

CHEROKEE COUNTY

STATE OF GEORGIA

GRAND JURY PRESENTMENTS

TO:

The Honorable Frank C. Mills, III
Chief Judge, Superior Court
Cherokee County, Georgia

The Honorable N. Jackson Harris
Judge, Superior Court
Cherokee County, Georgia

FILED IN OFFICE
CLERK OF SUPERIOR COURT
CHEROKEE COUNTY, GA
2006 AUG 22 AM 9:39
PATTY BAKER, CLERK

We, the members of this Grand Jury, chosen and sworn to serve the May 2006 term of the Superior Court of Cherokee County, hereby submit the following report and several recommendations.

We, the May 2006 Grand Jury, heard 271 indictments and returned 271 true bills.

PRESENTMENT 1

We would like to commend Jane Johnson for her assistance arranging the material for the Grand Jury, managing the schedule of cases to be presented, coordinating the Grand Jury payroll, and assuring that the Grand Jury runs as smoothly as possible. We thank Jane for her friendliness and support of this Grand Jury.

PRESENTMENT 2

Thanks to Garry Moss, his staff and all law enforcement personnel who submitted indictments to us.

PRESENTMENT 3

We strongly recommend that our lawmakers introduce legislation that requires a person charged with the offense of homicide by vehicle involving DUI, reckless driving, or fleeing and eluding, be held in jail without bond until a judge decides otherwise.

PRESENTMENT NO. 4

We have carefully reviewed and discussed SB502 from the 2006 Legislative General Assembly and have thoroughly questioned District Attorney Moss regarding the constitutionality, effect on existing laws and individual rights; and in determining the practical and common sense clarification of its use as a tool to our law enforcement professionals, the effective performance of their duty, while insuring protection to the community, have concluded the urgent need for and implementation of this bill. We strongly recommend our commissioners, representatives, and other county officers promote and support its passage.

PRESENTMENT NO. 5Status of January 2006 Grand Jury presentment #6 concerning county employees pay structure.

We recommend that the County Manager make available to the Grand Jury the results of the study on the county pay structure for the purposes of ascertaining whether or not there are pay areas that need to be addressed to maintain the high quality employees that the citizens expect and deserve.

PRESENTMENT NO. 6

We regret that for whatever reason we were unable to meet with County Commissioners in spite of several requests. We recommend that future County Commissioners respond to Grand Jury meeting requests within 30 days. However, we would like to thank the County Manager for meeting with the Grand Jury to attempt to answer questions regarding county management.

PRESENTMENT NO. 7

We would like to thank the candidates from the Cherokee County Airport Authority, who came in to share their expertise, and do personal interviews with us. We would like to congratulate the following people who have been appointed: Don Stevens, George McClure, Steve Mammen, and John Marinko. Thank you for serving.

PRESENTMENT NO. 8

We commend Commander Terry Pelfrey of the Cherokee County Multi-Agency Narcotics Squad for his informative presentation of problems of drug abuse and the efforts of the CMANS in combating these problems in Cherokee County.

PRESENTMENT NO. 9

We would like to endorse the January 2006 Grand Jury's Presentment No. 3 as follows:

We, the January 2006 Grand Jury, learned that methamphetamine is the most addictive drug that has ever been available, even more addictive than heroin or cocaine, and it is easily made from ingredients commonly found in local stores. Most people are not aware of the seriousness of the methamphetamine problem until they serve on a jury or have a family member or friend who becomes addicted. With 95% of people who use methamphetamine becoming addicted, and the rate of overcoming addiction at only 5-6%, the likelihood of a greater epidemic cannot be underestimated.

The Grand Jury recommends the following, in conjunction with ongoing community and school system efforts, to address the methamphetamine problem in Cherokee County:

- (1) A stronger focus on methamphetamine abuse education in middle and high schools
- (2) An annual drug abuse forum presented by community leaders at local high schools
- (3) Continued efforts by Drug Free Cherokee to educate the public

Although current statistics demonstrate that methamphetamine abuse is mainly in the adult population at this time, the Grand Jury members are concerned that methamphetamine abuse will eventually

trickle down from the adult population to teenagers and children. Children who live in homes with methamphetamine users often suffer serious neglect, and often physical, sexual, and emotional abuse, as well as exposure to toxic chemicals and second hand smoke associated with methamphetamine abuse. Although methamphetamine abuse has not become a serious problem with the students in Cherokee County yet, the Grand Jury would encourage a stronger focus on methamphetamine abuse education with its students and staff, as part of current drug education training. Taking a pro-active and preventative approach may help prevent a major epidemic with our youth.

Recognizing that methamphetamine abuse is a community problem the Grand Jury appreciates the school system's willingness to coordinate a drug education forum with community leaders, including representatives from the Sheriff's office, juvenile and adult court system, and members of local drug counseling and rehabilitation programs. The forum would have the greatest impact if held during the school day, while students and staff are present, with parents invited.

The Grand Jury supports the efforts of Drug Free Cherokee and encourages utilizing existing community groups to educate the public about the growing methamphetamine problem, including the Chamber of Commerce, Churches, YMCA, Rotary Clubs, Optimist Clubs, Lions Clubs, Boys & Girls Club, Scout groups, and other groups that work toward improving our community.

PRESENTMENT NO. 10

We would like to thank Lt. Perkins and Sgt. Dana Martin for a tour of the Cherokee County Adult Detention Center. We thank them for their professionalism and for answering our many questions.

We observed the facility to be well maintained and the sanitary conditions to be above accepted standards.

We would like to thank Sheriff Roger Garrison for setting up the tour, and commend him and his staff for operating an efficient and secure facility in a highly professional manner.

PRESENTMENT NO. 11

We, after interviewing staff members at the Cherokee County Adult Detention Center, recommend that the September 2006 Grand Jury address the expressed need for additional staffing at that facility.

The need for additional staffing has been expressed by both the existing Adult Detention Center staff and members of the May 2006 Grand Jury.

PRESENTMENT NO. 12

We would like to extend a special thank you to Robbie Westbrook and Renee Cornelison for our tour of the EMS and 911 facilities, and for their excellent presentation of our county's state of the art disaster center.

PRESENTMENT NO. 13

We concur with the January 2006 Grand Jury request to follow up on staffing issues within the fire department with the appropriate county officials to ensure that they are implemented - specifically, the staffing of emergency response vehicles with more than one responder.

PRESENTMENT NO. 14

We would like to thank Randy Martin, Gene Thomason, Helen Iverson, Sheila Towers and Mark Kissel from the Cherokee County School System for speaking to this Grand Jury about the school system's on-going proactive efforts to provide a safe place for our children. We would like to acknowledge their achievement for ranking number 77 in the nation. We would also like to recognize Mrs. Iverson for her excellent computer programming capabilities in writing the program for tracking and mapping out sex offenders, which has been used by several other counties in Georgia and other states.

Having reviewed a comprehensive presentation by the Cherokee County School District regarding the establishment of school bus stops, routing procedures and operations in general; and, recognizing that the State of Georgia provides only \$2.5 million of the School District's necessary expenditure of \$12.3 million operating budget for student transportation; we, the Grand Jury, strongly encourage state officials and legislators as a whole moving forward, to provide adequate funding for this endeavor which is so very necessary and important to the safety and well-being of our children.


ELIZABETH S. BARRETT
FOREMAN

CHEROKEE COUNTY

STATE OF GEORGIA

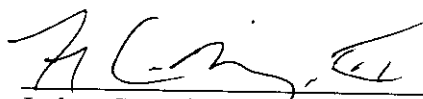
ORDER

The within and foregoing Grand Jury Presentments having read and considered, let the same be filed.

Let a copy of the Presentments, along with a copy of the Order, be sent to the Cherokee Tribune and Radio Station WCHK for publication and the usual fees paid thereon.

It is further ordered that the Clerk of Superior, Cherokee County, Georgia mail a copy of these presentments to each legislator who represents Cherokee County, to each Cherokee County Commissioner, to the Atlanta Journal Constitution, the Cherokee Ledger News and to radio station WLJA.

This the 22 day of Aug, 2006.



Judge, Superior
Blue Ridge Judicial Circuit

FILED IN OFFICE
CLERK OF SUPERIOR COURT
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2006 AUG 22 AM 9:44
PATTY BAKER, CLERK