



Annual Report

2021

Office of the Kendall County Coroner

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To the Citizens of Kendall County:

The Kendall County Coroner's Office is pleased to release this 2021 Annual Report. The purpose of the report is to enable the Kendall County Board Members and the general public to better acquaint themselves with the activities of our office, as well as to provide an ongoing statistical analysis of past and current deaths in the county to serve as a tool for future planning.

We continued into the 2021 year with adaptations and change brought on by the continuance and local surges of Covid-19 deaths. We had to adapt to an office environment that presented several challenges as far as space and personnel. Fortunately, we were able to limit exposures within the office and maintain a constant on-call coverage. Work and supply shortages throughout the country also presented challenges. Our toxicology reports took much longer than normal to receive which resulted in autopsy reports taking longer to complete and so on...it really makes you realize how crucial each area of discipline is to the entire investigation process.

We were pleased to be able to get back into some of our typical presentations. We've been back in the police departments training new hires, back in the schools with the law enforcement class presentations and welcoming various community members into the office again. We began our community service program again which has been a tremendous help. We miss the public interactions, both in the office and throughout the community. But, we have remained healthy and safe, and that is what is important.

The Coroner's Office has occupied its current space for 20 years this year without any addition of space. I have begun the early process of planning for more space for our operation. I am pleased that the process seems to be moving in a positive direction. I have hopes for increased and better work space in the coming year or so.

I am so proud of my deputies and assistants for their dedication, both to the office and to the families we serve. Their compassionate care is unmistakable in everything they do. It is truly my honor to work alongside such fine individuals.

Sincerely,



Jacquie Purcell
Kendall County Coroner



Coroner's Office Personnel

According to the Illinois State Statutes which govern the Coroner's Office, the Coroner and Deputy Coroners are sworn law enforcement officers and are designated by the law as peace officers. In fact, according to IL state statute, the Coroner and Sheriff hold equal powers throughout the county. Our office is comprised of both sworn and non-sworn personnel. Coroner Purcell, Chief Deputy Gotte, Deputy Jessica Gotte, Deputy Dave Jordan, Deputy Paty Monarrez and Deputy Will Sutton are all sworn officers. In addition, we have seven coroner's assistants. The assistants are not sworn officers, and as such, do not hold the same powers nor do they share the same responsibilities as the deputy coroners.

Jacquie Purcell

Kendall County Coroner

Jacquie is the 25th person to be elected as Coroner of Kendall County. She graduated from Worsham College where she studied mortuary science. She is a nationally board certified funeral director and embalmer. She has worked in the death industry since 1994. She began her career with the Kane County Coroner's Office, moved to the LaSalle County Coroner's Office and has been with the Kendall County Coroner's Office since 2003. Jacquie is a diplomate of the American Board of Medicolegal Death Investigators, and she serves as the District 1 Director for the Illinois Coroners & Medical Examiner's Association. Jacquie is also a member of the International Association of Coroners & Medical Examiner's Association, the Society of Medicolegal Death Investigators and an affiliate member of the National Association of Medical Examiners.

Levi Gotte

Chief Deputy Coroner

Levi is the only full-time staff member in the coroner's office. His background is extensive in public safety. He has worked as a supervisor for Kendall County's 9-1-1 Center. He recently became a diplomate of the American Board of Medicolegal Death Investigators. Levi has completed training with the St. Louis University School of Medicine – Division of Forensic Sciences, Basic Medicolegal Death Investigator Training Program. He is also a fellow member of the International Association of Coroners and Medical Examiners.

Jessica Gotte

Deputy Coroner

Jessica is a part-time Deputy Coroner with the office. She studied at College of DuPage and received her license as Radiologic Technician. She furthered her studies at Weber State University in Utah where she received her license as a Radiological Practitioner Assistant. She currently works full time in the Interventional Radiology department at a local hospital. Jessica completed training with the International Coroner’s and Medical Examiner’s Association, Basic Medicolegal Death Investigator Training Program. She is also a fellow member of the International Association of Coroners and Medical Examiners.

David Jordan

Deputy Coroner

Dave is a part-time Deputy Coroner with Kendall County. He is employed full-time as a Lieutenant and Paramedic and part-time as an Assistant Chief of Operations for two local fire protection districts. Dave has over 30 years of experience in the fire service.

Patricia Monarrez

Deputy Coroner

Patricia (Paty) is a graduate of Calumet College of St. Joseph with her degree in Criminal Justice with a Forensic Science Concentration. She works full-time as a Youth Counselor with the Kane County Juvenile Justice Center.

Will Sutton

Deputy Coroner

Will was promoted from Coroner’s Assistant to Deputy Coroner this year. He serves full time as a County Veteran Service Officer for the Veteran’s Assistance Commission of Kendall County. He is also an OIF-OEF Combat Purple Heart Veteran of the United States Marine Corps.

Coroner’s Assistants

Jennifer Hockings

Michael Melcher

Lynsey Ingram

Jennifer Coe

Allen Grobe

Tina Kaltenecker

Taryn Borcky

Cherie McCarron

Administrative Assistance

Cherie joined the office this year as the administrative assistant. She has a background in both emergency medical services and organ and tissue donation. In her free time, she is the President of the Blind Dog Rescue Alliance.

Dr. Kristin Escobar Alvarenga

Forensic Pathologist / Coroner's Physician

Kristin Escobar Alvarenga, M.D., is originally from Texas where she received her undergraduate degree from Baylor University and her medical degree from the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston, Texas. She then completed her Anatomic and Clinical Pathology Residency at Montefiore Medical Center and the Albert Einstein College of Medicine in Bronx, New York, followed by a one-year forensic pathology fellowship training program at the Harris County Institute of Forensic Sciences. Dr. Escobar-Alvarenga works full-time as a medical examiner in Cook County, and she contracts with Kendall County as a Coroner's Physician.



Reportable Deaths in Kendall County

Kendall County runs on a fiscal year which begins December 1 and ends on November 30. However, we have decided to transfer to a calendar year reporting system beginning this year. Therefore, this annual report will cover 13 months, including December, 2020 through December, 2021.

The State of Illinois dictates that the jurisdiction for the coroner is wherever the subject is pronounced dead. This simply means that if an incident occurs in Kendall County, but that person is transported by any means (personal transport, ambulance, helicopter, etc.) to a hospital or area outside of Kendall County, and is pronounced dead, the Coroner in that county assumes jurisdiction for that death. There are many incidents that begin in Kendall County, but jurisdiction for the coroner is transferred to another county when the subject is pronounced dead (generally at a hospital) outside of Kendall County.

There are 5 manners of death. Each reported death will be examined and assigned a manner and cause of death. The manners are: natural, accidental, suicidal, homicidal or undetermined. The following charts show a breakdown of deaths which have occurred and were reported to our office during Fiscal Year 2021.

DEATHS by MANNER (December 1, 2020-December 31, 2021)

| | |
|----------------------------------|------------|
| Natural | 405 |
| Accident | 23 |
| Suicide | 11 |
| Homicide | 1 |
| Undetermined | 0 |
| TOTAL DEATHS REPORTED | 440 |

Scene Response/Transportation

The Kendall County Coroner’s Office responds to many scenes throughout the year.

During the investigation, the decision is made whether or not the body should be transported to the Kendall County Coroner’s Office for further investigation, transported until next-of-kin can be notified, or released directly to the care of the funeral home. In 2021, the Coroner’s staff responded to 80 different calls/scenes and transported 56 bodies to the Kendall County morgue.

NATURAL DEATHS by Cause (December 1, 2020 – December 31, 2021)

| Description | # of Cases |
|------------------------------|------------|
| TOTAL Natural Death | 405 |
| ALL Heart Related | 99 |
| ALL Cancers | 124 |
| ALL Dementias | 58 |
| COPD/Pneumonias | 24 |
| ALL Stroke/CVAs | 26 |
| ALL Failure to Thrive | 12 |
| ALL Kidney Failure | 19 |
| ALL COVID-19 | 13 |
| ALL Other | 30 |

COVID-19 Related Deaths (December 1, 2020 – December 31, 2021)

The Coroner’s Office is only responsible for tracking deaths that occur inside Kendall County. There were 13 deaths reported in Kendall County which were attributed to COVID-19 infection.

| Date | Age | M/F | Location |
|---------|-----|--------|--------------|
| 12/2020 | 89 | Female | Facility |
| 12/2020 | 78 | Female | Facility |
| 01/2021 | 92 | Female | Facility |
| 01/2021 | 77 | Male | Facility |
| 01/2021 | 67 | Female | Residence |
| 02/2021 | 71 | Female | Residence |
| 02/2021 | 92 | Female | Facility |
| 02/2021 | 95 | Female | Residence |
| 08/2021 | 76 | Male | Residence |
| 10/2021 | 85 | Female | Residence |
| 10/2021 | 94 | Female | Residence |
| 10/2021 | 65 | Female | Nursing Home |
| 10/2021 | 86 | Female | Residence |

NON-NATURAL DEATHS by Cause & Manner (December 1, 2020 – December 31, 2021)

| DESCRIPTION | MANNER | Age | M/F |
|---|---------------|------------|------------|
| Combined Drug (Hydromorphone, Lorazepam, Trazodone, Tramadol, Fluoxetine and Dextromethorphan and/or Levomethorphan) Toxicity | Accident | 29 | Female |
| Combined Drug (Cocaine, Para-Fluorofentanyl, Fentanyl and 4-ANPP [Despropionyl Fentanyl]) Toxicity | Accident | 43 | Male |
| Blunt Force Injuries Due to Pick-up vs Truck Collision | Accident | 54 | Male |
| Hypertensive and Atherosclerotic Cardiovascular Disease Probable Cold Exposure | Accident | 55 | Male |
| Blunt Force Injuries Due to Automobile vs Semi Tractor Trailer Collision | Accident | 73 | Male |
| Blunt Force Injuries Due to Automobile vs Semi Tractor Trailer Collision | Accident | 26 | Female |
| Asphyxia due to Carbon Monoxide Poisoning Due to Acute Ethanol Intoxication | Accident | 50 | Male |
| Combined Cocaine, 4-ANPP (Despropionyl Fentanyl), Fentanyl & Alprazolam Toxicity | Accident | 22 | Female |
| Combined Cocaine, 4-ANPP (Despropionyl Fentanyl) and Fentanyl Toxicity | Accident | 28 | Male |
| Blunt Force Injuries Due to Single Motorcycle Mishap | Accident | 33 | Male |
| Blunt Force Injuries Due to SUV vs Flatbed Truck Motor Vehicle Collision | Accident | 20 | Male |
| Blunt Force Injuries Due to Truck Vs SUV Collision | Accident | 13 | Male |
| Complications of Traumatic Head Injury Due to a Fall | Accident | 94 | Female |
| Combined Mitragynine, Alprazolam, Clonazepam, R-ANPP (Despropionyl Fentanyl) and Fentanyl Toxicity | Accident | 33 | Male |
| Multiple Injuries Due to Motor Vehicle Collision | Accident | 43 | Male |
| Subdural Hematoma Due to a Fall | Accident | 77 | Male |
| Congestive Heart Failure due to Atrial Fibrillation Exacerbated by Hip Fracture | Accident | 79 | Female |
| Combined Ethanol and Drug (Cocaine, Fentanyl and 4-ANPP [Despropionyl Fentanyl]) Toxicity | Accident | 37 | Male |
| Blunt Force Injuries Due to Automobile vs SUV Collision | Accident | 33 | Female |
| Combined Drug (Fentanyl, Alprazolam and 4-ANPP Despropionyl Fentanyl) Toxicity | Accident | 39 | Male |
| Blunt Force Injuries Due to Motor Vehicle vs Tree Collision | Accident | 37 | Male |
| Blunt Force Injuries Due to SUV vs Truck Collision | Accident | 68 | Male |
| Blunt Force Injuries Due to Automobile vs Tree Collision | Accident | 23 | Male |

| | | | |
|--|----------|----|--------|
| | | | |
| Gunshot Wound to the Head | Suicide | 53 | Male |
| Asphyxiation due to Hanging | Suicide | 77 | Male |
| Asphyxiation due to Hanging | Suicide | 23 | Male |
| Gunshot Wound to the Head | Suicide | 78 | Male |
| Asphyxiation due to Hanging | Suicide | 49 | Male |
| Combined Ethanol & Fluoxetine Toxicity | Suicide | 36 | Male |
| Gunshot Wound to the Head | Suicide | 14 | Female |
| Gunshot Wound to the Head | Suicide | 18 | Male |
| Gunshot Wound to the Head | Suicide | 18 | Male |
| Intraoral Gunshot Wound | Suicide | 21 | Male |
| Asphyxiation due to Hanging | Suicide | 42 | Male |
| | | | |
| Multiple Gunshot Wounds | Homicide | 68 | Male |

BUDGET

The Kendall County Coroner's Office operates on a budget from the general fund. In FY 2021 our entire operating budget was \$190,874. We also generate revenue by charging a \$50 fee for cremation authorizations and various fees for specific reports (autopsy reports, toxicology reports, etc.). In FY 2021, the Kendall County Coroner's Office authorized 279 cremation permits. According to the IL State Statute, all revenues received from cremation permits and fees for report copies are held in a special fund which can be used to supplement the coroner's office's general operations. In 2021, the Kendall County Coroner's Office received \$10,750 in special fees. The coroner's offices throughout the State of Illinois also receive an annual grant. The grant monies are based on a surcharge amount placed on each death certificate issued. Therefore, the grant amount is dependent on the number of death certificates issued, throughout the state, during the previous year. In FY 2021, the Kendall County Coroner's Office received a grant for \$3,922. The Kendall County Coroner's Office began working with SUDORS (State Unintentional Drug Overdose Reporting System) which provides a stipend to the office in return for statistical gathering and actively working to reduce opioid deaths within the communities. In 2021, the Kendall County Coroner's Office received a stipend for \$1,484.05. These combined monies are mostly unrestricted and are used to supplement the general budget.

FOIA (Freedom of Information Act)

The Kendall County Coroner's Office receives requests throughout the year for records and information. The majority of information regarding a death is considered public information. In 2021, the Kendall County Coroner's Office fulfilled 13 FOIA requests.

Please refer to the Kendall County website at www.co.kendall.il.us and click on the FOIA link to process any FOIA requests.

ORGAN/TISSUE DONATION

We work closely with the Gift of Hope which is our regional Organ Procurement Organization. In 2021, the Kendall County Coroner's Office facilitated a number of donations which benefited over one hundred recipients. The gift of donation is special for both the donor and family and recipient. The criterion which needs to be met to even qualify for donation is quite strict, so when a donation is able to be successfully completed – it is truly a gift.

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

Throughout the year we are quite active in the community. The Kendall County Coroner's Office is active in the local high schools and vocational schools with the various driver's education programs, Law Enforcement Classes, Health & Science Careers, and STEM programs. Our community and training programs are well received, and we are glad to be back out in the community.

Coroner Purcell hosts a bi-monthly meeting called 'Lights of Hope' for family and friends who have been impacted by an overdose related death. Due to restrictions put in place due to the pandemic, we were forced to cancel some of these meetings. As of December 2021, we have resumed meeting in person. Please refer to the Kendall County Coroner's Facebook page for more information.

The Kendall County Coroner's Office provides open-to-the-public tours of the office and morgue by request. Please refer to the Kendall County website or Facebook page for additional information.

Coroner Purcell serves as the Chair for the Region 2 At-Risk Adult Fatality Review Team. The team serves to identify deaths of At-Risk Adults and establish protocols to ensure certain measures are in place to avoid similar deaths.

The Kendall County Coroner's Office partners with the Kendall County Probation Department for community service workers. Many hours of community service hours are served each year through the Coroner's Office.

New in 2021, the Kendall County Coroner's Office participated in the DEA Takeback. We registered as a drop-off site and ultimately took in over 200 pounds of expired/unused medication. This event was more successful than we anticipated and we will be participating in future takeback events – each spring and fall!

The Kendall County Coroner's Office serves as a collection site for donated diabetic supplies and medications. We regularly collect insulin and insulin pens, monitors, needles/syringes, testing strips, lancets, etc. We properly package and ship these donations to Insulin for Life. Insulin for Life is a registered charity licensed to accept and distribute diabetic supplies to under privileged areas throughout the world. Diabetic supplies are accepted in the office year-round. Please feel free to contact our office to arrange a time to drop off donations/supplies. Together, we are literally saving lives!



Elected Coroners of Kendall County

| <u>Name</u> | <u>Term</u> |
|---------------------------------|-------------|
| Hon. Lewis Brinsley Judson | 1841-1842 |
| Hon. George Albert Hollenback | 1842-1848 |
| Hon. Solomon Heustis | 1848-1854 |
| Hon. William Wesley Winn | 1854-1856 |
| Hon. Nathan Carr Mighell | 1856-1860 |
| Hon. John H. Bird | 1860-1862 |
| Hon. John Dunn | 1862-1864 |
| Hon. Mordicai Davis | 1864-1866 |
| Dr. Daniel Smith Jenks | 1866-1868 |
| Hon. Lyman Childs | 1868-1870 |
| Hon. Willis Atkins | 1870-1872 |
| Hon. James B. Littlewood | 1872-1874 |
| Hon. Orris W. Grant | 1874-1878 |
| Dr. Isaac E. Bennett | 1878-1882 |
| Dr. Robert Alexander McClelland | 1882-1892 |
| Dr. Frank Howard Lord | 1892-1900 |
| Dr. Amasa Elijah Field | 1900-1904 |
| Hon. Thomas Barnett Drew | 1904-1916 |
| Hon. Arthur Evarts Lord | 1916-1928 |
| Dr. Frederick Michael Groner | 1928-1940 |
| Dr. Lyman Ambrose Perkins | 1940-1960 |
| Hon. Everett M. McKeown | 1960-1976 |
| Hon. William F. Dunn | 1976-1992 |
| Hon. Kenneth Orrin Toftoy | 1992-2016 |
| Hon. Jacqueline Rae Purcell | 2016 - |

HISTORY of the CORONER



'Carorum Ad Curam', this is a Latin statement you'll notice on many of the items produced from our office. It is a way of offering tribute to the original roots of the Coroner's Office. Originally, the job title, *'custos placitorum coronae'*, was the officer tasked with protecting the property of the Royal Family. From the Latin, *'Corona'*, meaning 'crown' eventually became 'Coroner'. The function of the office

gradually changed, and by the 17th century the main duties were to determine the cause of death in cases not obviously natural. *'Carorum Ad Curam'* translates literally to mean 'to take care of loved ones'. There is no better way to express what we do here in our office. We take care of loved ones – both who have died and those left to mourn.

CLOSING

The Kendall County Coroner's Office is always available to the public for questions or concerns. Please feel free to contact us for any reason.



RESOURCES

| | |
|---|--------------|
| Gift of Hope Organ/Tissue Network | 630-758-2600 |
| Nationwide Chaplain Services | 847-890-5003 |
| Compassionate Friends (Local) (For parents who have lost children) | 630-779-7756 |
| Lights of Hope (For those impacted by overdose deaths) | 630-553-4200 |
| Survivors of Suicide (Resources for those impacted by suicide) | 630-482-9699 |
| Kendall County Health Department (Grief Counseling Services) | 630-553-9100 |
| Veteran's Assistance Commission | 630-553-8355 |

The following is a list of funeral homes, direct cremation and donation services in our general area. The Kendall County Coroner does not recommend one funeral home, cremation or donation service over another.

Direct Cremation Services

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|
| Cremation Society of Illinois | 800-622-8358 |
| Illinois Cremation Centers | 877-368-7005 |
| Simplicity Funeral & Cremation Care | 630-445-1439 |
| DuPage Cremations, Ltd. | 630-293-5200 |

Direct Body Donation Services

| | |
|-----------------------------|--------------|
| Science Care | 800-417-3747 |
| Anatomical Gift Association | 312-733-5283 |

Local Funeral Homes

| Aurora | |
|-------------------------------|--------------|
| Daleiden Mortuary | 630-631-5500 |
| Healy Chapel | 630-897-9291 |
| James Funeral Service | 630-851-6503 |
| Montgomery | |
| Dieterle Memorial Home | 630-897-1196 |
| Newark | |
| Gabel-Dunn Funeral Home | 815-695-5131 |
| Oswego | |
| Dunn Family Funeral Home | 630-554-8484 |
| Plano | |
| Larson-Nelson Funeral Home | 630-552-7211 |
| Turner-Eighner Funeral Home | 630-552-3022 |
| Sandwich | |
| Beverage Funeral Home | 815-786-6715 |
| Nelson Funeral Home | 815-786-6461 |
| Burkhart-Eighner Funeral Home | 815-786-2165 |
| Yorkville | |
| Larson-Nelson Funeral Home | 630-553-7611 |

