



The 21st Monthly



From the Office of District Attorney Scott M. Perrilloux
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MYERS PLEADS IN MURDER CASE

Amite- Joyce Myers, 36, of Easley Road, Tangipahoa, LA, was sentenced to 40 years with the department of corrections for Manslaughter.

Assistant District Attorney Angel Monistere handled the prosecution, with Judge Ray Chutz presiding.

Myers was charged with the 2010 murder of Kentwood Plaza Inn manager Eugene Dong Lee. Police were notified of the homicide on July 11, 2010. At this time, Myers was identified as a person of interest. On July 14, Myers was brought in for questioning. She claimed that she heard voices in her head telling her that Lee had put cameras in the room where she lived. She then admitted to attacking and fatally stabbing the victim.

Myers was originally charged with Second Degree Murder, but pleaded guilty to the reduced charge of Manslaughter.

DAY CONVICTION LEADS TO 40 YEAR SENTENCE

Amite- On July 10, 2012, a jury of six deliberated for only 17 minutes before convicting 22-year-old Brandon Day of Attempted Simple Burglary of a Vehicle.

Assistant District Attorney Britain Sledge represented the State with Judge Ernest Drake presiding.

The offense occurred on June 6, 2011. A witness noticed two people pulling on car handles in the parking lot of the Windrush Trace apartment complex in Hammond. As the defendant and an accomplice approached the witness' car, he contacted police.

The men ran, but were intercepted by officers from the Hammond Police Department.

At the time of his arrest Day was on probation stemming from a separate conviction.

On May 25, 2011, only 11 days before his last arrest, Day was sentenced to 36 years with the department of corrections for 15 counts of Simple Burglary. The sentence was suspended and Day was placed on five (5) years of probation.

On July 31, 2012, Day was sentenced to four years with the department of corrections for Attempted Simple Burglary of a Vehicle. His probation was revoked and the defendant was ordered to serve the full 36 year sentence for a total of 40 years.

PETITTO SENTENCED

Amite- On July 18, 2012, Michael Petitto, 48, of West State Street, Amite, LA, was sentenced to a total of 10 years with the department of corrections for two counts of Malfeasance in Office by Judge Bruce Bennett. The sentence was suspended and Petitto was placed on five years of probation, and ordered to pay a \$10,000.00 fine and court costs.

The defendant was found guilty in a bench trial before Judge Bennett on April 23, 2012. District Attorney Scott Perrilloux represented the State.

The prosecution alleged that in 2007 Petitto offered, and voted for, a resolution to the parish council in support of tax benefits for a low to moderate income housing project to be developed in Amite.

By passing the resolution, Petitto's brother Salvatore Petitto was able to make a substantial profit on a land deal with Shreveport based developers Standard Enterprise. Soon after, Salvatore Petitto paid off Michael Petitto's mortgage in the amount of \$49,207.12.

Perrilloux explained that as a councilman Petitto is not allowed to vote on resolutions that would benefit himself or a family member.

ADAs SPEAK AT LDAA CONFERENCE

Assistant District Attorneys Jeff Johnson (Tangipahoa) and Greg Murphy (Livingston) had the opportunity to speak with district attorneys from across the state at the 36th annual Louisiana District Attorney Association's (LDAA) summer conference.

Johnson discussed domestic violence, while Murphy focused on vehicular homicides.

Domestic Violence

Johnson defined domestic violence as a pattern of control expressed emotionally, physically, and/or financially. This may include controlling partners through children or pets, financial isolation, or by attacking his/her self-worth.

The circumstances surrounding domestic violence present unique issues when cases are brought to trial, said Johnson. Because victims always know their attackers and choose to stay in that environment, he finds that with some jurors "the fact that the victim remains diminishes the crime."

"Domestic violence crimes are ongoing in nature and escalate over time," he explained. "You must understand the dynamic of domestic violence to understand why victims don't leave."

Other problems include jurors' belief that domestic violence does not really happen; people who believe matters should be handled within the home; and the cultural acceptance of domestic violence.

The prosecutor also emphasized the role children play in presenting domestic violence cases. He stated that it is important to remind the court of the effects domestic violence has on not only the victim, but the children present. "Never let children exit the picture."

Beginning in August 2012, a new criminal statute will take effect. Domestic Violence Aggravated Assault will be a felony crime carrying a sentence of two to five years.

Vehicular Homicide

Murphy spoke with attendees about a new approach to prosecuting vehicular homicides. He feels that by using experts, the State will be able to build more effective cases.



"The Vehicular Homicide statute requires that intoxication be a contributing factor to an accident that results in death. District Attorney Scott Perrilloux and I believe that the only way the State can carry their burden is by having an accident reconstructionist along with a toxicologist," Murphy explained.

"The reconstructionist can educate the jury on the speed of the vehicle at the time of the crash as well as many other factors including reaction times and skid to stop calculations," he said.

A toxicologist would educate jurors on the effects that drugs and alcohol have on the body, such as reduced reaction times, compromised depth perception, and distorted vision due to light sensitivity.

"We believe that in combination these types of experts can assist us in proving a contributing factor," said Murphy.

NOTABLE CONVICTIONS AND SENTENCES

On July 10, 2012, John S. Johnson, Jr., 36, of Albany, LA, was sentenced to 10 years with the department of corrections after pleading guilty to Driving while Intoxicated (4th offense).

On July 12, 2012, Joseph Roy Fitzpatrick, II, 51, of Livingston, LA, was sentenced to two years with the department of corrections for Pornography Involving Juveniles.

On July 18, 2012, Antwine Barze, 45, of Ponchatoula, LA, pleaded no contest to Simple Burglary. He was sentenced to 10 years with the department of corrections.

On July 19, 2012, Jerry W. Miller, 62, of Denham Springs, LA, was sentenced to 18 years with the department of corrections for Manslaughter.

On July 30, 2012, Desmond Clemmons, 38, of Hammond, LA, pleaded no contest to Attempted Second Degree Murder. He was sentenced to 12 years with the department of corrections.

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