

Busy time for the prosecutor's office

By Mark Shaffer
Scioto Voice writer

Reviewing the upcoming cases, Scioto Prosecutor Mark Kuhn sees a pretty full workload.

"I probably say this every year after the holidays but this looks to be one of the busiest times we've had in a couple of years," he said. In the next three months, the office has a number targeted cases-high priority cases due to the seri-

ous nature of the crime. Kuhn explained that they sit down and go through the indictments and decide which cases are most important for them to target for the community's safety.

"Sometimes it is because it is a serious crime like murder," Kuhn said. "Sometimes, they are a lesser felony where the person has a bad criminal record. We look at the strength of the cases and which one we want to put

extra resources on."

One of the targeted cases is the just concluded Cecil Conley double murder case. Conley was the third defendant in the shooting deaths of Gary Markins Jr. of Lucasville, and Christina Williams, 37, of Lucasville in 2010. Conley received two life sentences for their murders. Conley is already serving a sentence for theft. He had ten prior convictions and has spent 23 years in prison. He is 45 years old.

Other high profile cases includes three murder cases, bank robbery, and a homicide. One of the upcoming cases is Daniel Furnier, 33, of West Portsmouth who is facing charges for the robbery of the PNC Bank in Rosemount last April. In June, he was indicted on a total of 22 counts including two counts of burglary, five counts of vandalism, robbery, four counts of theft, three counts of receiving stolen property, three counts of theft

by deception, three counts of breaking and entering, and possession of criminal tools.

On Feb. 13, David Harshburger Jr. will have a double homicide trial. In July, Harshberger, 39, of McDermott was charged with two counts of aggravated vehicular homicide in the death of his girlfriend Samantha Tackett and their two-year-old child after the vehicle he was driving went

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Man's body pulled from the river

By Mark Shaffer
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The Scioto County Sheriff's Office is asking for the public's help to identify a body that was washed up on the banks of the Ohio River.

On Jan. 30, the sheriff's office got a call around 2:28 p.m. from a person saying that a body had washed up onto the shoreline in Buena Vista in Nile Township.

Deputies and detectives arrived at the scene and with the help of EMS and fire department personnel, they retrieved the body from Ohio River.

The body was badly decomposed and there is hope of making an identification through dental records.

Captain David Hall said they are wondering if the body could be that of man who jumped in the Ohio River near Proctorville on Nov. 18.

"It is a possibility," he said.

The man, whose identity hasn't been released,

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Johnson joins Counseling Center

Dr. Terry Johnson, DO is joining The Counseling Center's professional staff as Medical Director and Physician effective February 1.

Dr. Johnson will be providing primary health care services and leadership at The Counseling Center's Family Health Care Center located at 1634 11th Street in Portsmouth to TCC clients and families.

Ed Hughes, President and CEO of The Counseling Center, comments that "Dr. Johnson's community knowledge, public health service, medical experience, and knowledge of our State government will be the catalyst in creating a primary health care system in Scioto County".

In addition, Sondra Hash, has recently been appointed to an administrative role as the Family Health Care Center's first Program Director. Sondra brings to The Counseling Center several years of health care experience in management, insurance and marketing.

Business history section inside



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50 cents

Economy, jobs need to be addressed

By Mark Shaffer
Scioto Voice writer

Senator Rob Portman feels that President Barack Obama's State of the Union speech didn't touch on some of the subjects that are Americans' minds.

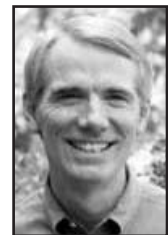
"You wouldn't know that we have a record \$15 trillion dollar debt and that spending is at its highest level since World War II," Portman said in a conference call on Jan. 26. "Listening to that speech he almost didn't touch on it. And so I think the fiscal crisis that is on our doorsteps is obviously needs presidential leadership or at least cooperation."

He said a post-speech analysis found that only three percent of the speech dealt with the record deficit and that only one percent was about health care.

"The president promised under his legislation, health care would go down," Portman said. "That hasn't been true, it has gone up. His promise that people could keep what they had hasn't been true."

He said with costs going up means that Ohio businesses have had to change what health care coverage they can offer employees.

"I was disappointed he didn't address more of the critical issues facing our country with regard to our economy and the



Portman

lack of jobs coming out of this recession and the fact that he seemed to be in another world in relationship to our deficit and debt," Portman said, adding that Obama brought up eight new spending ideas and offered nothing on how to get the deficit under control.

Portman said that he thought the speech did offer some opportunities to work on some issues on a bipartisan level including a energy efficiency bill that Portman and Democrat congressmen had brought to the Congress.

"I think that is one area where we can make progress, coming together as Republicans and Democrats, and promoting efficiency and energy conservation," Portman said. "Not just producing more, which I think we need to do, but using less energy." He said the president needs to offer more regulatory relief. He said at least one Ohio power company, First Energy, may have to close plants because of too stringent regulations which means the possible loss of over 400 jobs and higher energy costs for Ohioans. Portman said he has introduced a common sense regulatory relief bill that would make the government do a cost benefit analysis looking at job impact and choose the less burdensome alternative, be more transparent and be subject to review.

He said if such regulations were in place, then the EPA wouldn't be able to make rules that are burdensome on the economy.

Portman said the president also opened a door on for corporate tax reform and he spoke with both the president and the secretary of the treasury after the speech about making the reforms on a bipartisan basis to make it more corporate tax more competitive.

"Right now, our employers are working with one hand tied behind their back," Portman said. "Our corporate tax rate is too high, our tax code is too complicated and people who are facing the brunt of that are workers because we are hiring fewer people in America because our tax code is too inefficient and too antiquated."

Portman said he hopes that those things can be discussed with the administration to make the economy more efficient and create more jobs.

Portman said the economic recovery has been weak and more needs to be done.

"This is an opportunity, I think, for us to restructure our economy through tax reform, regulatory relief, using domestic energy and getting health care costs down," he said.

When questioned about his support of Mitt Romney's campaign to be the Republican presidential candidate, Portman said he thinks Romney is the person best equipped to win the race in the fall and to turn the country around.

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Adams joins Ohio Opiate Task Force

Dr. Aaron Adams, a physician at Southern Ohio Medical Center, has been selected to join Gov. John Kasich's Ohio Opiate Task Force as a representative for the Ohio Association of Health Commissioners.

"Serving on this task force really is an honor and something that I look forward to being a part of," Dr. Adams said.

The Ohio Opiate Task Force will



Adams

address the issue of prescription drug abuse and misuse by educating medical professionals on the appropriate way to prescribe potentially addictive medications.

"There will be two work groups that come out of the task force, and I'll work with both of them," Dr. Adams said. "The first group will write a white paper regarding the best practices for opiate prescribing. The other will deal with Emergency Department prescribing of opiates. We will develop standards across the state on how to prescribe these addicting

drugs."

Dr. Adams also served on Ohio's Prescription Drug Abuse Task Force in 2010. He said the state's latest task force is much more physician and healthcare provider oriented than those Ohio has put together in the past.

"In the past, there were a lot of people representing law enforcement. Now, we're seeing increased participation from physicians," Dr. Adams said. "There's a focus on getting medical professionals involved, now more than ever."

Warnock seeks County Recorder seat

Local business and civic leader William R. "Bill" Warnock filed petitions Dec. 7 at the Scioto County Board of Elections to run for the office of Scioto County Recorder.

Warnock, a graduate of Wheelersburg High School, who has been an active member of many boards and committees over the past 40 years, as well as co-founder, owner and general manager of the Community Common newspaper, will pursue the office on the Republican ticket in the primary election on March to run for the office in the general election in November 2012. Warnock, was Advertising Manager for the Portsmouth Daily Times in the late 70's and early

80's and served four years as Sports Director for WPAY Radio.

"The recorder's office generates and manages records related to land ownership in the county," Warnock said. "Our local office is in need of modernization. Having managed the computerization of systems in news, advertising and accounting for The Community Common in the past, I can bring that experience to this position and do it with a responsible budget."

A lifelong area resident, Warnock was just elected to his sixth term to the Clay Local School Board of Education and has served on the boards of Southern Ohio Growth Partnership, Portsmouth Area

Chamber of Commerce, Portsmouth Area Conventions and Visitors Bureau, and Portsmouth Murals Association, among others.

"The county recorder has a responsibility to the taxpayers to maintain good stewardship of their property records," Warnock said. "I have the experience, vision and dedication needed to not only run the office now but to build a foundation of both technology and accountability for its future management for all the residents of our county."

Warnock and his wife, Debbie, live in Clay Township and have two grown children, Todd and Cayla, and two grandchildren.

Man gets life sentences for two murders

By Mark Shaffer
Scioto Voice writer

A Lucasville man was sentenced got two life sentences for his part in the 2010 shooting deaths of two people.

On Jan. 26, Cecil W. Conley, 45, was sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole on each of two counts of aggravated murder, ten years on one count of kidnapping, and ten years on one count of aggravated burglary. All the sentences are to run consecutively, or one after the other.

Conley is the third person to be sentenced in the deaths of Gary D. Markins, Sr., 64, and Nina Mannering, 29, on Jan. 8, 2010. The shootings occurred in Markins' home on Sherborne Road in Lucasville.

"This has been a long and tragic case and is another example of the plague of prescription drugs in our community," said Scioto County Assistant Prosecutor Pat Apel. "The three prime suspects were after drugs and money. All three were in custody within 72 hours of the shooting."

Conley had been tried with the possibility of being sentenced to death

On the evening of Jan. 8, 2010, the Scioto County Sheriff's Office got a call from an 8-year-old girl saying that her mother and a friend had been shot at a house in the 1100 block of Sherborne Avenue. Markins and Mannering were pronounced dead at the scene by emergency crews. Approximately, seven hours before the call, entry was made into the house by a door being pried open in the garage. Markins Sr. had been shot three times and Mannering once.

The sheriff called it a double murder and speculated that it was drug related.

Four days later, Markins's son, Gary Markins Jr. of Lucasville, and Christina Williams, 37, of Lucasville, were arrested and charged in the deaths. Investigators believe it was Conley who shot the two people. Conley was arrested in a Middleton gas station by a SWAT team after Scioto County Sheriff's detectives got a pinged Conley's cell phone. Conley was in the possession of a stolen car with stolen plates and a drug paraphernalia.

Conley was already serving a sentence for theft. He had ten prior convictions and has spent 23 years in prison. In separate trials, Markins Jr. and Williams were found guilty in the murders and related robbery charges. In July 2010, was tried and convicted of kidnapping,

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