

Monroe County District Attorney Sandra Doorley

September 29, 2023



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Monroe County District
Attorney's Office

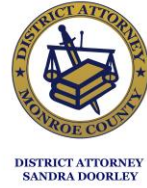
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Monroe County District Attorney's Office

Weekly Newsletter



Welcome to the weekly newsletter from Monroe County District Attorney Sandra Doorley.

Message from Sandra Doorley

People vs. Ronald Lagasse

This week, during a lunch break for the People vs. Kelvin Vickers, I switched gears for the sentencing of Ronald Lagasse.

For those who are not familiar with this case, I prosecuted Ronald Lagasse for the murder of Mary Simzer. He was convicted of Murder in the 2nd Degree by a jury after less than 45 minutes of deliberations three months ago. Together with Assistant District Attorney Aliyah Fowler, we showed the jury the overwhelming evidence proving that Ronald Lagasse was responsible for Mary's heinous murder.

Just over one year ago, on September 24, 2022, Rochester Police Officers found 65-year-old Mary Simzer deceased in an alley on Pearce Street with blunt force trauma to her head and neck. She also was found with tree branches shoved down her throat and up her vagina.

Based on video evidence of the victim and the defendant and forensic evidence of the defendant's clothing soaked in the victim's blood, the Rochester Police Investigators identified registered sex offender Ronald Lagasse as the murderer.

Nobody deserves to live out their final moments in the way Mary did. We were so disgusted by the defendant's actions, both ADA Fowler and I spoke at sentencing. I talked about Mary and the woman she was. She was a mother, a daughter, a sister, and a friend. She loved spreading Christmas cheer and had an extensive doll collection. Ronald Lagasse made the choice to take this woman's life and defile her body. ADA Fowler addressed the Judge and the defendant, commenting on his despicable actions, which deserve a life sentence in prison.

Monroe County Court Judge Michael Dollinger sentenced Ronald Lagasse to the maximum, 25 years to Life in the New York State Department of Corrections. During sentencing, the judge remarked on the unmatched savagery and brutality of Ronald Lagasse's crimes.

Homicide Update

So far in 2023:

City of Rochester Total:
42

Monroe County Total: 46

Thank you to the Rochester Police Department's Major Crimes Unit for securing the evidence proving Ronald Lagasse guilty beyond a reasonable doubt. Thank you to Judge Dollinger for issuing the maximum sentence against this monster. Most importantly, thank you to Mary's family and the community for trusting me to be Mary's voice in the courtroom.

Sandra

Travis Lewis Admits to Multiple Violent Offenses

Travis Lewis is a name we have heard over and over again. On Wednesday, September 27, 2023, he pled guilty to multiple incidents. Travis Lewis pled guilty to an entire indictment, including two counts of Assault in the 1st Degree, two counts of Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the 2nd Degree, and Criminal Possession of a Controlled Substance in the 7th Degree. The co-defendant, 17-year-old Justin Rhynes, also pled guilty to the indictment, including two counts of Assault in the 1st Degree, two counts of Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the 2nd Degree, and Criminal Possession of a Controlled Substance in the 7th Degree. This indictment was related to a shooting on September 28, 2022, which resulted in a 3-year-old being shot in the crossfire.

On September 28, 2022, Rochester Police Officers arrived in the area of N. Clinton Avenue and Clifford Avenue around 6:00PM. The toddler was sitting in a car seat in a parked vehicle when he was caught in the crossfire and shot. After a swift and thorough investigation, Travis Lewis and Justin Rhynes were identified as the shooters. Travis Lewis will be sentenced to 20 years in the New York State Department of Corrections plus 5 years of post-release supervision. Justin Rhynes, who was 16 years old at the time of the shooting, will be sentenced to 5 years in the New York State Department of Corrections plus 5 years of post-release supervision.

Travis Lewis also pled guilty to Manslaughter in the 1st Degree for causing the death of Isaiah Fleming. On September 5, 2022, at approximately 12:15AM, Rochester Police Officers responded to a convenience store at Joseph Avenue for the report of a male shot. Upon arrival, they located 24-year-old Isaiah Fleming shot in the upper body. He died at the scene following lifesaving measures. After a detailed investigation, Travis Lewis was later indicted by a grand jury for the homicide, which was unsealed on December 7, 2022. Travis Lewis will be sentenced to 20 years in the New York State Department of Corrections plus 5 years of post-release supervision for the homicide.

Travis Lewis also pled guilty to Attempted Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the 2nd Degree on May 31, 2021, which was pending sentencing at the time of his most recent crimes. He will be sentenced to 7 years in the New York State Department of Corrections for this 2021 gun offense.

The September 28, 2022 charges and the September 5, 2022 Manslaughter in the 1st Degree charge will run concurrently to each other but they will run consecutively to the Attempted Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the 2nd Degree plea. **Travis Lewis is expected to serve 27 years in the New York State Department of Corrections plus 5 years of post-release supervision.**

The case was prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Michael Robertson, Deputy Chief of the Special Victims Unit and Assistant District Attorney Matthew Schiano, of the Major Felony Bureau.

Highlights from the MCDA's Office

The trial for the **People vs. Kelvin Vickers** will continue into next week. This case is being prosecuted by Monroe County District Attorney Sandra Doorley and First Assistant District Attorney Perry Duckles. The defendant is charged with Aggravated Murder, four counts of Murder in the 1st Degree, Murder in the 2nd Degree, Attempted Aggravated Murder, two counts of Attempted Murder in the 2nd Degree, Assault in the 2nd Degree, fourteen counts of Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the 2nd Degree, Reckless Endangerment in the 1st Degree, and Arson in the 4th Degree in front of Monroe County Court Judge Hahn.

A Monroe County Jury convicted 28-year-old **Tyrone Jiggetts, Jr.** of Murder in the 2nd Degree and six counts of Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the 2nd Degree for murder of Juan Pena Mendez. The jury did not reach a verdict for the murder of Luis Morales. This case will be retried at a later date. On February 26, 2022, at approximately 11:15AM, Rochester Police Officers were called to Rialto Street for a shooting. Upon arrival, they located Juan Pena Mendez, who was found deceased from gunshot wounds, sitting inside his motor vehicle in a driveway. After a thorough investigation, the Rochester Police Department identified parolee Tyrone Jiggetts, Jr. as the shooter. Tyrone Jiggetts was on parole for a previous Attempted Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the 2nd Degree conviction at the time of both murders. The case was prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Michael Robertson, Deputy Chief of the Special Victims Unit.

41-year-old **Lorcen Burroughs** was convicted of two counts of Sexual Abuse in the 1st Degree and Endangering the Welfare of a Child by New York State Supreme Court Justice Doran following a bench trial regarding the sexual abuse of a 13-year-old child on February 18, 2021, in the City of Rochester. This case was investigated by the Rochester Police Department and prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Ralph Alloco, of the Special Victims Unit. Lorcen Burroughs will be sentenced on November 16, 2023, in front of New York State Supreme Court Justice Doran.

39-year-old **Elfin Elliot** pled guilty to his indictment, which included two counts of Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the 2nd Degree and one count of Criminal Possession of a Controlled Substance in the 3rd Degree. On February 28, 2023, Elfin Elliot and his co-defendant led New York State Troopers and Rochester Police Officers on a high-speed police chase throughout the Northeast portion of the City of Rochester, where Elfin Elliot drove into one of the buildings at Marshall High School. During the chase, two loaded semi-automatic handguns were recovered along with a significant amount of Fentanyl packaged for sale. Both the New York State Police Troopers and Rochester Police Officers ensured that no civilians were injured during this chase. This case was prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Tony DiPerna, of the Special Investigations Bureau. Elfin Elliot will be sentenced on November 22, 2023, before Monroe County Court Judge Dollinger.

26-year-old **Michael Jones** was sentenced by Monroe County Court Judge Bailey Turner to 14 years in the New York State Department of Corrections plus 5 years of post-release supervision. He was previously convicted of Manslaughter in the 1st Degree by Monroe County Court Judge Bailey Turner following a bench trial for the stabbing death of Keith Arnold on June 6, 2021. This case was investigated by the Rochester Police Department and prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Greg Clark, Chief of the Public Corruption/Economic Crimes Bureau. The co-defendant charged for the death of Keith Arnold, Morris Jones, Jr., will face trial on February 5, 2024.

MCDA in the News

<https://www.whec.com/top-news/kelvin-vickers-trial-tactical-officers-testify-about-night-of-officer-mazurkiewicz-death/>

<https://13wham.com/news/local/kelvin-vickers-trial-continues-testimony-focuses-on-north-clinton-triple-shooting>

<https://13wham.com/news/local/rochester-parolee-convicted-in-deadly-2022-shooting-will-be-retried-for-separate-murder-charge>

<https://www.democratandchronicle.com/story/news/2023/09/25/tryone-jiggetts-convicted-in-death-of-juan-pena-mendez-in-rochester-ny/70959098007/>

<https://13wham.com/news/local/registered-sex-offender-sentenced-for-beating-65-year-old-woman-to-death-in-rochester>

<https://www.whec.com/top-news/sex-offender-gets-25-years-to-life-for-murder/>

<https://www.democratandchronicle.com/story/news/2023/09/28/officer-anthony-mazurkiewiczs-sergeant-testifies-in-rochester-tragedy/70988933007/>

<https://www.democratandchronicle.com/story/news/2023/09/28/ronald-lagasse-gets-25-to-life-sentence-for-killing-of-mary-simzer/70985504007/>

<https://www.whec.com/top-news/emotional-day-of-testimony-and-evidence-in-kelvin-vickers-trial/>

<https://www.whec.com/top-news/da-wraps-up-part-of-their-case-against-vickers/>

<https://13wham.com/news/local/rpd-sergeant-recalls-anthony-mazurkiewiczs-final-words-during-testimony-in-kelvin-vickers-trial>

<https://www.democratandchronicle.com/story/news/2023/09/25/kelvin-vickers-trial-rochester-ny-crime-spree-testimony/70960708007/>

<https://13wham.com/news/local/kelvin-vickers-murder-trial-resumes-rochester-police-officer-anthony-mazurkiewicz-testimony-jurors>

<https://wham1180.iheart.com/content/2023-09-27-rochester-man-sentenced-to-25-to-life-in-fatal-beating/>

<https://www.whec.com/top-news/man-pleads-guilty-in-death-of-man-shooting-of-3-year-old/>

<https://www.rochesterfirst.com/rochester/two-plead-guilty-in-shootout-that-injured-rochester-toddler-marlo-joseph/>

<https://www.whec.com/top-news/rally-in-rochester-will-honor-3-year-old-shot-and-wounded-in-car-seat-a-year-ago/>

<https://13wham.com/news/local/rochester-man-pleads-guilty-in-convenience-store-killing-shooting-of-3-year-old-boy>

<https://www.whec.com/top-news/rally-celebrates-rochester-boys-recovery-one-year-after-being-shot-in-the-head/>

A red graphic resembling a scroll or ribbon, with the text "WE'RE HIRING" written in white, bold, uppercase letters across its center. The scroll has a slight 3D effect with shadows on the top and bottom edges.

WE'RE HIRING

We are hiring attorneys! If you are a recent law school graduate or an experienced attorney and are interested in a career in criminal law and public service, apply with us today! More information is available on monroecounty.gov/da.