

October 25, 2007

**OHIO INVESTIGATORS ASSOCIATION
NOMINEE FOR
INVESTIGATOR OF THE YEAR**

I would like to nominate Linda Lawler of The Ohio Organized Crime Investigations Commission, an arm of the Attorney General's office. Linda is the Chief Investigator of a five person team to work the entire State of Ohio. The team is assigned with law enforcement as a leader in Task Force White Color Crimes.

Linda was the valedictorian of her graduating class at Whitehall High School. She later became the first female officer at the Gahanna Police Department and then the first female Detective with the same department.

Approximately twenty years ago she became an investigator with the Ohio Attorney General's Consumer Protection Section, later becoming the lead investigator where she spearheaded the Criminal Investigation Unit. The Consumer Protection Section was mostly a civil section. The criminal investigators were moved to Organized Crime and work out of their office as Attorney General Criminal Investigators, working with appropriate Task Forces in July 2005.

Under Lawler's leadership, the Investigations Unit of the Organized Crime Section, for the first time, developed Case Management Procedures. Also, for the first time the section is working more closely with law enforcement agencies to aggressively assist in the investigation of criminal fraud cases. This venture has been very well received by law enforcement and is successful largely due to the guidance, leadership, and expertise of Linda Lawler.

To date in the year 2007 the following data has been recorded for the Central Ohio Mortgage Fraud Task Force:

20 Defendants have been indicted in Franklin County
2 Defendants have been indicted in Delaware County
1 Defendant have been indicted in Licking County

The total number of Felony Charges is 144. Total Value of Fraudulent Loans or Theft for which have been filed is \$6,221,000.00.

Fifteen Search Warrants Executed, with a total value of seizures: \$104,035.40, one of which is a 2007 Mercedes Benz, purchased with fraudulent money, and three different bank accounts which belonged to phony Home Improvement Company's.

The above listed defendants include two title agents, two mortgage broker loan officers, and one appraiser.

Charges of the above listed indictments include: Engaging in a Pattern of Corrupt Activity, Theft, Money Laundering, Securing Writings by Deception, Forgery, Tampering with Records, and Identity Theft.

The above listed is only a small amount that has been through the court system. At the time this letter is being submitted there are approximately fifteen more defendants, and over 1.5 million dollars in losses on the prosecutor's desk waiting to get into the court system.

On June 7th of this year Linda participated as an instructor in the Prosecutor's training at the Ohio Peace Officers Training facility. She explained to the investigators and prosecutors in attendance an understanding of the various schemes that are being used. She and Scott Smith from the Franklin County Prosecutors office walked through several successful cases and the investigative techniques that were used.

Linda has worked day and night with numerous law enforcement agencies around the Central Ohio area to bring justice to individuals who have been victimized. This is not just a job to Linda; it is a way of life. For example, Linda spent her own money and eight weekends of her own time to complete a course on property appraisals. Linda felt without the phony appraisals these fraudulent home loans would not be approved by the loan companies. Her training allowed her to become more knowledgeable with these phony property appraisals.

While doing all the work for the Task Forces she is also a leader who you can easily approach with a problem and always takes the time to make sure the needs of her investigators are taken care of. She is a strong aggressor in her pursuit of justice, and yet is a compassionate advocate for the weak and vulnerable. Linda brings out the best in her people. Individual Investigator successes in her Unit are possible because of the leadership which she provides. Tough, yet caring; aggressive, yet compassionate; strong, yet fair Linda Lawler is a good manager, and a great leader.

Gary Brackney/Criminal Investigator
Ohio Organized Crime Investigations Commission