

THE PROSECUTOR'S PROGRESS

AN UPDATE FROM THE VIRGINIA BEACH COMMONWEALTH'S ATTORNEY'S OFFICE



VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1 SUMMER 2014



A MESSAGE FROM THE COMMONWEALTH'S ATTORNEY



The city of Virginia Beach is not the “safest city of our size in America” by accident. This happens due to an excellent working partnership between the citizens of Virginia Beach, law enforcement, and the Office of the Commonwealth's Attorney.

Please join me in helping to keep our city safe. Use the information you receive in these quarterly updates to remain involved in public safety efforts in your community and informed on how to protect yourselves

and your loved ones from fraud and scams. Together, we can take a stand against crime!

Sincerely,
Colin Stolle

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- *A message from Commonwealth's Attorney Colin Stolle*
- *An update on DUI cases & Virginia Beach Public Safety Night*
- *The Consumer Corner: Don't Fall for the Jury Duty Scam*
- *OCA Walks Like MADD*

CHANGES TO DUI CASES

The Office of the Commonwealth's Attorney (OCA) is taking a stand against impaired driving in Virginia Beach. A “driving under the influence” (DUI) charge can result from drinking alcohol as well as taking illegal drugs, designer drugs, or prescription drugs. It only takes the slightest bit of impairment from any of these substances to take a life.



AN UPDATE ON DUI CASES (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

On June 30, 2014, the OCA began prosecution of all DUI charges that occur in Virginia Beach. Previously, the arresting officers handled most DUI-1st offense charges without the assistance of a prosecutor. This presented challenges for the officers because although they could testify, they could not argue the law as defense attorneys could. By providing a prosecutor for every DUI case, the OCA is now assisting law enforcement and helping dockets move efficiently in court.



Although the current conviction rates in Virginia Beach for DUI are generally outstanding at above 90-percent, Stolle hopes the number of DUIs that occur in the city will decrease. For years, Virginia Beach has had the most DUI arrests in Virginia, with over 2,300 DUI arrests passing through General District Court in 2013. This is roughly 10% of the total amount of DUI arrests in the entire state. This may be attributed, in part, to Virginia Beach's large population, tourism industry, and the very dedicated and well-trained police department. The Virginia Beach Police Department

has a Traffic Safety Unit whose mission is to increase traffic safety in Virginia Beach through aggressive enforcement and traffic safety initiatives. Realizing that enforcement alone will not reduce the number of DUIs, these officers regularly provide training to local schools, military commands, and community groups on the consequences of drinking and driving.



"This is unacceptable for a city that consistently ranks among the safest cities of its size," Stolle said. "Impaired driving will not be tolerated in Virginia Beach. If you drive under the influence of alcohol or drugs, you will be arrested by law enforcement and prosecuted by my office."

Stolle reminds drivers that impaired driving is preventable with just a little planning. "Either don't drink or don't drive." Drivers should not take the risk of driving impaired. Virginia Beach offers a "Do Not Tow" sticker program. Drivers who may have had too much to drink and are parked in a "municipal" parking lot can ask the lot attendant for a "Do Not Tow" sticker. If a lot attendant is not available, call 385-5600 and a police officer can assist. All vehicles must be documented and tagged before 2:30 a.m. and vehicles may be picked up penalty free the following day from 8:30 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. Other options such as taxis, public transportation, limos, and overnight hotel stays are all significantly less costly than a DUI.

The OCA hosted a Public Safety Night to highlight DUI efforts at Mount Trashmore on June 27th. Co-sponsor WAVY-10 was on site marketing their W82TXT (don't text and drive) campaign. Other agencies offering resources and activities included Virginia State Police with their DUI Simulator, Virginia Beach Police Department Crime Prevention Unit, Virginia Beach Sheriff's Office offering Child ID kits, Virginia Beach Fire Department, EMS, Public Health, Mothers Against Drunk Driving, and more.

Check out the OCA's public service announcement produced by Virginia Beach Multimedia Services by visiting: <http://youtu.be/gc6EeXBKMEI>. Join the OCA in keeping Virginia Beach the safest city of its size!





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TOGETHER, WE CAN
KEEP VIRGINIA BEACH
SAFE!

The Consumer Corner

Don't fall for the jury duty scam, which is happening right now in Virginia Beach. Scammers are calling Virginia Beach residents pretending to be sheriff's deputies or court personnel, then demanding money and personal information.

Here's how the scam works:

You get a phone call from a scammer posing as law enforcement or court personnel. Sometimes the caller even uses the name of a real police officer in order to gain credibility. He or she tells you that you failed to appear for jury duty, and you must pay a fine to avoid being arrested. The scammer demands that you wire money immediately to cancel the arrest warrant. In other cases, the caller requests personal information such as social security number, bank or credit card numbers, or date of birth for "verification purposes." This information can be used to steal your identity or drain your bank account.

DON'T be fooled! Court officials almost always communicate with prospective jurors via mail, and would never ask for confidential information over the phone.

What should you do to avoid falling victim?

Never wire money. Court personnel will never call you and ask that you wire money, whether or not you missed jury duty. Do not provide personal information to a stranger over the phone. Call the police at the non-emergency number: 757-385-5000.

If you ever question whether you need to appear for jury duty, either call 385-4589 or check the jury duty section of Virginia Beach's courts website by visiting <http://www.vb.gov/government/departments/courts/circuit-court-judges/Pages/jury-duty.aspx>.

OCA "WALKS LIKE MADD"



The Commonwealth's Attorney's Office participated in the Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) Third Annual "Walk Like MADD" 5k at Mount Trashmore on June 7th. Our team of over 35 walkers raised \$1,241.49 for MADD, coming in second place for greatest funds raised in the law enforcement category. By supporting MADD in this fundraiser, we helped raise awareness about impaired driving and how to eliminate it.