





Stephen B. Russell, State Attorney

The Russell Report

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Chief Assistant Retiring

This month marks the end of an era. Chief Assistant State Attorney Randall McGruther is retiring. Randy started with the State Attorney’s Office on July 2, 1979. As a young prosecutor he immediately began taking on some very important cases and later became an office head. In 2001, he left the office for private practice.

He came back to the State Attorney’s Office in 2003 in his current role as the Chief Assistant State Attorney under the then newly elected State Attorney Steve Russell.

In Randy’s time with the office he has been involved with thousands of cases. He has personally prosecuted some of the biggest cases in Southwest Florida’s history.

He prosecuted Kevin Foster in the so called “Lords of Chaos” case which involved the murder of Riverdale High School band leader and teacher Mark Swebes. Foster was convicted of First Degree Murder and sentenced to death.

He also prosecuted Fred Cooper for the double homicides in the so called “Gateway Murders.” Michelle and Steven Andrews were murdered in their Gateway home in 2005. Cooper was convicted of two counts of First Degree Murder and sentenced to life in prison.

Randy not only prosecutes cases but he also mentors newer attorneys. As Chief Assistant, he works alongside the State Attorney to help run all facets of the office throughout the circuit.

He also deals with the Grand Jury and works as a liason with law enforcement agencies.

In 2013 Randy was awarded the Eugene Berry Award in honor of his dedication to prosecution and his achievements. The award is named after a prosecutor from our circuit who was murdered.

We will greatly miss having Randy in the office. Current Deputy Chief Assistant State Attorney Amira Fox will be taking over Randy’s role as of January 1<sup>st</sup>.



Mr. McGruther accepting the Gene Berry Award presented by Mr. Russell



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## The Russell Report

### Holiday Closure

The State Attorney's Office will be closed December 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> for Christmas. We will also be closed January 1<sup>st</sup> for the New Year holiday.



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### 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 an 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](mailto:ncruz@sao.cjis20.org) or call her at 533-1000.



# Office of the State Attorney

*Twentieth Judicial Circuit, State of Florida*

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## THE RUSSELL REPORT



### HIV Case

Tony Paulino was sentenced to 25 years in prison followed by 5 years of probation for knowingly infecting several women with HIV.

The 57-year-old Lehigh Acres resident was arrested in 2013 for the crimes.

Assistant State Attorney Stephanie Russell prosecuted the case.



Tony Paulino

### Law Enforcement Appreciation Day

We are seeking sponsors for the 13<sup>th</sup> Annual State Attorney's Office Law Enforcement Appreciation Day Softball Tournament Event.

The event is May 9, 2015 at the Lee County Sports Complex. It's a free day of fun for law enforcement and their families. It's also open to the public.

Agencies from across Southwest Florida will be competing in 4 softball games on 4 fields throughout the day. There will also be carnival games, sponsor tables, great food and amazing raffle prizes.

If you want to learn about sponsorship opportunities, contact Communications Director Samantha Syoen at 239-533-1000.

All of the proceeds benefit Southwest Florida Crime Stoppers.





## **THE RUSSELL REPORT**

### **GUILTY VERDICTS**

ASA's Stephanie Russell and John Dommerich Jr.: Aggravated Manslaughter of a Child

ASA Leena Marcos: Possession of Heroin, Resisting or Obstructing an Officer without Violence

ASA Stephanie Powers: Sexual Activity with a Child by a Person in a Familial/Custodial Relationship

ASA Jennifer Royal: Sexual Battery

ASA's John Grochowski and Andrew Woodliff: Domestic Violence Battery

ASA Caitlin Sorenson: Lewd or Lascivious Battery

ASA Mitchell Cooper: Possession of Marijuana, Possession of Paraphernalia, Resisting without Violence

ASA's John Grochowski and Andrew Woodliff: Driving While License Suspended or Revoked

ASA Stephanie Bendeck: Petit Theft (Retail)

ASA Brad Willard: DUI





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# THE RUSSELL REPORT

### DECEMBER 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 December employment anniversary dates:

- |                         |                           |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| Stacey Carlton '95      | Amanda Zych '09           |
| Nancy Cruz '95          | Brenda Evensen '10        |
| Martin Bowman '97       | Jennifer Navarro '10      |
| Francine Donnorummo '98 | Rebecca Jones '10         |
| Barbara Rogers '03      | Janet Lee '11             |
| Chelsie Jones '05       | Jennifer Forsythe '11     |
| Courtney Berke '06      | Kelsey Chaney '11         |
| Lisa Nodarse '06        | Sonja Rodriguez-Gomez '11 |
| Amanda Brown '07        | Robert Conklin '12        |
| Jill Cabai '07          | Michelle Mathis '12       |
| Jennifer LaDelfa '08    | Cody Lo '13               |
| Stephen Iorio '09       |                           |

### SOMETIMES THEY MAKE IT EASY

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A man in Lake Wales, Florida faked a heart attack as a diversion as his cohort tried to get out of a Walmart with stolen merchandise. They were trying to get away with a shopping cart full of expensive toys including a Barbie dollhouse and a Barbie motorized child's car among other things. Shoppers came to the aid of the man laying on the floor clutching his chest while the other raced out the door. The whole thing was caught on security cameras and they were soon arrested. No doubt they will both be on Santa's naughty list this year.

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A New Hampshire woman got into a heated game of Monopoly with her boyfriend and unfortunately did not have a "Get Out of Jail Free" card. The 21 year old got so mad during the game, she slapped her boyfriend in the face. Police were called and she was charged with domestic violence – simple assault. She is headed to court just after Christmas to face the judge. She likely will not be asking for board games from Santa.

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