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## The D.A. Dispatch

The Official Newsletter of the Philadelphia District Attorney's Office

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### ***Our Newsletter Debut!***

Welcome to the first issue of The D.A. Dispatch, the official newsletter of the Philadelphia District Attorney's Office. This electronic publication will inform readers about office investigations, prosecutions, and crime prevention initiatives, as well as safety alerts and tips. We hope you will find our newsletters helpful and informative.

### ***Let's Heal Our City by Reporting Crime***

"Let's Heal Our City" was the collective message of District Attorney Lynne Abraham and other area political leaders who gathered in the shadows of Philadelphia's LOVE statue in J.F.K. Plaza on Friday, November 2, 2007. The rally was sparked by the city's unabated wave of violence, including the recent succession of violent assaults against police officers. The D.A. urged Philadelphians to [Step Up, Speak Up](#) and come forward to report crime and to serve as witnesses in court.

### ***Grand Jury Releases Findings & Recommendations in Body Parts Scam***

District Attorney Lynne Abraham [announced](#) the arrest of three Philadelphia funeral directors immediately after the release of the results of a 16-month Grand Jury investigation. The funeral directors are accused of illegally selling tissue and body parts harvested from cadavers, often disease-ridden and not suitable for medical transplantation. Additionally, a former dentist and his accomplice were arrested for their contributions to the scam. According to the report, these flesh and bone traffickers put the public's health at risk, and harmed unsuspecting family members by desecrating the remains of their loved ones. The Grand Jury also offered more than a dozen recommendations to protect the public in future. For a complete copy of the report, please click [here](#).

### ***17 Arrests by Gun Violence Task Force Target Convicted Felons and Straws***

District Attorney Lynne Abraham, Attorney General Tom Corbett and Police Commissioner Sylvester Johnson recently [announced](#) that the [Gun Violence Task Force](#) has arrested 17 more individuals involved in the illegal purchase and trafficking of handguns in Philadelphia. Over the past ten months, the Task Force has opened over 350 investigations, made 97 arrests involving the illegal sale of firearms, and seized 168 firearms including 7 AK-47's. In addition, the Task Force has assisted Philadelphia police in solving numerous shootings and at least one homicide.

### ***Office Welcomes 49 New Assistant District Attorneys***

Last month, District Attorney Lynne Abraham presented 49 attorneys and recent law school graduates to Pennsylvania Supreme Court Justice Ronald D. Castille for admission to the Bar of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court and to administer the Assistant District Attorney oath of office. The day was special not only for the new prosecutors, but also for their families and friends who helped them to get to this point in their careers. It also was a significant day for the District Attorney's Office as we welcomed the newest members of the Office in the fight to make Philadelphia a safer and better place.

### ***D.A. Testifies in State Capitol to Reduce Gun Violence***

District Attorney Lynne Abraham recently [testified](#) before the House Judiciary Committee of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives regarding proposed firearms legislation. The D.A. offered her support for several proposals to reduce handgun violence and included suggestions to provide law enforcement with the necessary tools to combat gun violence and to prosecute the most dangerous criminals, those armed with deadly handguns. To read the D.A.'s entire testimony, please click [here](#).

### ***Prevention Can Help Make for a Happy Holiday Season***

The busy holiday shopping season is in full swing, and District Attorney Lynne Abraham and Chief Inspector Anthony DiLacqua of the Philadelphia Police Department remind everyone that it is also a busy time of year for criminals as well as holiday shoppers. "There is always somebody looking to separate you from your money and the best course of action is prevention," said the D.A. "Many thieves choose their victims because the thieves see an opportunity," said Chief Inspector DiLacqua. He further added, "If you take away the opportunity, chances are you won't become a victim." More consumer safety strategies can be found [here](#).

### ***Diverse City = Diverse Office***

The District Attorney's Office recently hosted its 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Diversity Prosecutors Recruitment Reception. District Attorney Lynne Abraham, along with current and former prosecutors from the Philadelphia District Attorney's Office, the Pennsylvania Attorney General's Office and the U.S. Attorney's Office welcomed recent law school graduates and law students who are interested in working as prosecutors in the Philadelphia District Attorney's Office. The reception allows prospective assistant district attorney candidates to learn more about life as a prosecutor in a diverse city. For more information about a career in prosecution, please click [here](#).

### ***250 Philadelphia Families Receive Thanksgiving Meals***

District Attorney Lynne Abraham teamed up with local businesses to provide 250 Philadelphia families with Thanksgiving turkeys and all of the trimmings. ACME Markets, The Capital Grille, and The Rittenhouse Hotel contributed the turkeys. ACME Markets also pitched in with the District Attorney's non-profit organization Urban Genesis to supply the trimmings. The Urban Genesis Thanksgiving food drive has been giving to those in need for 13 consecutive years.

### ***Good Looking & Informative -- Office Launches New Website***

The District Attorney's Office recently launched its new and improved [website](#), which is designed to be a reliable resource for crime victims, those seeking employment or others trying to find out more about the criminal justice system in Philadelphia. "Our new website is intuitive, user friendly and chock full of valuable information. I encourage all Philadelphians to surf around our fabulous new website," said District Attorney Lynne Abraham. Some of the site's new features include an extensive [glossary of terms](#) and interactive judicial flow charts for [felony](#), [misdemeanor](#), [juvenile](#), and [private criminal complaint](#) cases.

### ***Students Receive Tools for School***

D.A. Lynne Abraham's annual "[Tools for School](#)" initiative, [sponsored](#) by Citizens Bank, Power 99 FM, *Philadelphia Business Journal*, and Abraham's Urban Genesis Foundation collected more than five tons of school supplies for Philadelphia children. Over 60 volunteers from Citizens Bank and the D.A.'s Office sorted the supplies and stuffed two thousand logo-free backpacks and 250 shopping bags. The backpacks and supplies were [donated](#) to community agencies for distribution to elementary, middle, and high school students for the school year's start.

### ***Moms Against Guns & D.A. Rally for Stricter Gun Laws***

District Attorney Lynne Abraham joined moms, grandmoms and others concerned about gun violence at a LOVE Park rally hosted by Lynne Honickman and [Moms Against Guns](#). The D.A., Honickman and representatives from the Million Mom March, Philadelphia Children's Commission and [CeaseFirePA](#) called upon state legislators to craft and pass common-sense guns laws in Pennsylvania.

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