

**LAPORTE COUNTY
PROSECUTING ATTORNEY'S
OFFICE**

1999
ANNUAL REPORT

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ANNUAL REPORT OF THE LAPORTE COUNTY PROSECUTING ATTORNEY'S OFFICE FOR 1999

- ▶ In 1999, the LaPorte County Prosecuting Attorney's Office was staffed by one full-time Prosecuting Attorney, one full-time Chief Deputy Prosecuting Attorney, three state-paid Deputy Prosecuting Attorneys, ten county-paid Deputy Prosecuting Attorneys, two Adult Protective Service Investigators, two Victim Advocates, one Bad Check administrator, one Infraction Deferral administrator, three Trial Support staff members, one Receptionist, one Victim Advocate Assistant, two Metro Operations staff members, eleven Child Support staff members, and one Administrative Assistant. During 1999 the Office reorganized the Trial Deputy Staff to effect coverage of the newly created Superior Court No. 4 Magistrates' court, adding one additional Deputy to the Juvenile court due to case load increases, and the assigning of that Deputy the additional responsibility of handling Adult Protective Services matters and the Bad Check programs case load in addition to his juvenile case load.

- ▶ In 1999, the LaPorte County Prosecuting Attorney's Office began its internal review of all budgetary allocations and expenditures in its various budgets. Because of this conscientious effort to monitor spending, the Prosecuting Attorney's Office, at year end, returned over \$56,000 to the County general fund and realized a total savings of \$188,000.00 in 1999, from the total office expenditures the previous year 1998, while maintaining and improving all levels of service.

Listed below is an itemization of the savings:

\$9,600.00	Return of two leased vehicles with cancellation of balance of leases
\$4,614.00	Refund/Return of unnecessary telephone equipment for the MC Office
\$33,923.00	Unused in budget by not hiring an Investigator
\$13,816.00	Unused in budget by changing a job classification
\$4,104.00	Unused in budget operating expenses
<u>\$122,197.00</u>	Difference in claim expenditures - fiscal year 1998 to fiscal year 1999
\$188,254.00	TOTAL SAVINGS IN 1999

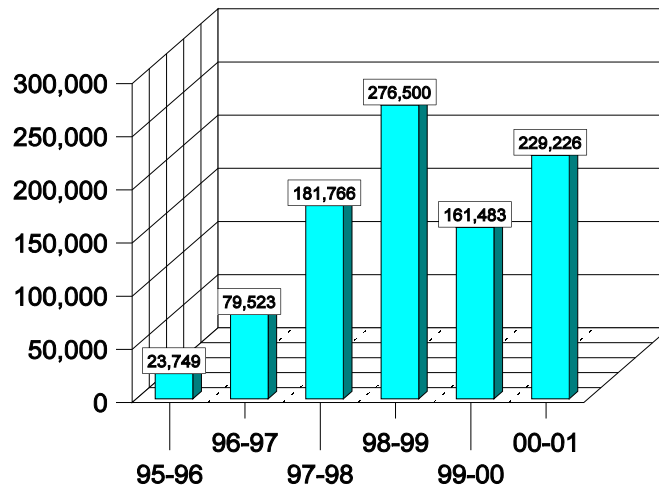
- ▶ In 1999, the LaPorte County Prosecuting Attorney's Office, Metro Operations Division, reported **184 drug buys**, which led not only to over **100 arrests** and confiscation of illegal drugs and paraphernalia, but the resolution of several robberies and burglaries and the recovery of stolen property throughout the county. The Metro Operations statistics are the highest on record for an annual basis, and do not include other assistance provided to Federal and State agencies.

In October 1999, Metro Operations and the United States Department of Agriculture joined in an effort to serve outstanding warrants by matching addresses of current welfare recipients with Civil Process and Local Police warrant lists. This endeavor resulted in the arrest of **nine**

individuals wanted for felony crimes.

- ▶ In 1999, the LaPorte County Prosecuting Attorney's Office shared its resources with other county offices and police agencies which directly affect the success of trial prosecutions through their investigations. In this regard the Prosecutor's Office provided needed equipment by either purchasing or gifting items to agencies to assist in criminal investigations. These items, both furniture and equipment, were valued at \$18,500.00. In addition \$26,650.00 of law enforcement equipment was provided through grants secured by the office.
- ▶ In 1999, the LaPorte County Prosecuting Attorney's Office continued to receive three grants from the Criminal Justice Institute - Metro Operations, Adult Protective Services/Victim Advocate & Community Prosecution. These grants were administered to improve victim services in the areas of elder abuse and neglect; to expand community prosecution; and to continue our unified, county-wide drug law enforcement efforts. In addition to salaries for six employees, the grants paid for training, equipment and operating expenses.

Indiana Criminal Justice Institute Grants
Federal Funds Received by Prosecuting Attorney's Office



- ▶ In 1999, the LaPorte County Prosecuting Attorney's Office continued to expand the office computerization, upgrading equipment, focusing on networking all staff members with the county; accessing the Internet for research; and inputting data and tracking county criminal cases through ProsLink, the prosecuting attorney's state-wide criminal database.
- ▶ In 1999, the LaPorte County Prosecuting Attorney's Office sponsored in-house training to all

LaPorte County police agencies. This is significant, as the LaPorte County Prosecuting Attorney's Office is a certified training provider through the Indiana Law Enforcement Training Board. Therefore, police officers receive their required continuing education credits for the mandatory training that we provide. These topics included:

- Domestic Violence
- New and Changed Legislation
- Victim Advocate Services
- Adult Protective Services

▶ In 1999, the LaPorte County Prosecuting Attorney's Office sponsored training for several police departments as well as its own staff members. These topics included:

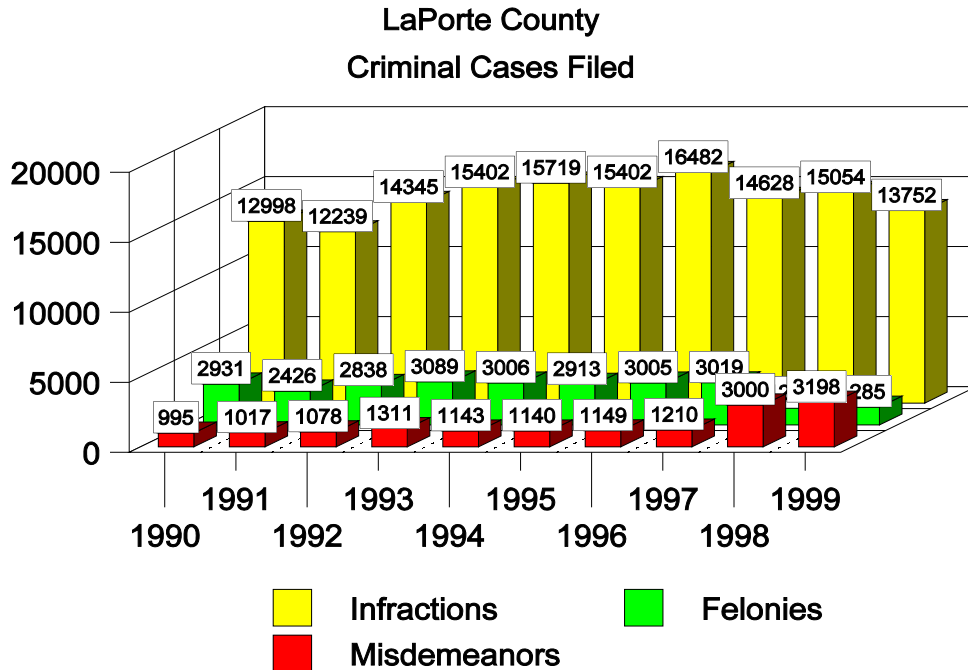
- Drug Enforcement for narcotics officers
- Office Management
- New Legislation
- Elder Abuse and Neglect
- O.W.I.
- Child Support Update
- Interview Skills for APS Investigators
- Sexual Assault
- Receptionist Workshop
- ProsLink
- Cross Examination

▶ In 1999, the LaPorte County Prosecuting Attorney's Office sponsored an Intern/Extern Program. The office employed four externs from Valparaiso Law School under the supervision of a Deputy Prosecuting Attorney. Each extern was responsible for assisting the deputy(s) assigned to their respective courts. This assistance included: legal research, the drafting of legal documents and in-court observations. Frequently, the externs were assigned special projects on upcoming trials or hearings that they could participate in and observe.

▶ In 1999, the LaPorte County Prosecuting Attorney's Office completed renovation of its Michigan City offices lower level, and completed the renovation of the Michigan City third floor offices thus providing an area for the Chief Deputy, his assistant, and a conference area.

PROSECUTION AND COURT STATISTICS

- ▶ The following chart shows the number of criminal cases filed in LaPorte County over the past years, including 1999.



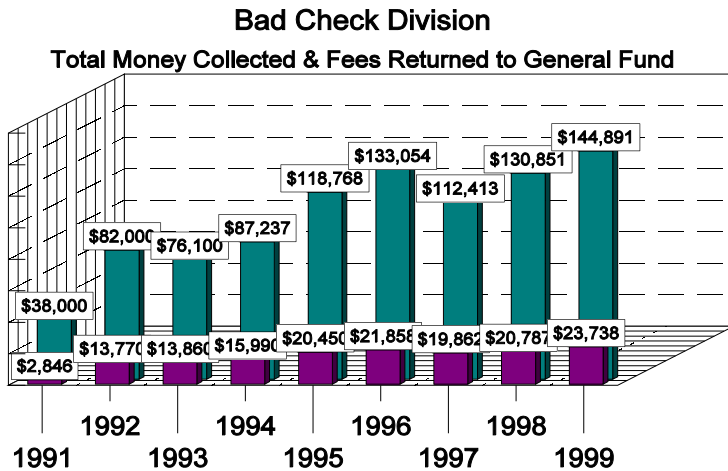
PROGRAMS/DIVISIONS WITHIN THE PROSECUTING ATTORNEYS OFFICE

ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES

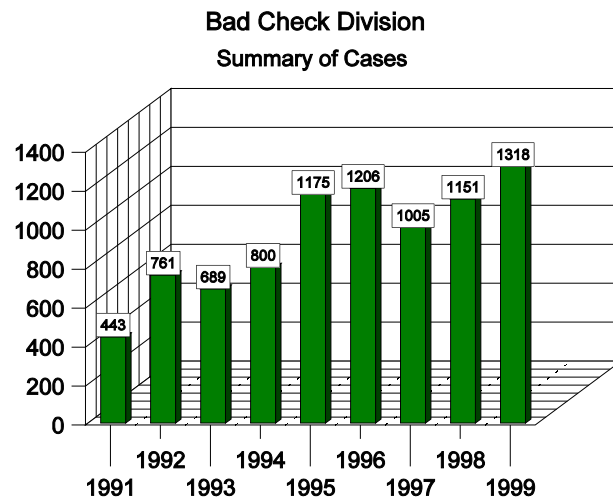
- ▶ Adult Protective Services continued its case expansion during 1999. APS continued its focus on investigating cases of abuse, neglect and exploitation of endangered adults in their six county area. Because APS had two full-time investigators during 1999, they were able to serve more victims, increase community awareness, increase their exposure in nursing homes, and increase the accuracy of case reporting and filing.
- ▶ APS made very positive changes in their program during 1999, reemphasizing their focus and attention on the protection of endangered adults in our area. With the elderly segment of society growing at an increasing rate, this will undoubtedly create a larger number of vulnerable elderly victims of crime. The goal remains to serve as many elderly victims of criminal activity and neglect as possible in the year ahead.

BAD CHECK DIVISION

- ▶ The Bad Check Division informs and assists businesses and individual complainants with the prosecution of “bad” check writers. The division handles matters that involve checks drawn on accounts that have been closed and accounts that contain insufficient funds.
- ▶ The program has seen a significant increase over the past several years due to the influx of large franchise stores in the community. Consequently, we are noticing an increase of bad check cases that cannot be brought to disposition due to “bad addresses” given by out of town writers.
- ▶ Below are two charts showing the total monies collected on behalf of the businesses, and the fees that have been returned to the County General Fund.



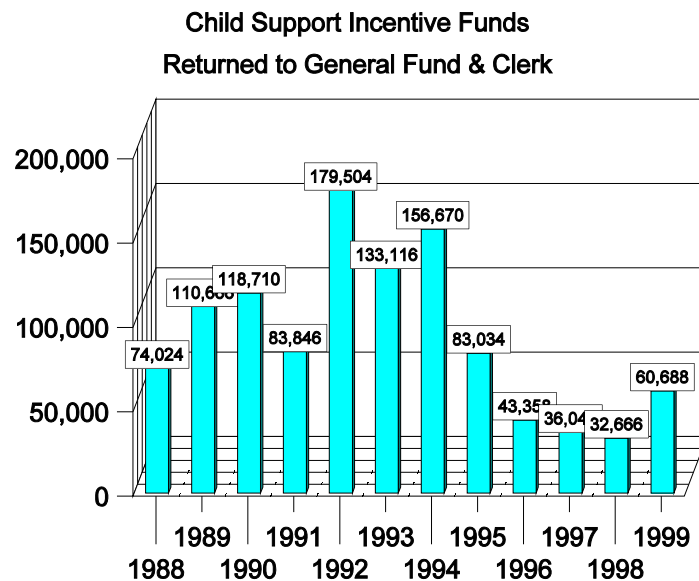
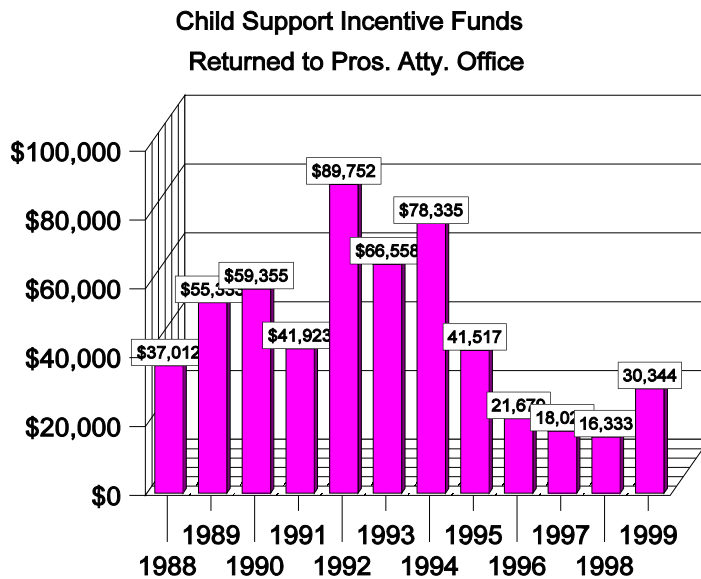
Total Collections
 Fees to General Fund



CHILD SUPPORT DIVISION

- ▶ The following charts show the Incentive Funds returned to the Prosecuting Attorneys Office IV-D Child Support Division over the past years, including 1999, and also shows the amounts returned to the General Fund and the Clerk's Office over those same years.

All of the Incentive Funds that are received from the State are divided into thirds and distributed to the General Fund, the Clerk's Office and the Prosecuting Attorneys Office as represented below.



- ▶ The Child Support Division IV-

D Office establishes paternity and collects support for children who reside in LaPorte County or whose parent(s) live in LaPorte County. The division is governed by Federal and State laws and regulations. The State reimburses each County Child Support Division a percentage of its expenses, plus a formula-based “incentive” amount (graphs above) determined by the collections of reimbursable welfare assistance costs. New inner office policy established in 1999 coupled with new legislation and regulations effective during 1999 now limit expenditure of Incentive Funds to the exclusive benefit of the Child Support Division.

- ▶ 1999 collections of child support in TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families) and NON-TANF (cases where no tax supported assistance has been received) totaled approximately \$6,000,000.00 (six million dollars). This amount is a dramatic increase from 1998 when approximately \$5,000,000.00 (five million dollars) was collected by the division. While the number of cases handled by the division continues to increase annually to 1999's current total of approximately 13,000 cases, the trend is toward increasing numbers of NON-TANF cases and decreasing numbers of TANF cases reflecting the dramatic result of Welfare Reform Legislation.

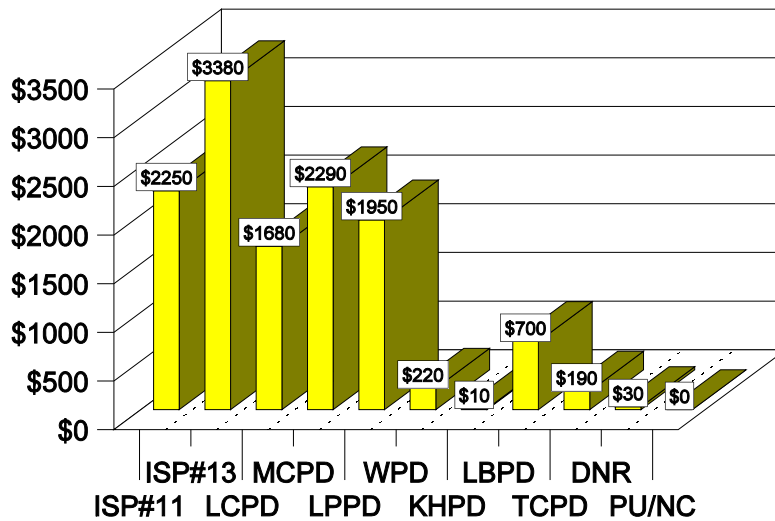
- ▶ The Division continued its transition from URESA (Uniform Reciprocal Enforcement of Support Act) to UIFSA (Uniform Interstate Family Support Act) in an effort to eliminate the confusion heretofore associated with the existence of multiple child support orders in different states. Although additional tools have been added to the arsenal available to enforce child support orders, State and Federal Income Tax Refund Intercepts remain the most effective form of collection.

- ▶ The Division during 1999 completed its formulation of and staffing for commencing criminal child support prosecutions in LaPorte County applying criminal statutes and penalties to the worst cases of failure to pay child support. The ability to criminally prosecute was made possible through the consolidation of the Welfare Fraud Division and their staff into the Child Support IV-D Division, which became possible when the Indiana Attorney General decided to assume Welfare Fraud investigation responsibilities. This addition of needed staff was critical due to the ever increasing case loads within the IV-D office.

INFRACTION DEFERRAL PROGRAM

- ▶ This program benefits primarily law-abiding individuals who have been charged with certain moving traffic violations. The program also benefits the police departments by returning a portion of the fees to them. These funds can be used at their discretion, and many departments utilize these funds to enhance their training programs. The following chart shows the amount of funds returned to the police agencies during 1999.

**IDP Incentive Funds Returned to Police Depts.
During 1999**



- ▶ In 1999, the total number of deferral participants for Superior Court No. 3 was 766, and the total for Superior Court No. 4 was 513. These numbers are up from the previous year due in part to cooperation

from local law enforcement.

METRO OPERATIONS

- ▶ In 1999, LaPorte County Metro Operations succeeded not only in discouraging drug sales and usage, but in enhancing the communication between the courts, the prosecuting attorney's office and law enforcement agencies countywide. The **mission statement** of the unit is to improve quality of life for citizens of LaPorte County through proactive multi-agency law enforcement efforts to prevent illegal drug abuse, heighten the public consciousness, and deter re-offending through prosecution and community awareness. This success rate was achieved in spite of the withdrawal of Indiana State Police support from the reconfigured units.
- ▶ Funded primarily by a criminal justice grant, Metro Ops was completely reconfigured during 1999 into multiple units with Metro Ops Groups currently operating from multiple county locations, including, among others, Michigan City consisting of multiple officers, and the City of LaPorte consisting of multiple officers. Metro Ops functions county-wide with other county police agencies, the Department of Corrections, University Police, Department of Natural Resources and Federal agencies supporting the units and utilizing the units and their expertise.
- ▶ In 1999 the reconfigured Metro Operations Group expanded criminal law enforcement throughout LaPorte County utilizing state of the art surveillance and monitoring equipment, and a variety of other law enforcement equipment purchased through grant dollars and matching funds provided by the Prosecuting Attorney's Office, the LaPorte County Sheriff's Department, LaPorte City Police Department, Michigan City Police Department and other county police departments. Metro Operations has made an undeniable impact not only on drug operations throughout LaPorte County but also in coordinating multiple police agencies into county-wide enforcement during 1999. In addition, Metro Ops has, under the reconfiguration established by the Prosecuting Attorney's Office in 1999, entered into special investigations on a variety of non-drug related criminal activity.

VICTIM ADVOCATE DIVISION - COMMUNITY PROSECUTION - MICHIGAN CITY

- ▶ The Victim Advocate Division funded by a grant has continued their community involvements including, attending community meetings, working with two community police officers, being available for neighborhood activities, helping with community issues along with the city code inspectors, health department, child protective services, adult protective services, hospitals, and the domestic violence safe shelter. Due to the effect of the crimes on

victims, the Victim Advocate Division makes arrangements for crisis counseling and contacts numerous counseling services, including drug and alcohol referrals.

- ▶ During the last three months of 1999, victim services in the higher courts have increased. These would include serious assaults, homicide and child molest. The number of **new** victims served for this period numbered **168**. This would average for the year a total of **672 victims**.
- ▶ The 168 victims served for these three months can be categorized by type of victimization. Domestic Violence victims counted 16%; Protective Orders were 29%; 6 victims received assistance in filing violent crime compensation claims; 4 women were victims of stalking.

VICTIM ADVOCATE DIVISION - LAPORTE AND SURROUNDING AREA

- ▶ The Victim Advocate Division has gone through various changes over the past several years. In 1999, the Victim Advocate Division was scaled back to two (2) advocates and one (1) assistant with an advocate each in the Michigan City and the LaPorte areas. The Michigan City Victim Advocate and the assistant are dependent on grants instead of county funding for their position. When we applied for the assistant grant position, we added responsibility of the assistant to be a support person to Adult Protective Services as well as the Victim Advocate Division.
- ▶ The office for the LaPorte Victim Advocate has been located at the new LaPorte City Police Station since October of 1997. She continues to service clients from the central and south county including clients from the jurisdiction of the Sheriff's Department, Westville Police Department, Kingsford Heights Police Department, Purdue North Central Police Department as well as the LaPorte City Police Department.
- ▶ In 1999, the total **Plea Notifications** by letter to victims for Superior Court #3 numbered **137**. This does not include contacts with victims where a notification was not necessary due to prior contact with continuing communication. Prior contacts are included in the total number of victims.
- ▶ The approximate total of **all contacts** numbered **3,166**. The total contacts are a result of telephone calls, meetings, and appointments with victims, law enforcement, prosecuting attorneys, and other agencies. The Plea Notification letters are included in this figure.

Types of Case Involvement with Victims

Domestic Violence	231
Violence not Domestic	122
Thefts, mischief, trespass etc.	95

Child Abuse (sexual & physical)	65
Traffic	76
Sexual Assault	18
Forgery, Burglary, Robbery	8
Home Improvement	6
Homicide	5
Death due to Traffic	4
Racial Violence	2
Drugs	2
Suicide	1
Attempted Suicide	1
Total Number of Victims	636