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## City & Region

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Acting District Attorney Michael J. Flaherty Jr. speaks in front of Erie County Hall Tuesday. Jane Kwiatkowski/Buffalo News

### Six lives lost to domestic violence this year

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Six people ranging in age from seven to 85 lost their lives to domestic violence this year in Erie County, announced Acting District Attorney Michael J. Flaherty Jr.

In 2015, law enforcement agencies in Erie County recorded 5,768 cases of domestic violence, Flaherty said as he stood before County Hall on Delaware Avenue with Sheriff Timothy B. Howard, Brian McLaughlin, county commissioner of probation and Dennis J. Richards, Buffalo Police chief of detectives.

“Erie County Hall is the place where many domestic violence survivors seek help and fight for justice against their abusers,” said Flaherty. “By bathing this grand building in the color purple, we are recognizing the struggle victims endure every day and show we are a beacon of hope, providing safety and security in their lives.”

Flaherty announced the illumination of County Hall in conjunction with the month-long county-wide campaign to raise public awareness to issues of domestic violence in October.

There have been six homicides directly linked to domestic violence in Erie County, Flaherty said:

- A grim discovery on Jan. 27 in a Pennsylvania motel room led Buffalo police to [an unimaginable crime scene \(http://www.buffalonews.com/city-region/police-courts/community-in-disbelief-over-mother-daughter-murder-suicide-20160128\)](http://www.buffalonews.com/city-region/police-courts/community-in-disbelief-over-mother-daughter-murder-suicide-20160128): Shoshana Lilien, 85, stabbed to death, apparently at the hands of her own daughter, Hannah Lilien. Hannah Lilien, 55, a well-liked former day care teacher, was found dead of multiple self-inflicted wounds after she missed the noon checkout time at Red Roof Inn Pittsburgh North.

Police said Hannah Lilien stabbed her mother in their home on Cunard Road in North Buffalo. She then drove more than 300 miles to Cranberry Township, 15 miles north of Pittsburgh, and checked into the motel where local police said she took her own life.

- [Roberta A. Rybinski, 51](http://www.buffalonews.com/city-region/town-of-tonawanda/convicted-felon-charged-in-stabbing-death-of-tonawanda-woman-20160525) (<http://www.buffalonews.com/city-region/town-of-tonawanda/convicted-felon-charged-in-stabbing-death-of-tonawanda-woman-20160525>) was found stabbed to death March 8 in her Town of Tonawanda apartment. Two months later police from the Town of Tonawanda and Olean teamed up with Cattaraugus County sheriff's deputies arrested John M. Avent, 49, in Olean. Avent, who was convicted in 2015 of violating an order of protection to stay away from Rybinski, was involved in a loud argument with her in the days before she was stabbed to death, according to neighbors.
- Ruby Stiglmeier was shot three times [in a murder-suicide](http://www.buffalonews.com/city-region/orchard-park/ruby-had-refrain-from-order-but-it-didnt-protect-her-from-her-ex-boyfriend-20160409) (<http://www.buffalonews.com/city-region/orchard-park/ruby-had-refrain-from-order-but-it-didnt-protect-her-from-her-ex-boyfriend-20160409>) police said was committed by her former boyfriend David Lewczyk in March in Orchard Park. Stiglmeier, a dental hygienist, had a "refrain from" order of protection against Lewczyk. Orchard Park police believe Lewczyk, whom Stiglmeier had dated sporadically for two years, shot Stiglmeier before turning the gun on himself. Stiglmeier is one of the 4,000 people in this country who are killed each year by an intimate partner. Her story echoes those of other women who had obtained orders of protection yet still lost their lives.
- Brian Smith, 59, was fatally stabbed during a [domestic dispute on Mohr Street](http://www.buffalonews.com/city-region/woman-arraigned-on-murder-charge-in-boyfriends-stabbing-death-20160726) (<http://www.buffalonews.com/city-region/woman-arraigned-on-murder-charge-in-boyfriends-stabbing-death-20160726>) on July 7. Veronica Reynolds, 42, Smith's girlfriend, has been charged with second-degree murder. Police said Smith's brother tried to intervene, but he was stabbed in the leg by Reynolds.
- [Raina Voll, 30, and her son, Leo Klinger, 7](http://www.buffalonews.com/city-region/police-courts/cheektowaga-woman-found-dead-with-son-7-described-as-devoted-mother-20160916) (<http://www.buffalonews.com/city-region/police-courts/cheektowaga-woman-found-dead-with-son-7-described-as-devoted-mother-20160916>), were found dead in their French Road apartment in Cheektowaga on Sept. 15. Voll's boyfriend, Shane Stevenson, was charged with two counts of second-degree murder. Cheektowaga police have said little about the circumstances of the double murder, only calling it "some sort of domestic situation."

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