



OFFICE OF THE STATE'S ATTORNEY

ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY, MARYLAND

Anne Colt Leitess, State's Attorney



Anne Arundel Justice

A Monthly News Digest from the Office of the State's Attorney for Anne Arundel County

A Message from Anne Arundel County State's Attorney Anne Colt Leitess

Greetings

Welcome to the latest edition of Anne Arundel Justice!

I hope everyone is having a safe and prosperous New Year!

With Maryland courts returning to Phase III operations from December 29 - March 6 in response to the recent Omicron surge, the courts have ordered a reduction in the number and types of in-court appearances and completely suspended all jury trials. The Office of the State's Attorney also returned to remote work for a large portion of our staff. Our offices are staffed daily with a small crew of employees and available by telephone and email. We are fortunate to have a completely paperless electronic filing system that permits us to upload, access and share documents with each other as well as with police and the courts. During this time, our prosecutors continue to handle most of our Circuit Court hearings remotely. The District Court is mainly resolving domestic violence, assault cases and DUI's as the courts have reduced their dockets significantly.

This month, we recognize Black History Month where we highlight the dynamic achievements of African Americans and celebrate their meaningful contributions to the American fabric. It's a time we teach our children about the strides and sacrifices of African American trailblazers as well as honor the legacy of those across the African diaspora who made immense sacrifices so that each of us today can know that liberty and justice are for all.

In this month's newsletter, you'll learn about the successful prosecution of some very notable cases which includes an Annapolis man who pled guilty to murder-for-hire as well as the retrial of a convicted felon who murdered a former federal protective service officer.

We're always updating our social media channels with the latest information and news so be sure to follow us at the below handles and subscribe to the

newsletter on our website.

- [AnneArundelSAO on Instagram and Twitter](#)
- [Anne Arundel County State's Attorney's Office on Facebook](#)
- [Anne Arundel Justice](#)

As always, thank you for your continued support!

Annapolis Man Hired As a Hitman Pleads Guilty to First Degree Murder, Using a Firearm During the Commission of a Crime of Violence

Michael Gibson, 23, of Annapolis entered a guilty plea to first degree murder and using a firearm during the commission of a crime of violence in the death of Leslie Saunders, 50. Gibson, was paid \$3200 by Thomas Smith, 31, to kill the victim following a verbal argument between the victim and Smith's mother. Smith recently pled guilty to first degree murder as well and will be sentenced on March 31, 2022, stated Anne Arundel County State's Attorney Anne Colt Leitess.

The defendant will be sentenced on April 26, 2022.

"It's shocking that a verbal argument prompted Thomas Smith to hire Gibson to kill Mr. Saunders and that Gibson was willing to commit such a heinous crime for money. Not only was this murder cold and calculated, but it now leaves three men's lives - and their family's lives - devastated. The defendant had little regard for human life or the community when he tracked the victim down in the neighborhood with the help of Thomas Smith. When he located the victim, he shot him repeatedly," said State's Attorney Anne Colt Leitess. "I am grateful that both of the perpetrators of this senseless crime have been held accountable for a brazen murder that took place in Annapolis. The Bens Drive neighborhood should not have to live in fear that this kind of gun violence will be accepted as common place. I would like to thank the Annapolis Police Department for their work in determining that not only was this a murder, but that it was also a murder for hire."

Deputy State's Attorney Brian Marsh and Assistant State's Attorney Glen Neubauer prosecuted the case on behalf of the citizens of Anne Arundel County.

Click [here](#) to read more.

Hanover Man Sentenced to 8 Years for Assaulting Anne Arundel County Sheriff's Officers

Shane Peart, 33, of Hanover was sentenced to 13 years suspend all but eight years of active incarceration in prison, for two counts of second degree assault, two counts for wearing or carrying a dangerous weapon with the intent to injure two Anne Arundel County Sheriff's Officers, Corporal Saadia Feliciano and Sergeant Matthew Beall, and one count of resisting arrest, Anne Arundel County State's Attorney Anne Colt Leitess recently announced.

An Anne Arundel County jury found the defendant guilty after a three-day trial on November 22, 2021.

“What started as a routine warrant service of the defendant ultimately turned into a great risk to these law enforcement officers,” said Anne Arundel County State’s Attorney Anne Colt Leitess. “In this case, the defendant charged toward the officers and he repeatedly ignored their commands to stop. They were able to subdue him by deploying non-lethal means to stop him. I am thankful that Cpl. Feliciano and Sgt. Beall were able to respond in a manner that kept themselves, other residents in the home and the defendant safe from serious injury during this difficult interaction.”

Assistant State’s Attorney Jaymi Sterling prosecuted the case on behalf of the citizens of Anne Arundel County.

Click [here](#) to read more.

Convicted Felon Receives Life Plus 45 Years in Retrial in Murder of Former Federal Protective Services Officer

William McDonald, 41, of Glen Burnie was sentenced to life without the possibility of parole plus 45 years for the first degree felony murder of Benjamin Curtis, a former federal protective services officer, two counts of armed robbery, use of a handgun in a crime of violence and possession of a regulated firearm after a conviction for a crime of violence, said Anne Arundel County State’s Attorney Anne Colt Leitess.

A jury found the defendant guilty of all the charges on October 28, 2021.

“Justice for the family and friends of Mr. Curtis was a long time coming. Initially, this was a cold case for many years and then once it was charged, had a number of challenges including a mistrial, and later being overturned on appeal due to a procedural error. The case was retried last year and a jury found the defendant guilty of all charges,” said State’s Attorney Anne Colt Leitess. “This outcome reflects our dedication to getting justice for victims regardless of the passing of time and the difficulties that come with handling complicated cases. I would like to thank the Atlantic City Police, New Jersey State Police Crime Lab, Maryland State Police Crime Lab, Fort Meade Military Police, Montgomery County Police Department and the Anne Arundel County Police Department for their contributions and support which led to the successful prosecution of the case.”

Assistant State’s Attorney Kelly Poma prosecuted this case on behalf of the citizens of Anne Arundel County.

Click [here](#) to read more.

