



Winter 2023

Year in Review: Prosecuting Antisemites, Covid Fraudsters & Killer Clown

As 2023 draws to a close, here's a recap of several significant accomplishments in keeping with our mission to secure justice, safeguard victims and serve the people of Palm Beach County:

- **Convicting Antisemites:** Prosecutors achieved court victories against members of a notorious neo-Nazi group that attempted to incite hatred against the Jewish community. The leader served a 30-day jail sentence after a jury found him guilty of attempting to throw antisemitic materials at homes. Two co-defendants also were convicted of littering charges and punished for their offensive acts – believed to be among the first such prosecutions anywhere. Future violators could be prosecuted under a new, tougher state law against such hate speech.
- **Covid Fraud:** The State Attorney's Office joined with the Sheriff's Office to start a new task force to target fraudsters who cheated the federal Paycheck Protection Program (PPP). Investigators have been working on more than two dozen cases amounting to millions of dollars in fraudulent loans from the program, where applicants claimed nonexistent employees and other false business expenses. Six individuals have been charged in state court so far on felony charges of organized scheme to defraud and money laundering.
- **Killer Clown:** Prosecutors obtained justice in a cold case murder that captivated the nation. Sheila Keen Warren admitted she dressed as a clown and killed Marlene Warren in Wellington 33 years ago. The killer, who was arrested in 2017, pleaded guilty to second-degree murder.
- **Fighting Fentanyl:** The State Attorney Addiction Recovery Task Force advocated for passage of a new state law that decriminalized fentanyl test strips, which easily detect the presence of the killer substance and will save lives during the opioid epidemic.
- **Conviction Rates:** The office ranked second out of the state's 20 Judicial Circuits with its 94.6% felony conviction rate. This statistic, representing the highest point in more than 10 years, includes guilty pleas and jury trial verdicts.
- **Revamped Website:** The office unveiled a redesigned, fully-accessible website with easy-to-navigate pages. A new mobile version also is available. Visit www.SA15.org.

State Attorney Dave Aronberg credits his dedicated team of 115 prosecutors and 180 professional staff for these noteworthy achievements. Watch for more good news in 2024!