Shoplifting Case

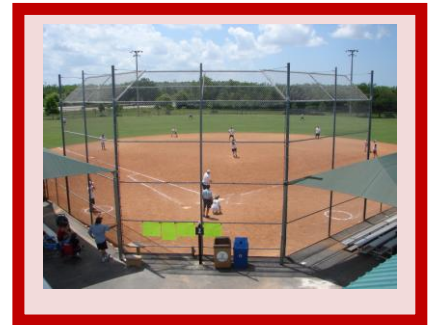
A shoplifting trip to a Charlotte County Wal-Mart ended with the defendant, Jeffrey Desrivieres spending one year in jail. He was spotted by a Wal-Mart loss prevention officer taking items and concealing them on him in places throughout the store. As Desrivieres walked out the door he was confronted by the officer. Everything he had stolen was found on him.

The jury deliberated for only 5 minutes. The one year sentence is because of his criminal history. Assistant State Attorney Caitlin Sorenson handled the case.

Law Enforcement Softball Tournament

The 11th Annual State Attorney's Office Law Enforcement Appreciation Day Softball Tournament is May 11th, 2013. All of the proceeds from the event go to support Southwest Florida Crime Stoppers.

If you are interested in being a business sponsor please contact Samantha Syoen, Communications Director for the State Attorney's Office at 239-533-1125.





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GUILTY VERDICTS

ASA Kate Rumley and Mara Marzano: Shooting into an Occupied Dwelling

ASAs Dan Feinberg, Jennifer Gutmore and Denise Kiser: First Degree Murder, First Degree Arson, Robbery with a Deadly Weapon

ASA Cameron Siggs: Robbery

ASA Caitlyn Sorenson: Petit Theft

ASA Matthew Roepstorff: DUI – 2nd within 5 years

ASAs Matthew Roepstorff and Leena Marcos: DUI

ASAs Bianca Bentley and Amy D’Alessandro: Battery, Assault, Breach of Peace

ASAs Tyler Lovejoy and Noelle Cella: Trespass, Battery

ASAs Kathryn Horst and Stephanie Powers: DUI 3rd within 10 years

ASAs Mike Brown and Amy D’Alessandro: Grand Theft

ASAs Jennifer Royal and Abe Thornburg: Aggravated Assault with a Deadly Weapon (3 counts)

ASA Hanna Renna: Possession of Cocaine

ASAs Andrew Woodliff and Rosemary Harlem-Wood: Resisting an Officer without Violence

ASAs Tyler Lovejoy and Anthony Kunasek: Battery on a Person 65 years or older, Felony Battery, Battery, Resisting or Obstructing an Officer without Violence

ASA Justin Chapman: Tampering with Physical Evidence, Resisting and Officer without Violence

ASA Maria DeMoya: Throwing a Deadly Missile

ASAs Justin Chapman and Robert Siddall: Trespass, Possession of Burglary Tools

ASAs Caitlin Sorenson and Garrick Soja: Driving While License Suspended or Revoked

ASAs Andrew Woodliff and Rosemary Harlem-Wood: DUI

ASA Ian MacLaren: Grand Theft

ASAs Jennifer Toussaint and Will Grauel: Battery – Domestic Violence

ASA Caitlin Sorenson: Obscene Phone Calls

ASA Tyler Lovejoy: Lewd or Lascivious Act

ASAs Rosemary Harlem-Wood and Mindy Alico: Petit Theft, Resisting a Merchant’s Efforts



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FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES:

In recognition of service to the people of Southwest Florida, and dedication to their jobs with the State Attorney's Office, a heartfelt thank you goes to the following people on their February employment anniversary dates:

- | | | |
|------------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| Warren Hamilton '88 | Victoria Coley '07 | Pamela Haney '12 |
| Sheri Raybuck '88 | Lori Lucas '07 | |
| Bernadette Miller '91 | LeWanda Smith '07 | |
| Laura Gagnon '95 | Orion Wright '07 | |
| Deborah Cunningham '00 | Brant Gederian '08 | |
| Raymond Huska '01 | Christina Gray '08 | |
| Betty McGuire '01 | Marisol Wallace '09 | |
| Marie Scalise '01 | Hope Miller '10 | |
| Tammera Wilson '02 | Shirley Benitez '11 | |
| Gary Phillips '05 | Brian Mortenson '11 | |
| Maria Veneigh '06 | Penny Young '11 | |

SOMETIMES THEY MAKE IT EASY

A man in Ontario thought it would be a good idea to steal some clothing from a donation bin for the Salvation Army. So early one morning he dove in, but got stuck. As the sun came up he was discovered with his feet sticking out of the large mailbox like receptacle. It was a quick capture by police and the only new clothes the man got was his jail uniform..

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A truck inspection in California led to an unusual find; a lot of carrots and a lot of marijuana. 310 pounds of the drug were hidden amid boxes of frozen carrots! The green buds were easy to spot among the orange vegetables! The 29-year-old driver is now facing federal drug charges for attempting to smuggle the half million dollars worth of drugs.