



Volume 2, February 2009

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Welcome to this month's newsletter from **Collin County District Attorney John R. Roach** and his staff. This newsletter is being sent to you because we believe you will find its contents informative and interesting.

We invite you to visit our website for more information about our office, our various programs, victim services, frequently asked questions and much, much more.

This month's articles:

- [District Attorney John Roach Receives 2008 Lone Star Prosecutor Award](#)
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District Attorney John Roach Receives 2008 Lone Star Prosecutor Award

Collin County Criminal District Attorney John Roach has received the 2008 Lone Star Prosecutor Award given on behalf of Texas prosecutors by the Texas District and County Attorneys Association (TDCAA).

"Recognition by my fellow Texas prosecutors as Lone Star Prosecutor of the Year is a great honor—and doubly so because of our shared dedication to truth, justice, and the rule of law," said Mr. Roach.

Each year the TDCAA Board of Directors names a Lone Star Prosecutor who demonstrates professionalism and dedication to the highest standards of prosecution.



The Inside Story on the Successful Prosecution of Rockwall County DA

Rockwall County District Attorney Galen Ray Sumrow was convicted in two trials of Theft by a Public Servant.

Did You Know?

There are **57** prosecutors in the Collin County District Attorney's Office.

Spotlight on Conviction:

Aggravated Robbery Conviction

Eric White was convicted by a jury on three counts of Aggravated Robbery and one count of Evading with a Vehicle on October 22, 2008. The defendant robbed three people at gunpoint and refused to obey the police, resulting in a high-speed chase that ended south of Dallas. The jury sentenced the defendant to 60 years confinement.

The case was tried by Assistant District Attorneys John Schomburger and Scott Becker.

For other convictions, [click here](#).

Sumrow was accused of using Rockwall District Attorney's Office funds for personal gain and for abuse of official capacity concerning \$68,000 of apportionment funds that he diverted into his personal banking account.

In the first trial, Sumrow was convicted of Theft by a Public Servant of greater than \$1,500 and sentenced to 4 years in prison on March 25, 2008. In the second trial, Sumrow was convicted of Theft by a Public Servant of greater than \$20,000 and on June 11, 2008, he was sentenced to 15 years in prison.

Both cases were tried by John Schomburger, Jim Skinner and Justin Johnson. For the full article, go to <http://www.tdcaa.com/node/3294>



DWI Statistics

The Collin County DA's Office tried 250 misdemeanor jury trials in FY 2008 (October 1, 2007- September 30, 2008). Of these, 170, or 68% were DWI cases. In cases where there was not a breath test or blood test results to show intoxication, the jury trial conviction rate averaged 70% in the six Misdemeanor courts. In those DWI cases where there were breath test results, the conviction rate in jury trials was 92%, and where a blood result was obtained, the conviction rate in jury trials was 100%.

"Last month, we reported our future plans to have search warrants issued and blood tests obtained in every DWI arrest in Collin County," said DA John Roach. "These statistics show what an enormous impact this program will have."



Collin County DA's Top Gun Award

The Collin County District Attorney's Office has a new Top Gun in town. The award was presented to Criminal Investigator Kenny Newton.



The Top Gun Award was introduced four years ago by Criminal District Attorney John Roach and is meant to promote the competition and recreation of shooting among the investigators in the DA's office. It is made up of two qualification rounds: one in the spring and one in the fall. After a combined total of the scores from both qualifications, the person with the highest total score wins the Top Gun Award, getting their name on a plaque, a cash award, and bragging rights for a year.



Feature - Emergency Response Team

Novaline Varner - Chief of Investigators

Chad Smith - Deputy Chief of Investigators

The DA created an Emergency Response Team (ERT) within the Investigations Division soon after taking office in 2003. At present, the team has 5 members. The ERT is currently staffed by Bobby Chacon, Keith Henslee, Gary Cochrane, Kim Pickrell, and Kenny Newton.

Employees of the DA's Office have been briefed about the Emergency Response Team (ERT) and know what its function is and how they are to respond to various emergencies. Other briefings for employees are held from time to time, and the Team holds regular practice drills that involve them. The purpose is to train DA employees and to keep them informed of what to do, depending on the threat, so that they will respond in a way that is most likely to help them avoid or survive the threat without further endangering themselves, other employees of the DA's Office, or members of the ERT.

The ERT's first mission is to protect members of the DA staff, and, secondarily, the equipment, files and records of the DA's Office, against any threat. The members of the ERT train frequently, usually after hours, in the courthouses, and each member knows how and where to respond in the event of an emergency. DA employees are trained to follow an ERT member's instructions at all times in an emergency.

All of the DA's criminal investigators work and train to be first responders to courthouse emergencies and have developed procedures and acquired equipment to be able to perform appropriately, as a situation dictates. The ERT's primary mission remains the same, but the investigators on that team will also be part of the courthouse first responder system that is currently being developed.



Criminal Investigators and ERT members (L to R) - Bobby Chacon, Kim Pickrell, Kenny Newton and Keith Henslee. Not pictured: Gary Cochrane.



Citizen Prosecutor Academy

Collin County DA announces spring 2009 Citizen Prosecutor Academy. The class will be February 12 - April 16. If you're interested in attending the fall session, please go to <http://www.collincountyda.com/citizen.htm> for more information.

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