

TRUMBULL COUNTY PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE

Dennis Watkins, Prosecutor
Repeat Violent Offenders newsletter

Update, SEPT. 13, 2023



The Trumbull County Prosecutor's office today was informed by the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction that inmate Marlon R. Chattman died on Sept. 12, 2023, at Marion Correctional Institution. No details of his death were disclosed. Chattman was 67 years old.

Chattman had served more than 33 years of a 15 to 50-year prison term for violent offenses in Mahoning and Trumbull counties, including the 1990 rape of an 18-year-old woman who was abducted from the parking lot of the former Phar-Mor store in Liberty Township. Previously in 1989, Chattman was paroled from the state of Indiana after serving 16 years in prison there for violent crimes, including rape.

Prosecutor Dennis Watkins, who prosecuted the Chattman case in 1990, notes that it was Trumbull County's first scheduled rape trial that would use DNA evidence. The evidence would include findings from the victim rape kit that showed a 145 million to one DNA match to Chattman.

At the last minute, Chattman pleaded guilty to charges of abduction and rape with specification and was given consecutive sentences by the late Judge Mitchell Shaker totaling 13 to 35 years. A probation violation on a Mahoning County felonious assault conviction where a female victim was stabbed multiple times in 1989, accounted for Chattman's total sentence of 15 to 50 years.

Since 1990, the Trumbull County Prosecutor's Office had joined with the victim's family to strongly oppose Chattman's release from prison. His sentence was scheduled to end in 2040, and his next parole hearing was slated for February 2026.

"With his death, he is one proven vicious sexual predator who will never re-offend and harm and brutalize another woman," Watkins said. "It is sad that he chose the path that he took in life."

In one of his letters opposing Chattman's parole, Watkins wrote: "if there were insurance policies for re-offender risk and damages for sexual predators, Marlon Chattman would not find an underwriter – the risk is too high."

CHATTMAN'S CRIMINAL RECORD

On June 3, 1973, in Fort Wayne, Indiana, Chattman went to trial on charges of robbery and rape. The case involved a 59-year-old female victim whom Chattman raped and robbed during an attack in a dry-cleaning store. He was convicted on both felony counts and sentenced to concurrent terms of 10 to 25 years and 2 to 21 years in Indiana State Prison.

After serving 16 years in prison, Chattman moved to the Youngstown, Ohio, area in 1989. There he found more innocent victims to attack and harm.

In Mahoning County, Chattman was convicted of felonious assault for stabbing a woman six times in Youngstown. However, a communication error did not bring up Chattman's previous violent offenses in Indiana, and he was given a two-year probation.

While on probation, he set his sights on the Phar-Mor parking lot in Liberty Township. About 9:50 p.m. on May 2, 1990, Chattman's last victim, a high school senior, was shopping for items for a school event. Chattman accosted her in the parking lot with a knife in his right hand. He got into her car and drove it to an abandoned home on Youngstown's north side. According to the victim, "(he) shut the lights off of (my car) and drove into the driveway of an abandoned house." With a knife to her neck, Chattman said to her "love me or die." The victim said after the rape... "The man advised that he would kill me if I told the police what happened...I promised not to tell..."

While awaiting trial in Trumbull County, Chattman was referred to the Forensic Psychiatric District Center for competency and sanity evaluation. In an interview with Dr. Nancy Huntsman, Chattman said he had never been married and would not answer questions regarding sexual experience. "He denied ever being sexually abused or molested," Dr. Huntsman was quoted as saying in one of the prosecutor's letters.

In the course of the interview, Chattman told Dr. Huntsman he would seek sexual gratification while in Indiana prison after looking at pornographic magazines. He also told her he has a full-sized “rubber doll.”

Chattman also offered the doctor the story of getting psychiatric help at the age of 6 after he had stabbed his teacher seven times with a letter opener. Dr. Huntsman wrote that Chattman does admit to having a long history of aggressive acting out “from threatening and shooting a principal when the principal was going to paddle him” to his numerous infractions while in prison, including major fights.

Chattman also told the psychologist that he dreams “almost nightly” of killing others.

Before pleading guilty in Trumbull County court, Chattman was diagnosed as a sociopath who does not have a psychiatric illness. In Dr. Huntsman’s report to the court, she gave the opinion that Chattman was competent to stand trial.

- For more information, contact Guy Vogrin of Trumbull County Prosecutor’s Office at 330-675-2485.