

THE PROSECUTOR

A NEWSLETTER FROM

MAT HECK, JR.

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Spring 2008

ArriveSafe Gives Hundreds of Free Cab Rides “Award of Excellence” presented by MADD

According to the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration, in 2006 there were 1.5 million people arrested in the United States for drunk driving. Some 41% of all traffic fatalities were alcohol related, resulting in 17,602 deaths. The statistics for Montgomery County closely mirror those of the rest of the nation. In 2006, there were 49 traffic fatalities, 21 of which (or 43%) were alcohol related. For comparison, in 2005 there were 59 traffic fatalities, 23 of which (or 39%) were alcohol related. While the number of fatalities is down from 2005, the percentage of alcohol related fatalities is higher.

Armed with this information, Prosecutor Mat Heck was determined to combat this problem. After researching what other communities and civic groups did to combat drunk driving, the project known as *ArriveSafe* was conceived.

ArriveSafe was announced during a press conference on December 19, 2007. The program, sponsored by the Prosecutor's Office, AAA Miami Valley and the Southwest Ohio Affiliate of MADD, would pay up to \$50 towards a cab ride for any Montgomery County resident that felt they were too impaired to drive home. The program ran on two consecutive weekends, being the Friday-Monday before Christmas and before New Years Day.

Residents requesting a ride called 449-9999 and an operator would get the pertinent

information and relay it to Miami Liberty Cab Company of Dayton, who provided the cabs.

Over the eight days the program was active, some 366 cab rides were given.

ArriveSafe was again offered over the St. Patrick's Day weekend. Over the four days the program was offered, 100 cab rides were given.

Prosecutor Heck said, "While we can never know how many injuries or deaths may have been prevented by *ArriveSafe*, keeping over 450 impaired drivers from driving on the streets of our community can only have had a positive impact."

On March 18, 2008 Prosecutor Heck received an Award of Excellence from the Southwest Ohio Affiliate of Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD). Given during an award luncheon in Loveland, Mat Heck was recognized for his contribution to the goals of MADD by offering the *ArriveSafe* program. In addition to *ArriveSafe*, the annual Homicide Victim's Memorial Service was also recognized by MADD. The service, now in its 18th year, recognizes those Montgomery County citizens who lose their lives to violence each year. Among those recognized are those killed by drunk drivers.

With the success of *ArriveSafe* during the Christmas, New Year's and St. Patrick's Day weekends, it most assuredly will be offered in the future .

Mat Heck, Jr. Selected As Ohio's Outstanding Prosecutor Of The Year



Ohio Prosecuting Attorneys Association Awards Committee Chair and Lucas County Prosecutor Julia Bates presents Prosecutor Mat Heck, Jr. with the Outstanding Prosecutor of the Year award—
November 29, 2007.

The Ohio Prosecuting Attorneys Association (OPAA) selected county prosecutor Mat Heck, Jr. the 2007 "Outstanding Prosecuting Attorney of the Year". Prosecutor Heck received this award at the OPAA Awards Banquet held at the Ohio State Capital in Columbus on November 29, 2007.

Each year, all county prosecutors in Ohio are invited to nominate their peers for this award. A committee of prosecuting attorneys then reviews the nominations to choose the prosecutor they wish to honor whose accomplishments have earned them the highest degree of respect in the field of prosecution.

This year, Mr. Heck was nominated and selected for his overall contribution and lifetime commitment of service to the effective prosecution of criminals, and holding those who victimize others responsible for their actions.

Prosecutor Heck said, "I am truly grateful and humbled by this recognition. There is nothing more rewarding or meaningful than being honored by one's peers, by the persons who do the same job as I do every day."

Assistant Prosecutor Mary Montgomery Named As Criminal Trial Team Leader

Mary Montgomery was promoted to Criminal Trial Team Leader on February 25. Trial Team Leaders supervise the Assistant Prosecutors handling Criminal Dockets in Common Pleas Court.

Ms. Montgomery received her BA in Political Science from Ohio University in 1994. She then attended the University of Dayton School of Law, receiving her law degree in 1998. Ms. Montgomery joined the staff full-time in 1998. She has worked in the Child Support Enforcement, Juvenile Delinquency, Child Abuse Bureau (Care House), Grand Jury, and Criminal Docket sections of the office. Since March, 2007, she has been the Supervising Attorney of the Intake and Grand Jury Division.

Ms. Montgomery is married to Dave Montgomery, and they have one child.

Assistant Prosecutor Kim Melnick Named As Supervising Attorney Intake and Grand Jury Division

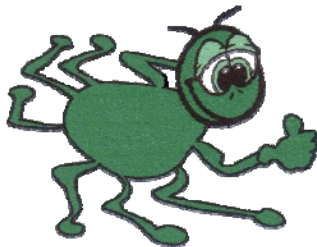
Kim Melnick was promoted to Supervising Attorney of the Intake and Grand Jury Division February 25. She will supervise the Assistant Prosecutors presenting criminal cases to the Montgomery County Grand Jury as well as the Assistant Prosecutors handling Preliminary Hearings in Municipal Court.

Ms. Melnick received her law degree from the University of Dayton School of Law in 1993. Ms. Melnick joined the staff full-time in January 1994 until April 1998. During 2000-2002 she was a Deputy District Attorney in Golden, Colorado. Ms. Melnick returned to the our office in October, 2006 and was assigned to the Intake and Grand Jury Division. Most recently she handled cases as a Criminal Docket Attorney.

The W.I.S.E. Program Launched ***Aim is to Educate About Online Dangers***

The W.I.S.E. Program, which stands for **Webbie's Internet Safety Education Program**, was launched on March 13, 2008 at a press conference given by Prosecutor Mat Heck, Jr. and Assistant Prosecutor Johnna Shia.

The W.I.S.E. Program, and its mascot, 'Webbie' are designed to empower youth and to educate parents and teachers to the risks involved with internet use.



The internet is a great resource for information. But it can also be a very dangerous place for our children. Predators use this tool to get to our children every day. Predators are very patient, they will find a vulnerable child and spend time "grooming" them and earning their trust with gifts and a sense of understanding, sometimes exposing them to pornography for

approval, then they will arrange to meet our children in person. We see a lot of this, right here in Montgomery County.

The W.I.S.E. Program is a new and exciting initiative that offers materials for parents, educators, teens and children including safety tips on a convenient mouse pad, Montgomery County stories, how to recognize tactics used by a predator, cyber bullying, the lingo, and much more.

All of these materials can be found at www.wiseprogram.org. Prosecutor Heck and his staff are also prepared to meet educators and students at school and parents in their community to enhance this very important message, "Don't get caught in a web of deception!"

Operation *Bite Back* Update

On June 12, 2007, the Montgomery County Grand Jury indicted 38 defendants on dog fighting charges as a result of a 14 month long investigation, Operation Bite Back. Undercover agents attended dog fights in Montgomery County between April 2006 and March 2007, at six locations.

There were two additional dog fighting cases indicted on November 11, 2006 that were not a part of Operation Bite Back, involving five defendants. In those cases, a total of 71 dogs were confiscated.

In the 16 months since November 2006, a total of 43 individuals have been indicted on charges of dog fighting. As of this writing, 39 of those defendants have been convicted, one defendant has an outstanding warrant, two are pending cases, and one defendant is deceased.

Buyer Beware When Buying Gift Cards Online

One of the newest scams to hit consumers is the online sale of store gift cards. On some online auction sites and online gift card 'stores', gift cards from major retailers are being sold at a discount. An example is a recent listing of a \$200 gift card to Wal-Mart that sold at auction for \$135. The card was obtained by the seller fraudulently, and was not honored by Wal-Mart.

The scam is referred to as "cyber money laundering". Often times, the crook uses stolen credit card numbers to quickly make large purchases of gift cards which are sold over a long period of time to unsuspecting buyers.

Remember, if a deal seems too good to be true, it probably is. If you have any questions about this scam, or others, contact our Fraud and Economic Crimes Division at 937-225-4747.

Prosecutor Briefs

The following are staff additions since our last newsletter.

New employees and their positions are:

Antoinette Dillard, Attorney—Child Protection Unit, University of Dayton School of Law 2007

E. Gerald Parker, Jr., Attorney—Child Protection Unit, Salmon P. Chase College of Law 2007

Kathryn Mazanec, Attorney—Juvenile Division, University of Dayton School of Law 2007

James Kaylor, Attorney—Child Protection Unit, University of Toledo College of Law 2007

Maureen Yuhas, Attorney—Child Protection Unit, University of Dayton School of Law 1986

Jaclyn Stapleton, Secretary—Case Management, RETS Tech Center 2008

Terri Maruca, Secretary—Victim / Witness Division, Ohio Institute of Photography and
Technology 1987

The Prosecutor is published as a public service by the Montgomery County Prosecutor's Office. For questions or comments about articles appearing in The Prosecutor, or to recommend topics you'd like to see, contact: Mr. Greg Flannagan at 937-225-5610 or e-mail flannagang@mcoho.org.

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