

## **Peggy - arson**

I deliver mail, and I was out on my route delivering mail, and here the supervisors, two of them, whipped up in front of me. And my dad's in bad—was in bad shape. He's on oxygen. And I thought, oh, something happened to my dad. And so they come running over to my car, and I said, "Is it my dad?" And they said—they shook their heads, no. And I said, "Is it one of my kids?" And they went like that [gestures]. And I said, "Is it my son?"

My son was a senior at the University of Pittsburgh. And a girl that lived on the second floor, her ex-boyfriend set a fire, and the smoke, you know, killed my son while he was upstairs sleeping.

This boy more or less was—I don't know if he was stalking her or what, but you know, jealous or whatever...and you know, set the fire and intended to kill *her*. And you know, Jerry didn't make it, you know.

We buried him on Monday. I think it was Thursday was when the detective called me to tell me that it had been an arson, and he wanted to let the family know before it hit the news.

Well, I was by myself when he told me, and, uh, you know, I just couldn't imagine. The trials would start and stuff. The first time I took my daughter was when the trial was actually going to start. And ever since that day that she seen this Matthew, I've had to sleep with her, and that was back in July.

Chrissy and I were watching TV the other day, and they said how one act—stupid act—can affect so many lives. And she looked at me, and she said, "We really know that, mom, don't we?"

But you figure this boy was jealous or whatever about this girl living with this guy—or I don't understand what he was thinking of—but his stupid act has ruined lives of people he didn't even know existed.

We've never done anything to . . . I've never gotten a traffic ticket—nothing. And to be punished like this for the . . . And we'll be punished the rest of our lives because of someone we didn't even know.

If he would have been in an accident where he was drinking...or if he would have—it'd been a car accident. It was an accident or something, but to know that someone deliberately, while he sleeping . . . Where is the safest place you think your child is? In bed sleeping.

He's—what this kid did is he has no idea how he has affected all of us, I mean, the emptiness, the sick feeling that you have inside you every single day. Not a day goes by that I do not shed a tear. Not one day.