

PSN PRESS CONFERENCE
United States v. Broyson Gonsalves
United States v. Christopher Yasay
July 26, 2006

This week, Honolulu police charged a 39-year old Waipahu man with second degree murder in connection with the stabbing death of his girlfriend early Saturday morning in Pearl City.

Apparently, there was a history of domestic violence during their relationship, and in 2004, the victim had taken out a restraining order against the Defendant, who was ordered to participate in domestic violence classes.

Last week, Big Island police arrested a 41-year old Puna man for murder in the deaths of two women in a car crash on Mamalahoa Highway.

The Defendant was chasing the car, in which his 19-year old ex-girlfriend was in, and rammed the car from behind. Their relationship had a history of abuse which had ended 6 months previously.

The young woman had filed a restraining order against the Defendant --- but the order had expired. Additionally, the Defendant had been previously charged with abuse of a household member.

Three weeks ago, a 34-year old man shot his ex-wife and critically wounded her daughter before taking his own life in Waipahu.

In November of last year, Big Island police charged a 24-year old man with the murder of his girlfriend, who was beaten so badly that she was brain dead. At the time, the victim was pregnant, and she was kept alive until after she gave birth.

There was a history of abuse during the relationship, and the victim had obtained a restraining order against the Defendant --- but she had returned to the relationship.

These are just some of what appears to be a growing number of tragic stories in the recent past concerning domestic violence. This type of violent crime has law enforcement all over our state concerned about the safety of our families and the welfare of our communities.

And, that is why we must remain tough on domestic abusers; while at the same time reaching out to their victims with awareness programs, group support and adequate shelters to protect them from their abusers.

Project Safe Neighborhoods – Hawaii does just that. This very successful initiative has aggressively prosecuted many in our community who have been prohibited persons carrying firearms --- and we have removed them from our communities --- leaving behind a safer neighborhood for our families.

Although under our Project Safe Neighborhoods initiative, we prosecute all forms of gun crimes — we have particularly included situations where a domestic abuser is the culprit.

There is never a justified reason for relationship violence --- Never. And, the chances for violence increases where guns or drugs are involved. Domestic Violence is a crime in this state, --- and, whenever an abuser violates federal law, I intend to make sure they suffer the consequences for it.

Thus, under federal law, if you are a person previously convicted for a crime of domestic violence, or if you have a domestic abuse restraining order against you, --- you cannot possess a firearm or ammunition. Because, if you do, you are in violation of federal law, and we will come after you with the full weight of the federal court behind us.

Since 2002, we have prosecuted and convicted approximately 40 such cases in Hawaii. With the promise of aggressive federal prosecutions, I would like to sternly warn all abusers that, “If you commit a gun crime, you will do hard time. No, ‘if,’ ‘ands,’ or ‘buts.’”

Anyone in violation of this law can receive a maximum 10 years in jail — and, you will serve your sentence in a federal penitentiary on the mainland. And, we will get as many years as we can on you when you are sentenced.

Today, a federal grand jury indicted Broyson Gonsalves for being a person who has a domestic abuse restraining order against him and who was in possession of a gun.

According to the Complaint filed previously in this case, on July 10, 2006, Hawaii County police stopped a Honda Civic after they received complaints that the occupants were threatening other cars, and that a male was brandishing a weapon.

After one of the victims identified the Defendant, he was arrested for Terroristic Threatening and Harassment, along with his girlfriend who was also in the car. During a search of the car, the police recovered a loaded .380 caliber pistol and narcotics paraphernalia.

At the time of his arrest, the Defendant had an outstanding domestic abuse restraining order — taken out against him by his girlfriend, and he had been clearly advised by the State Court that he could not possess firearms for the duration of the protection order which expires in 2008.

The Defendant is being held at the Federal Detention Center in Honolulu pending his trial, and he will be held there because he is a danger to the community as well as a flight risk.

I would like to thank the Big Island police in this case, along with ATF, for their investigative work in this case.

I have assigned Assistant U.S. Attorney Loretta Sheehan to prosecute this case in federal court. Ms. Sheehan, who is presently on annual leave, is a very seasoned prosecutor with much experience in domestic violence cases.

In the future, she or Mr Ron Johnson, will make themselves available to you should you have any questions pertaining to this case.

Additionally today, the federal grand jury indicted Christopher Yasay. Count 1 alleges that on October 30, 2005, he was a felon in possession of a firearm and ammunition. Count 2 alleges he was a user of controlled substances in possession of a firearm and ammunition on that same date. And, Count 3 alleges that he was in possession with the intent to distribute more than 5 grams of crystal methamphetamine.

If convicted of the Counts 1 or 2, the Defendant may serve a maximum sentence of 10 years in jail. If convicted of Count 3, the Defendant must serve a mandatory 5 year sentence and he may be sentenced to up to 40 years in jail.

In December, 2003, the Defendant was placed on probation after being convicted of Possession of Drug Paraphernalia, which is a felony under state law.

In October, last year (2005) Kauai police observed the Defendant passing cars in the turning lane and disregarding the double solid yellow lines. After the car was stopped, the police learned that the Defendant had a state warrant out for his arrest.

In the car's center console cup holder, the police observed a clear Ziploc packet containing methamphetamine. Based on this observation, the police obtained a search warrant and while searching the car, they recovered the ICE, along with a Remington rifle, numerous 22 caliber rounds of ammunition, and drug paraphernalia.

The Defendant is currently in state custody serving a state prison term, but I expect him to be brought to federal court to answer our charges.

I would like to thank the Kauai Police Department and ATF for their investigative work in this case.

Finally, I have assigned Assistant U.S. Attorney Darren Ching to prosecute this case. Darren is an experienced trial prosecutor and up until recently was a County Prosecutor on the Big Island.

In the future, he or Mr. Ron Johnson, will make themselves available to you should you have any questions pertaining to this case.

Thank you very much.