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# The Detroit News

Monday, May 12, 2008

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Metro Final

## Delays worsen at state crime lab

■ Probe of Detroit Police firearm cases means fewer workers to investigate gun crimes across the state.

By DOUG GUTHRIE,  
MIKE MARTINDALE  
AND GEORGE HUNTER  
*The Detroit News*

**DETROIT** — The shutdown of the Detroit Police Department's firearms analysis laboratory over revelations about mishandled evidence is creating a statewide de-

lay in criminal investigations and prosecutions, tying up a third of all Michigan State Police forensic technicians and adding to a deep backlog in the preparation of scientific evidence.

Questions about the Detroit lab were raised last month after it was determined that police mis-

handled evidence in a shooting case. Detroit Police Chief Ella Bully-Cummings closed the unit and asked the State Police to conduct an audit of the lab.

For the next four months, State Police technicians will randomly audit Detroit cases. But because a third of the State Police's crime lab personnel will be tied up looking into the city's problems, that will further delay the state's forensic investigations. Already, there is a

**GUN CASES ON HOLD**  
Prosecutor halts action until audit of Detroit cases involving lab. **6A**

significant logjam.

The commander of the State Police crime labs told The Detroit News that the audit of 270 Detroit gun cases from the past year will cost him five technicians. Mean-

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Morris Richardson II / The Detroit News

**"You have a system already overloaded picking up additional work. ... Already unacceptable time lapses are going to get worse."**

ROBERT STEVENSON  
*Livonia police chief*

## MISSING SOLDIER'S MOM: 'I DON'T KNOW IF HE'S ALIVE OR DEAD'



Charles V. Tines / The Detroit News

Gordon Dibler Jr., Byron Fouty's former stepfather, peruses photos of the missing soldier by a lit candle. Dibler often has a private communion with the G.I. at dusk and dawn, asking him things he is afraid to ask but can't help wanting to know.

## GI from Walled Lake kidnapped in Iraq 1 year ago

By CATHERINE JUN | *The Detroit News*

**O**XFORD TOWNSHIP — Uniformed soldiers showed up last May with the dreaded news: Byron Fouty had been ambushed and kidnapped in Iraq.

Fouty, then a 19-year-old Army private first class from Walled Lake, was one of three U.S. soldiers abducted a year ago today in an insurgent ambush about 20 miles south of Baghdad. His mother still jumps when the phone rings, praying for any update, any news.

"I don't know if he's alive or dead," said Hilary Meunier, Fouty's mother, in a phone interview from her home in Texas. "I can't put closure to it."

Fouty remains missing, and for his family here and in Texas that has meant living the past year in a kind of tormented limbo — waiting for

word on the search, waiting for a happy ending, waiting for their hopes to be realized, or waiting for their ever-present fears to play out.

"I've never experienced the feeling of waiting so intensely or for so long, in my life," wrote Sarah Dibler, his 18-year-old half sister, on a MySpace page dedicated to her brother.

In the ambush near Mahmoudiya on

*Please see Soldier, Page 5A*



U.S. Army

Fouty was 19 when he was ambushed and abducted a year ago south of Baghdad.

## Kilpatrick lawyer who chided Worthy owes taxes, too

■ Parkman owes Ala. \$23,600 after paying off \$1M in liens in 2006.

By ROBERT SNELL  
*The Detroit News*

**DETROIT** — A member of Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick's legal team who scolded Wayne County Prosecutor Kym Worthy for not paying taxes owes \$23,602 to the state of Alabama for unpaid income taxes, public records show.

That's only the most recent tax delinquency, though. Since 2005, lawyer James W. Parkman III has paid off more than \$1 million in delinquent state and federal taxes, a figure that dwarfs the \$31,000 in liens filed against Worthy.

The Detroit News discovered the delinquencies more than a week after Parkman lashed out at Worthy, saying she should spend more time paying her delinquent taxes and addressing a perjury allegation in her own office and less time talking to reporters.

"The hypocrisy of that is unbelievable," said Kelly Rossman-McKinney, chief executive officer



Parkman



Worthy

**FRAUD TRIAL TO BEGIN**  
Suit against a charity Kwame Kilpatrick launched is set for trial Tuesday. **1B**

of the Rossman Group public relations firm in Lansing.

Parkman blames the tax situation on a reorganization of his former law firm. He would not elaborate.

The folksy lawyer from Birmingham, Ala., who charges an estimated \$500 an hour is the newest addition to the legal team helping Kilpatrick fight felony perjury and misconduct in office charges stemming from the text message scandal. He gained fame in 2005 helping get HealthSouth CEO Richard Scrushy acquitted

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### NEW ONLINE: TAX WATCHDOG BLOG

Each week Staff Writer Robert Snell will highlight back taxes owed by notable people and companies at [detnews.com/bloghouse](http://detnews.com/bloghouse).

detnews.com

## Fire kills boy while mom's away at birth

■ In hospital bed, woman told of 5-year-old's death in Detroit duplex blaze.

By CATHERINE JUN  
*The Detroit News*

**DETROIT** — Just three days ago, Andrea Hodge gave birth to her ninth child, a boy — a priceless gift for Mother's Day.

On Sunday, her joy turned to grief when she learned from her hospital room that a fire had erupted at her mother's home in east Detroit and killed her 5-year-old son, Kavon Williams.

"I can't even put it into words," Hodge, 37, of Warren said in a

phone interview from her room at Sinai-Grace Hospital. "I'm telling you, Mother's Day will definitely never be the same."

Authorities say the fire erupted about 3:30 a.m. Sunday on the first floor of a duplex in the 3900 block of St. Claire.

Kavon was staying in the second level with his grandmother, Barbara Hodge, 65, while his mother recuperated in the hospital, Andrea Hodge said.

The grandmother awoke to the smell of smoke, and she and several of Kavon's siblings who were staying at the home —

*Please see Fire, Page 6A*



### IN OTHER NEWS

◀ Crews hunt storm survivors in 3 states. **4A**

4 Troy programmers among dead in Pa. minivan crash. **1B**

GM dealers feel pinch from UAW strikes. **1C**

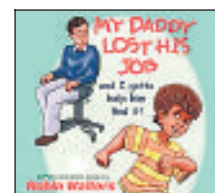


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COMING TOMORROW:  
**HELPING KIDS  
COPE WITH CRISES**

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