

Jonathan A. Roberts Plea

January 27, 2023

District Attorney Matthew Van Houten announced today that Jonathan A. Roberts, 32, of Elmira, appeared in Tompkins County Court today and entered a guilty plea to the crime of Manslaughter in the Second Degree, a Class C Felony. Manslaughter in the Second Degree represents the most serious count of the four-count indictment, which also charged Reckless Driving, Criminally Negligent Homicide and Leaving the Scene of a Personal Injury Incident Without Reporting.

The maximum possible sentence is an indeterminate term of five to fifteen years in New York State prison. No promises were made by the prosecution or the Court with regard to the prospective sentence. Roberts also waived his right to appeal.

Roberts admitted to operating a motor vehicle while in an impaired condition in the early morning hours of March 19, 2022 in the Town of Newfield, and to recklessly causing the death of Joseph L. Arguello, 49, of New Mexico.

Leon Arguello was a father of two and a talented musician. He had been in Ithaca on an extended visit to spend time with his children.

District Attorney Van Houten prosecuted the case and Luke Fenchel represented the defendant.

Sentencing has been scheduled for April 21, 2023 at 11:00 a.m. before County Court Judge John C. Rowley.

Clifton Bibbins Conviction

January 31, 2023

District Attorney Matthew Van Houten announced today that Clifton Bibbins, 39, of Ithaca, was convicted by a jury on this afternoon of the crimes of Assault in the Second Degree, two counts of Burglary in the First Degree, Attempted Robbery in the First Degree, and Criminal Possession

of a Weapon in the Second Degree. Burglary in the First Degree is a Class B felony which is punishable by up to 25 years in State Prison. The indictment charged Bibbins with a home invasion attempted robbery in Lansing on October 14, 2021, during which the defendant pistol-whipped the victim and shot the victim in the foot.

Bibbins was convicted of all charges after a jury trial in the Tompkins County Court. The trial commenced on January 20, 2023, and concluded on Tuesday, January 31, 2023.

Sentencing has been scheduled for March 17, 2023, at 10:00 a.m. before Judge John C. Rowley.

Assistant District Attorney Emily Perks Quinlan prosecuted the case with Deputy District Attorney Andrew Bonavia. Michael Witmer and Christopher Monna from Rochester represented the defendant.

William L. Marshall Plea

February 23, 2023

District Attorney Matthew Van Houten announced today that William L. Marshall, 41, of Ithaca, appeared in Tompkins County Court this afternoon and entered a guilty plea to Manslaughter in the First Degree. The maximum legal sentence for Manslaughter in the First Degree is 25 years in state prison. A mandatory term of post release supervision of between 2.5 and 5 years will be imposed after Marshall completes his prison sentence.

The prosecution will be seeking the maximum sentence, 25 years plus 5 years of post-release supervision. Marshall was required to waive his right to appeal.

Deputy District Attorney Andrew Bonavia prosecuted the case. Attorneys Raymond Schlather and Jacob McNamara of the Ithaca law firm of Schlather, Stumbar, Parks & Salk, LLP represented the defendant.

Marshall admitted to intentionally causing the death of Alan Godfrey on July 20, 2021 at 206 Taughannock Boulevard in the City of Ithaca. Marshall is currently serving a 33-month sentence from a 2022 conviction in federal court for possession of a firearm by a prior convicted felon. He will remain incarcerated in the Tompkins County Jail pending sentencing.

Alan Godfrey was 32 years old when his life was tragically cut short by Marshall's senseless act of violence. Alan was a loved member of the Ithaca community, known for his smile and vibrant personality. Alan had worked at GIAC and Southside and was universally regarded for his positive energy and larger than life persona.

District Attorney Van Houten stated "The defendant brutally killed Alan Godfrey and devastated his entire family. As stated in court, the defendant would have likely raised the affirmative defense recognized under New York law that he acted under the influence of an extreme emotional disturbance. In pleading guilty today, the defendant accepted responsibility and will be held accountable for taking Alan's life. This resolution will also spare Alan's family from an extremely traumatic and upsetting trial."

"The most important consideration to me is that Alan's family supports the plea to First Degree Manslaughter. Nothing the justice system can do will ever feel like enough of a punishment for what William Marshall did. But we intend to vigorously argue for the maximum sentence of 25 years in prison."

The District Attorney's Office recognizes and thanks the agencies who conducted the investigation and assisted in the prosecution of this case, specifically the exemplary work of the Ithaca Police Department, the New York State Police, Troop C BCI and Forensic Investigation Unit, and the Tompkins County Sheriff's Department.

A sentencing hearing has been scheduled for April 13 and 14, 2023 before Tompkins County Judge Joseph R. Cassidy.

Zachary D. Starner Conviction

March 22, 2023

District Attorney Matthew Van Houten announced today that Zachary D. Starner, 36, of Lansing, was convicted by a jury this morning of the crime of Perjury in the Third Degree. Perjury in the Third Degree is a Class A misdemeanor punishable by up to 364 days in jail, a term of probation or a conditional discharge.

Starner had been on administrative leave from his job as a Tompkins County Sheriff's Deputy since his arrest on February 8, 2021. The Tompkins County Sheriff's Office conducted the investigation and Sheriff Derek Osborne was the arresting officer in connection with the perjury charge. Starner was convicted of providing false sworn testimony in connection with a criminal trial in Tompkins County Court in 2019.

The conviction came after a jury trial in the Ithaca City Court. The trial commenced on March 20, 2023, and concluded with the jury verdict just before noon on Wednesday, March 22, 2023.

DA Van Houten said "dishonesty from a law enforcement officer has no place in this community. This verdict represents a significant message that no one is above the law in Tompkins County. I want to commend ADA Veronica Fox for her strong advocacy and steadfast work on this difficult case."

Sheriff Osborne added "I am both grateful for the verdict and thankful to the jury who took this allegation as seriously as I did. I remain committed to allowing only the best public servants to serve as my deputies."

Sentencing has been scheduled for May 26, 2023 at 1:30 p.m. before Judge Richard M. Wallace.

Assistant District Attorney Veronica Fox prosecuted the case, assisted by ADA Heidi Paulino. Daniel Strollo from Rochester, New York, represented the defendant.

Clifton Bibbins Sentenced

April 17, 2023

District Attorney Matthew Van Houten announced today that Clifton Bibbins, 39, of Ithaca, was sentenced on Friday, April 14, 2023 for the crimes of Assault in the Second Degree, two counts of Burglary in the First Degree, Attempted Robbery in the First Degree, and Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the Second Degree. Bibbins was convicted after a jury trial that commenced on January 20, 2023, and concluded on Tuesday, January 31, 2023.

Bibbins' conviction stems from a home invasion attempted robbery in Lansing on October 14, 2021, during which the defendant pistol-whipped the victim and shot the victim in the foot.

Judge John C. Rowley sentenced Bibbins to a term of twenty (20) years to life for the most serious convictions, two counts of Burglary in the First Degree, as well as concurrent terms of sixteen (16) to life for Attempted First Degree Robbery and Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the Second Degree, and twelve (12) to life for Assault in the Second Degree. The Court found Bibbins to be a Persistent Violent Felony Offender after a review of Bibbins' criminal history, which includes two prior Attempted Robbery in the Second Degree convictions and a narcotics felony conviction. None of Bibbins' prior crimes took place in Tompkins County.

Assistant District Attorney Emily Perks Quinlan prosecuted the case with Deputy District Attorney Andrew Bonavia. Michael Witmer and Christopher Monna from Rochester represented the defendant.

Van Houten said "Assistant District Attorney Emily Quinlan deserves special recognition for her tenacious work on this difficult case. Her professionalism and preparation were extraordinary."

The Tompkins County Sheriff's Office investigated the case, with support from the New York State Police.

William Marshall Sentenced

August 15, 2023

District Attorney Matthew Van Houten announced today that William L. Marshall, 41, of Ithaca, was sentenced on Friday, April 14, 2023, in Tompkins County Court in connection with his conviction of Manslaughter in the First Degree.

County Court Judge Joseph R. Cassidy sentenced Marshall to a determinate term of twenty (20) years in New York State Prison together with five (5) years of post-release supervision. The prosecution sought the maximum sentence, 25 years plus 5 years of post-release supervision.

Deputy District Attorney Andrew Bonavia prosecuted the case. Attorney Raymond Schlather of the Ithaca law firm of Schlather, Stumbar, Parks & Salk, LLP represented the defendant.

On February 23, 2023 Marshall pleaded guilty to intentionally causing the death of Alan Godfrey on July 20, 2021 at 206 Taughannock Boulevard in the City of Ithaca.

Marshall is currently serving a 33-month sentence from a 2022 conviction in federal court for possession of a firearm by a prior convicted felon.

On April 13th the Court heard testimony from several witnesses, including a forensic psychiatrist, intended to mitigate the defendant's actions and support Marshall's request for a minimum sentence.

On April 14th, Alan Godfrey's family members addressed the Court in an emotional plea for the maximum sentence. Alan's sisters Latishia Abdellatif and Quinn Godfrey, and Alan's mother, Barbara Godfrey gave powerful and poignant statements to the judge. The theme of their message was to seek Justice for Alan. They emphasized Alan's sense of family and his ability to make everyone around him happy. Alan's death was a heartbreaking loss to the entire community and was devastating to his family and friends. Alan Godfrey was 32 years old when his life was

tragically cut short. Alan was a loved member of the Ithaca community, known for his smile and vibrant personality. Alan had worked at GIAC and Southside and was universally regarded for his positive energy and larger-than-life persona.

District Attorney Van Houten stated “Regardless of any underlying circumstances, the defendant chose to take the law into his own hands when he brutally killed Alan Godfrey. Alan Godfrey did not deserve to die. There is no place in our society for those who exercise vigilante justice without regard for the law and without considering the devastating consequences of their actions.”

The District Attorney’s Office recognizes and thanks the agencies who conducted the investigation and assisted in the prosecution of this case, specifically the exemplary work of the Ithaca Police Department, the New York State Police, Troop C BCI and Forensic Investigation Unit, and the Tompkins County Sheriff’s Department.

Larry Walrad, Jr. Indictment

May 12, 2023

District Attorney Matthew Van Houten announced today that Larry R. Walrad, Jr., 52, of Lansing, has been arraigned in Tompkins County Court in connection with a sealed, one-count indictment charging him with Murder in the Second Degree. Walrad is charged with the intentional homicide of Joseph West, Jr., 71, of Ithaca, on or about March 4, 2023.

The arraignment took place before County Court Judge John C. Rowley, who remanded Walrad to the Tompkins County Jail.

Murder in the Second Degree, Penal Law Section 125.25(1) is a Class A-I Felony for which the maximum penalty is an indeterminate sentence of twenty-five (25) years to life in prison.

The Tompkins County Sheriff’s Office was the lead agency in connection with the investigation together with the New York State Police, Ithaca Police Department and the Cornell University Police Department.

NOTE: An indictment, like any criminal charge, is solely an accusation. All defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty.

Zachary Starner Sentenced

May 29, 2023

District Attorney Matthew Van Houten announced today that Zachary D. Starner, 36, of Lansing, was sentenced on Friday afternoon in the Ithaca City Court in connection with his conviction of the crime of Perjury in the Third Degree. The conviction came after a jury trial which commenced on March 20, 2023 and concluded with the jury verdict on March 22, 2023.

Perjury in the Third Degree is a Class A misdemeanor punishable by up to 364 days in jail, a term of probation or a conditional discharge.

Starner was convicted of providing false sworn testimony in connection with a criminal trial in Tompkins County Court in 2019. Sheriff Derek Osborne terminated Starner's employment immediately after the guilty verdict.

City Court Judge Richard M. Wallace imposed a sentence of sixty (60) days in jail followed by three years of probation supervision.

Assistant District Attorney Veronica Fox represented the prosecution. Daniel Strollo from Rochester, New York, represented the defendant.

District Attorney Van Houten said, “Friday was a sad day for the justice system in Tompkins County. The circumstances underlying this case, specifically the objective dishonesty of a law enforcement officer, represent a blemish on the integrity of our court system. It is important to note that this defendant was treated the same as any other similarly situated person would have been treated in Tompkins County. It is my hope that the community can move on from this negative experience and see it as the aberration that it is.”

Jeremiah Jordan Conviction

July 20, 2023

District Attorney Matthew Van Houten announced today that Jeremiah L. Jordan, 40, of Ithaca, was convicted by a jury yesterday afternoon of the crimes of Murder in the Second Degree and Tampering with Physical Evidence. Murder in the Second Degree is a Class A-I felony which is punishable by a maximum of 25 years to life in State Prison. Tampering with Physical Evidence is a Class E felony with a maximum sentence of up to four years in State Prison.

The indictment charged Jordan with fatally stabbing 38-year-old Michael Monroe on the Six Mile Creek Walk in the City of Ithaca on October 28, 2022.

Jordan was convicted of all charges after a jury trial in the Tompkins County Court. The trial commenced on July 10, 2023, and concluded on Wednesday, July 19, 2023.

Sentencing has been scheduled for August 25, 2023, at 11:30 a.m. before Judge John C. Rowley.

District Attorney Van Houten prosecuted the case with assistance from Assistant District Attorney Heidi Paulino. Ithaca attorneys Michael Pehinec and Joseph Kirby represented the defendant.

Van Houten said, “I would like to recognize the Ithaca Police Department and the New York State Police Forensic Investigations Unit for their thorough and effective investigation which resulted in an arrest very quickly after the commission of this brutal crime.”

Jeremiah Jordan Sentenced

August 30, 2023

District Attorney Matthew Van Houten announced today that Jeremiah L. Jordan, 40, of Ithaca, was sentenced on Friday, August 25, 2023, in Tompkins County Court in connection with his conviction of Murder in the Second Degree and Tampering with Physical Evidence.

County Court Judge John C. Rowley sentenced Jordan to twenty (20) years to life in New York State Prison in connection with the Murder conviction and a concurrent term of one and a third to four (1 1/3 – 4) years in connection with the Tampering with Physical Evidence conviction. The prosecution had sought the maximum sentence, 25 years to life, and asked the court to impose consecutive sentences for the two felony convictions.

District Attorney Van Houten prosecuted the case. Ithaca attorneys Michael Pehinec and Joseph Kirby represented the defendant.

On July 19, 2023 a Tompkins County jury found Jordan guilty of Second Degree Murder and Tampering with Physical Evidence related to the stabbing death of Michael Monroe on October 28, 2022 along the Six Mile Creek Walk in the City of Ithaca. The trial commenced on July 10, 2023.

District Attorney Van Houten stated “Under the circumstances of this brutal murder, I strongly believe that Jeremiah Jordan should have received the maximum sentence of 25 to life. I was

grateful that Michael Monroe's mother and niece spoke at the sentencing hearing because the defendant needed to hear that Michael was a kind and gentle person who was loved and supported by his family. Jeremiah Jordan's unprovoked and senseless act of violence caused Michael's family immeasurable pain that no court proceeding can ever come close to addressing."

The District Attorney's Office recognizes and thanks the agencies who conducted the investigation and assisted in the prosecution of this case, specifically the exemplary work of the Ithaca Police Department and the New York State Police Forensic Investigation Unit.

Bruce Mead, II Indicted

November 20, 2023

District Attorney Matthew Van Houten announced today that Bruce R. Mead, II, 30, of Ithaca, has been indicted by the Tompkins County Grand Jury in a two-count indictment charging him with Murder in the Second Degree and Manslaughter in the Second Degree.

Mead is charged with the stabbing death of his 37-year-old brother, Zacharias Moore, on December 19, 2022, at the Cayuga Gardens Apartments in the City of Ithaca. Mead was taken into custody on December 19, 2022 and is currently serving a prison sentence in connection with an unrelated 2022 conviction for Criminal Possession of a Weapon.

The Ithaca Police Department and New York State Forensic Identification Unit conducted the investigation.

The maximum sentence available for Murder in the Second Degree is twenty-five years to life.

NOTE: An indictment, like any criminal charge, is solely an accusation. All defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty.

Edwin Garcia Sentenced

December 13, 2023

District Attorney Matthew Van Houten announced today that Edwin Garcia, 66, of Pennsylvania, was sentenced on Tuesday, December 12, 2023 for the crime of Rape in the First Degree, a Class B violent felony offense. Garcia pleaded guilty on August 29, 2023.

Garcia admitted to engaging in sexual intercourse with a person who was less than eleven years old on May 20, 2023, in the Town of Ulysses. Garcia has been incarcerated in the Tompkins County Jail since he was arrested on May 21, 2023.

County Court Judge Scott A. Miller sentenced Garcia to a term of twenty-five (25) years in state prison together with twenty (20) years of post-release supervision. In addition, Garcia will be required to register as a sex offender.

Assistant District Attorney Veronica Fox prosecuted the case. Attorney Jerome Mayersak of Ithaca represented the defendant.

Van Houten said “This sentence should be taken as a clear message that sexual abuse of children will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law in this community. Nothing the judicial process

can provide will ever fully amount to justice for the victim and her family, but the sentence in this case represents the most appropriate consequences legally available, and a fair resolution to such a horrific case.”

The New York State Police, Bureau of Criminal Investigations, Troop C, Ithaca, investigated the case.