



# SHERRI BEVAN WALSH

## Summit County Prosecutor

### Newsletter

#### March 2007

53 University Avenue  
6th Floor  
Akron, OH 44308  
Phone: 330-643-2800  
Fax: 330-643-8277

## Message from the Prosecutor



Prosecutor  
Sherrri Bevan Walsh

My office continues to be busy, completing 4,895 cases in 2006. Ninety-five percent of those ended with a conviction. We are reorganizing our office to better support the increased case load. **Brad Gessner**, featured in this month's newsletter, has been promoted to **Chief Assistant Prosecutor** over the Criminal Felony Division. **Mary Ann Kovach**, who assists me office-wide, continues to be our **Chief Counsel**. We are also in the process of hiring five additional assistant prosecutors to

help lessen the load on our current staff and to work with the visiting judges who are here daily. In addition, in 2008, two new Common Pleas judges will be elected, taking the bench in 2009, also requiring additional assistant prosecutors. In total, we will have 33 criminal assistant prosecutors when the hiring is finalized.

Year	Disposed Cases	Guilty or Pled	Trials	Overall Conviction Rate (including pleas/jury verdicts)
2006	4,895	4,657	143	95%
2005	4,824	4,592	203	95%
2004	4,507	4,294	140	95%

## Tough Prosecution

**Jason Meyers**, 32, of Akron, was sentenced to 18 years — as **Assistant Prosecutor's Jennie Shuki and Beth Aronson** requested — for Rape and Kidnapping. He was found guilty by a jury on March 29, 2007.

In August of 2002, the Defendant jumped out of the bushes at the end of the Kenmore Bridge. He pulled the Victim into the bushes and raped her while another man held her down. She then ran naked to her original destination, a friend's house,



Jason Meyers

where they called 911. She went to a hospital and a rape kit was administered, gathering DNA on the unknown perpetrator. She was not

able to identify her attackers except to give a physical description.

This case remained unsolved until 2006 when a CODIS search of DNA identified Jason Meyers. His DNA was in the database due to a 2004 prison sentence. It was confirmed to be Meyers, the Defendant, through a follow up DNA test.

**Nice work Assistant Prosecutors Jennie Shuki and Beth Aronson!**

## Mock Trial Program: And the Winner is...St. Hilary School

Prosecutor Walsh once again sponsored The **Middle School Mock Trial competition** on March 30, 2007, with **St. Cosmas and Damian School in Twinsburg, Coventry Junior High and St. Hilary** competing. Students played the role of attorneys and witnesses in a Civil Class Action Suit alleging a violation of Civil Rights. The trial was based upon the book "Animal Farm" by George Orwell. Here are all of the winners (scores were within points of each other):

**Winning School: St. Hilary**

**Second Place: Coventry Jr. High**

**Third Place: St. Cosmas & Damian**

**Best Attorneys:** Jenna Decker and Ileana Horattas of St. Hilary; and Hannah Smelter of Coventry. **Best Witnesses:** Bryan Baumgardner, Katie Whalen, Kevin Geary of St. Hilary; Venessa Purefoy of Coventry; and Lindsay Jindra of St. Cosmas and Damian.

**Congratulations to all of the participating schools and students!**



On March 21, 2007, **Prosecutor Walsh** received the **2007 National Association of Social Workers Public Official of the Year Award**.

Questions? E-mail Laurie Cramer:  
cramer@prosecutor.summitoh.net

## We're on the Web!

[www.co.summit.oh.us/Prosecutor/index.htm](http://www.co.summit.oh.us/Prosecutor/index.htm)

## Top Cop

Deputy Larry Brown  
Summit County Sheriff's  
Office



Assistant Prosecutor **Emily Laube-Haughton** nominated **Sheriff's Deputy Larry Brown** for his investigation into the case of Wayne Kuikahi, Jr. wherein he assaulted his ex-girlfriend. After the incident, Deputy Brown took the time to interview the victim on video. The video interview was instrumental in the defendant receiving a three year sentence. In the video, the victim, who later wasn't as cooperative against her ex-boyfriend, outlined what had occurred and related the events of prior assaults from Kuikahi.

Kuikahi pled to felonious assault. The video was attached to the sentencing recommendation motion given to Judge Bond. The Judge commented that the video was instrumental in her sentencing.

Emily said, "It really gave her (the judge) the opportunity to see the victim and her demeanor. She said that during the interview, the victim seemed cooperative and credible . . . I'm sure all because of Deputy Brown's professionalism and attitude with the victim." **Thanks Top Cop Dep. Brown!**

## Did You Know?

Did you know that a criminal only needs your phone number to find out where you live? If you go to **Google** and type in a phone number (only listed numbers will work), it will give you the address of the person as well as a map on how to get to their address.

To remove or block your number from this listing, type in your phone number and then click on the number and click on the Removal Form. It will take approximately 48 hours to remove your information.

**Take Action Now!**

## Meet Brad Gessner



**Duties:** Chief Assistant Prosecutor,  
Criminal Felony Division

**Hire Date:** May, 2001

**Home Town:** Austintown, Ohio

**Personal:** Married, two children

**Law Degree:** University of Akron School of Law

**Years Prosecuting:** 16 years

**Little Known Fact:** My grandfather was a deputy sheriff who in 1937 survived being shot in the chest in a jail break (the escapee didn't make it).

**Most Memorable Case: State of Ohio vs. Raymond Howard.** In 1991, I re-convicted Howard for a 1979 Aggravated Murder/Kidnapping/Aggravated Robbery/Aggravated Burglary scheme that he was originally convicted on in 1981. In 1990 the case was reversed and remanded by the Ohio Supreme Court for a new trial based on the original court's faulty instruction to a deadlocked jury. The corrected instruction ordered in the case law is now better known as the "Howard Charge." We found that the witnesses had moved all across the country in the years following his first conviction. In addition to tracking them down, one co-defendant, who originally refused to testify under her "fifth amendment" privilege of self-incrimination had completed her sentence and could no longer refuse to testify. While we continue to use the "Howard Charge," today, Howard continues to serve his life sentence. There was no death penalty in Ohio in 1979 when Howard committed the murder.

## Outrageous Crime of the Month



**Hugh Hively**, 45, of Akron, was a trusted nurse at an elderly facility. On February 26, 2007, he pled guilty to Patient Abuse or Neglect and Assault: Caretaker & Institutional, both Felonies of the Fourth Degree. **He was sentenced to one year in prison.**

On September 20, 2006, Mr. Hively assaulted an 83 year old dementia patient. The Victim, a WWII purple heart recipient, suffers from both Alzheimer's and dementia.

On the date of the incident, the Victim was walking around his unit's pod, a secured area, and was trying to get out of the locked exit door. He was agitated and wanted to get out of the unit. The Victim walked up to the nurse's station where Hively was doing paperwork and began flailing his arms at Hively. Hively became irritated and vaulted over the nurse's desk/counter and grabbed the elderly Victim from behind. He placed the Victim in a headlock, picked the Victim completely off the ground, carried him into his room, and threw the Victim in his bed. The Victim sustained minor injuries.

The family was devastated by this incident, a clear breach of trust in a very difficult situation. **Assistant Prosecutor Emily Laube-Haughton** was praised repeatedly by the family for her compassionate handling of this difficult case. **Nice job, Emily.**