

PRESS RELEASE

"Sweetheart Swindler" Sent to Prison for Fraud

On October 1, 2012, Fairfield County Common Pleas Court Judge Chris Martin sentenced Tonya Weiss to 32 months in prison for multiple acts of fraud. Weiss was indicted in late 2011 on five counts of Telecommunications Fraud and one count of Identity Fraud. On August 30, 2012, Weiss was found guilty on all counts after a three day jury trial argued by Assistant Prosecuting Attorney Darren Meade.

Weiss is known in law enforcement circles as the "Sweetheart Swindler" from her repeated practice of befriending well-to-do elderly gentlemen and scamming them out of large sums of money. Weiss has criminal convictions related to fraud and theft going back to the mid 1960's, and was most recently released from prison in 2009 after serving an eight year sentence for similar crimes. In that case, Weiss defrauded elderly gentlemen even while incarcerated in the Ohio Reformatory for Women

Investigator Dave Kessler of the Fairfield County Prosecutor's Office, a renowned law enforcement expert regarding crimes against the elderly, led the investigation against Ms. Weiss in this case. This was the third time in eleven years Kessler's investigation of Ms. Weiss led to her being successfully prosecuted and convicted. Kessler stated "I have investigated thousands of criminals in my decades in law enforcement, including murderers, drug dealers and rapists, and I have never encountered any subject more cunning, diabolical, or just plain evil than Tonya Weiss." Fairfield County Prosecuting Attorney Gregg Marx stated "Ms. Weiss has spent almost half a century defrauding vulnerable members of society, and our office is proud to have returned such a career criminal back to prison where she belongs."

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Gregg Marx
Prosecuting Attorney