

Grand Jury Report

March-April, 2011

We would like to start by saying that we have learned so much in the two short months that we have served on the Grand Jury. It has been a pleasure serving with my fellow jurors, and we believe that Miss Pryor and her team are doing an excellent job in their duties serving the community. Previously, none of us ever saw jury duty as much of an honor, and most people view it as an unpleasant waste of their time. Our collective opinion has changed about jury service now, and we do consider it a privilege. We have all been amazed by just how much goes on in our little town that we never even know about. We are certain that we still only know a small fraction of it now.

The dedication and the sacrifices that our men and women in law enforcement make every day for the betterment of our daily lives is something to congratulate them for and to be proud of. This is particularly true for the detectives who spend countless hours investigating and preparing their cases, with depth and attention to detail, for the courts and jurors to examine and pick apart. We certainly do not mean to exclude all of the other fine officers that risk their lives daily to uphold that which is right and just. They certainly don't get paid enough for the service they perform for all of us. We have all developed a greater appreciation for the men and women of law enforcement throughout Christian County. Thank you!

Our Concerns:

SCHOOLS: During our service on the Grand Jury, a concern was raised about the school board's methods of dealing with teachers who cross the line and violate the law. There are certainly times when law enforcement should be contacted early on to investigate situations, rather than simply addressing these matters before the school board. We feel strongly that teachers who victimize students should face appropriate sanctions and not get turned back out with our kids. They need to be accountable to more than just the school board. We have rules against sexual harassment in the work place, and those rules are very strict. Those teachers who interact inappropriately with students should be held to an even higher standard and not be allowed to continue victimizing students. We need laws that will be stricter on people that commit crimes against children, especially those who are in a position of authority over our kids, such as in schools and anywhere else adults are in charge of the well being of our children. Our children should never have to go to school wondering if their teacher or coach is going to touch them today or otherwise put them in an uncomfortable situation where they have to tell the adult to stop.

GANGS: The issue of gangs in Western Kentucky seemed almost like a laughable notion at first. But, they are real, they are here, and they are no laughing matter. We have seen the shows on television about gangs, and heard the stories of how the gang is the only "family that cares" for these people were simply looking for somewhere to belong. We do not believe that to be true. Our children get caught up in the

idea of being a gangster, and think that life will be better for them if they follow the crowd. The media has sugar coated the gangster lifestyle as glamorous, full of money, and something to aspire to. We are aware that gang violence often targets law enforcement officials, and we hope that the community will take the local gang activity seriously. Again, our men and women in uniform risk their lives daily, not knowing what the next case will be, or if they will live to write the report. We encourage each of you to take a stand against gang violence in your community.

DRUGS: Drugs destroy everything they touch, tear families apart and cause such pain to the ones that love the drug users the most. We need to find a better system of punishment for people that traffic in and manufacture drugs, compared to those who are solely users. Drug addicts need help, not jail, when the only crime they have committed is using drugs. They need help to get clean, not a record that will follow them for the rest of their lives. No one is exempt from the hold drugs can have on people. Drugs can affect family members, friends, or maybe even you. We all know someone who is struggling with this disease, and they need help. Some treatments work and some don't. We need to focus on finding a program that does work so that true addicts have an alternative to repeated incarceration.

FOREPERSON

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