

GRAND JURY REPORT
January-February, 2017

While not Grand Jury specific, it was refreshing to see that Judge Atkins takes the time to incorporate a devotional and prayer in the first jury orientation of the year. The incorporation of prayer for safety of law enforcement, justice for victims, and rehabilitation of defendants and the entire legal system for the upcoming year is a necessary component to the success of the system.

It is both a privilege and honor to serve as a member of the Grand Jury. In a society that is so wrapped up in 'what my country can do for me', this is a small way to give back to our community. While the pay doesn't cover one's time away from work, at least it is some compensation to what should be an honor to serve with or without pay. There will always be those that will be negatively affected in a financial manner, however, there are hardship provisions for these individuals to be excused. Maybe there should be a mandate on employers to contribute to the compensation of their employees. Maybe not with full regular pay, but a portion of their time off.

Lynn Pryor was exceptional and went above and beyond making sure all twelve jury members understood all charges and the subsequent penalties for each. She frequently pulled out the Kentucky Revised Statutes and read the law directly to us. There was a wide range of educational levels as it pertained to the legal system. But in the end, we all came together with a clear understanding of each charge as it related to each defendant and voted to the best of our ability in a fair manner.

It was extremely disheartening (and quite sickening) to see just how many cases came through involving children in this community. Child pornography and child sexual abuse were the hardest types of cases to listen to. If only there was a way to prevent these cases.

I applaud Lynn Pryor and her staff for their hard work researching the information to present persistent felony offenders (especially when the offenses occurred out of this jurisdiction). The statute is clear on how one is labeled a PFO. Having this charge with a stiffer penalty attached to a defendant just may be one of the key components to keeping these criminals off the street in the future.

While most of the jury members were aware there was a drug problem in this community, it was very evident that the problem is substantially larger than everyone realized. Our law enforcement agencies do an exceptional job trying to catch as many offenders as they can. Our community needs to step up and support every effort these agencies make, as it only makes the community stronger. While listening to testimonies of the detectives, police officers, etc., it was very evident that these men and women take their job seriously and are very attentive to the case being presented. They were all very knowledgeable of the details of each charge and presented themselves in a professional manner. Listening to the details gave a better understanding of what these men and women go through on a daily basis to protect each and every one of us.

In conclusion, we would like to thank Lynn Pryor and her staff as well as the police officers and detectives for all of their hard work and dedication. Again, this has been an eye opening experience for us all.

2/24/17
DATE

Respectfully Submitted,
A. Stevens
FOREPERSON