

## TRUMBULL COUNTY PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE

**Dennis Watkins**, Prosecutor

Repeat Violent Offenders newsletter

UPDATE: February 23, 2024

### **Christopher Ferrell up for parole; Prosecutor says no**



This office is opposing parole for inmate Christopher Ferrell. Ferrell is currently serving a life sentence with consecutive gun specifications along with multiple concurrent 10- to 25-year and 8- to 15-year sentences.

He was convicted of aggravated murder in the Feb. 11, 1992, shooting death of 19-year-old Douglas Lash in Newton Township. Evidence showed Ferrell, then age 17, used a .380-caliber semiautomatic pistol to deliver at close range one gunshot to the back of the head of Lash, who was kneeling down.

Ferrell was also the leader of a burglary ring of area juveniles and also was convicted of aggravated burglary, attempted aggravated burglary, aggravated robbery and kidnapping.

One of the home invasions resulted in the aggravated murder of Douglas Lash. As the juvenile gang was burglarizing Douglas's home, he returned and interrupted the crime. Douglas tried to defend his home with a machete. Ferrell, who was one week away from his 18th birthday, forced Douglas into the living room at gunpoint, commanded him to kneel and shot him in the head.

Ferrell, now 49, is incarcerated at Lebanon Correctional Institution. He was denied parole in 2013 with the state board giving him the maximum 10-year wait until his next hearing. That hearing will take place in March 2024 and in his letter to the parole board chair Lisa Hoying, dated Feb. 23, 2024, Prosecutor Watkins continues to voice his strong opposition to Ferrell's release.

"In short, Ferrell is a sociopath who needs to be locked up for the rest of his natural life. The best proof to justify this recommendation is actual behavior. With him there is a disgusting overload of it," wrote Watkins who pointed to inmate Ferrell's guilt in five recent rules infraction violations after serving about 30 years in prison as well as his reluctance to follow instructions given by correction officers.

Both Watkins and former Assistant Prosecutor and retired Common Pleas Judge Peter Kontos noted that because of his youth, Ferrell was spared the death penalty.

Former Assistant Prosecutor LuWayne Annos in a 2008 letter to the parole board wrote: "As one of the original prosecutors in this case, I can say without hesitation that Christopher Ferrell is holly unworthy of any grant of parole," pointing to an impressive criminal history as a juvenile.

Annos wrote that this inmate is not an example of an otherwise good boy gone bad: "Inmate Ferrell led an outlaw band of other teenage thugs who committed armed burglaries of numerous homes throughout Western Pennsylvania, and Trumbull, Portage and Geauga counties in Ohio."

Prior to Lash's murder, Ferrell had duct taped and terrorized an elderly deaf woman with a sawed-off shotgun he regularly carried to "his jobs."

For more information, contact Guy M. Vogrin, investigator and public information officer of the Trumbull County Prosecutor's Office at 330-675-2485.