

DA's office: "We only have eyewitnesses, a paper trail and verbal admissions. We don't have enough to prosecute. We can't get a conviction."

It looks like the city inspectors who took improper gifts, or illegal bribes, will get away with it. My source told me that no prosecution would occur because the DA's office wasn't certain they could get a conviction. There was no guarantee.

A few years ago, Jon Forwood told me, concerning the Dwayne Sells matter, that it was not his job to charge or try someone when he wasn't sure he could gain a conviction. He needed that guarantee.

On the surface, that appears to be sound reasoning. That way, the DA's office can try only those cases they feel certain they can win, insuring a high success rate. On the other hand, if practiced religiously, it would mean the DA's office would not charge or try an accused who likely had committed no crime.

Except the statement is a steaming pile of

They charge, prosecute and try whom they choose. Without significant evidence, they charge, prosecute and try whom they please. They reach plea arrangements with those they choose and take to trial those they choose.

Who can forget the trial of a guy they charged with aggravated assault when there was no victim, no evidence and no chance of conviction. It was as though they wanted to use the case as a training trial for a new gal in the office. She could learn how to prepare for trial, present a case to the court and jury and, what the hell, if the accused was acquitted, she would learn from the experience. Forget the trauma and cost to an innocent man.

The case of the city inspectors reminds me of a case where a woman was the victim of a home invasion in which she had a knife held to her throat and asked, "do you want to die?" Three men broke into the apartment and one of them made the threat. According to the victim, had it not been for one of the others, she may have had her throat slit.

Without naming the men, who do you think was the first to go to jail over this incident? The guy with the knife? No. The guy who may have saved the victim's life? No. Not even close. The third guy who was less active in the invasion? No, not him either. The roommate with the relic guns? Nope.

The victim.

The victim went to jail first. She was on probation and lived with a man who collected relic firearms. One of those relics ended the siege because the intruders saw him with a gun in his lap - her roommate was wheelchair-bound - and fled.

But, being on probation, she couldn't be where firearms were kept. The fact that such a "firearm" might be unworkable didn't seem to matter to the overzealous prosecution. She was a woman and their practice is to prosecute women charged with nonviolent crimes and release men charged with violent crimes. Simple.

And, if I've reviewed one case file where a man on probation for violent crime was brought back before the court for violation of probation and released again to the street, I've seen a hundred. That's the way it works in Laramie County. Maybe elsewhere. It costs a lot of money to house these miscreants and there must not be room in Rawlins. But, there must be room for women both in LCDC and Lusk. So, away they go.

The victim in the home invasion case did 105 days in jail, during which time her car was stolen and, when the driver was stopped in another state with her car, he was released because there was no stolen car report made on it. She couldn't. She was in jail and not allowed access.

Now to the case of the inspectors and beer. There is not enough evidence to insure a conviction, the DA's office says. Hell, there's never enough evidence to "insure" a conviction. The DA may blow the case. The judge may be in a foul mood and know the accused or are aware they work for the City. Or, a jury may not think accepting beer is a punishable crime. That would require too much jail space.

The issue here was not accepting beer. It was who had accepted the beer. Those people are not allowed to accept gifts because doing so can, and usually does, hamper their judgment. Taking beer in this case may have meant that inspections were not made but just signed off on. And now occupied houses are unsafe.

Anyway, the woman who reported these repeated acts of wrongdoing has now been charged with a crime. Not a false report, mind you. No, more nefarious than that. A charge to discourage people from speaking up in matters like this one, especially women. The men will walk with hugs all around. Justice, my ascot.

The Jessica Venable Compassion Fund

Several readers of the Cheyenne Herald have asked me to let them know when they could contribute funds to help Jessica Venable buy the necessities she otherwise would have to do without while she's confined. To provide money for her personal account in the Lusk Women's Center, one has to be on the approved visitor's list. I have been approved and have forwarded money donated by Cheyenne Herald readers and my wife and myself to her twice now. If you want to help, please send a check to the Cheyenne Herald at the address below. I will convert donations to the necessary money order to send up there in your name. She is assured of having adequate money to at least buy the basic things she's had to do without - through the generosity and concern of Herald readers to date - but if you also want to be involved, you can now do so. You can also send her a card or note. Contact me for her mailing address. And, on behalf of Jessica, I thank you.

Herald -- n. An officer whose business was to proclaim war ... He was invested with a sacred and inviolable character. A proclaimer; one who publishes or announces; A forerunner; a precursor; a harbinger. v. To introduce, or give tidings of ... To proclaim, to announce, to foretell, to usher in.

WOODHOUSE RODEN Law Firm

1912 Capitol Avenue, Suite 500
(American National Bank Bldg, Fifth Floor)



gaywoodhouselaw@aol.com



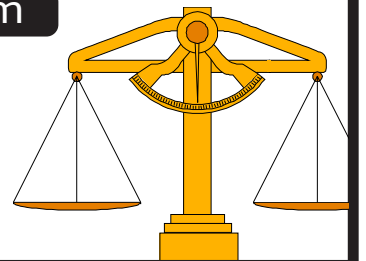
debb@woodhouseroden.com

www.gaywoodhouse.com

432-9399

FAX: 432-7522

"Advocating for your legal rights"



The Wyoming State Bar does not certify any lawyer as a specialist or expert. Anyone considering a lawyer should independently investigate the lawyer's credentials and ability, and not rely upon advertisements or self-proclaimed expertise.

Unjust Incarceration - The Jessica Venable Story will continue in the next issue of the Cheyenne Herald

WINDSHIELD CRACKED?

We offer prompt, friendly, qualified windshield replacement. Backed by over 40 years of experience! Same day service - using first-line, quality Auto Glass. Installation guaranteed watertight for as long as your own your car or we'll fix it ... **FREE!!**



up to
\$100.00
Off

YOUR INSURANCE
DEDUCTIBLE FOR
WINDSHIELD
REPLACEMENT

On-The-Spot Glass

63-GLASS (634-5277) • 805 W. 21st