



# SHERRI BEVAN WALSH

## Summit County Prosecutor

### Newsletter

#### November 2007

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## Message from the Prosecutor



Prosecutor  
Sherri Bevan Walsh

I recently finished trying the case of Jimmy Lee Tayse. Now that it is over and Tayse has been convicted of 14 various felonies that put him in prison for 73 years, I find myself thinking about this case from a number of different angles.

First, the sheer shock of what Tayse did that day – kidnapping a mother and her baby when she was on a routine grocery shopping trip, in the middle of the day – is such a random crime. He then forced her to drive to Ohio where he raped and robbed her in several areas of Ohio, and then eventually told her to get out of the car in Cleveland. Admittedly, crimes of this nature don't happen every day, thank goodness.

It does, however, remind us of how randomly crime can happen. It can take place at any time of the day or night, in perfectly "good" neighborhoods and malls, and to ordinary citizens who are engaging in purely innocent activities – such as shopping for an Easter meal.

As I prepared for this case, I began to change my routine and habits because I realized that we tend to become complacent in our day-to-day lives. For instance, when I walk to my car, I make it a point to look around to see who might be nearby. I also only unlock the driver's door instead of all the doors. Knowing what Tayse inflicted on his Victims makes me – and a number of the women in my Office – take extra measures to lessen our chances of becoming a victim of crime.

Lastly, but importantly, the police in this case were phenomenal. Tayse's crimes spanned two states and numerous jurisdictions – Pittsburgh, Portage County, Summit County, and Cleveland. I knew that coordinating the efforts of the various police departments would be vital to the prosecution's case. It turned out, though, that coordination wasn't a problem. In fact, I was overwhelmed by the contributions of these officers, who went the extra mile in assisting my Office and making sure that we put Tayse away for his horrific acts. These officers made it their priority to work with us every step of the way, culminating in their trial testimony and ultimately a successful conviction.

## Tough Prosecution

On November 5, Judge Judith Hunter sent **Robert Hudson, 72**, to prison for 15 years to life for killing his Miller Hotel neighbor in February. Hudson stabbed Neal Shafer, 56, to death after a daylong dispute over the Victim not moving his car to allow a snowplow to clear the road.



The dispute originated with the two arguing and the Victim pushing Hudson, who then proceeded to the Main Street Bar to drink. After relaying the incident to those at the bar, the police were called. Officers came out and spoke to Hudson, but he did not press the issue. Shortly after, someone kicked in Shafer's door and assaulted him. The Victim was taken to the hospital, where he required stitches in his head. Police were called to the hospital, where they got the Victim's account of the situation. Upon returning to Miller Hotel, Hudson attacked the Victim in the lobby, stabbing him in the chest and in the back.

Hudson was out on bond throughout the proceedings because of a medical condition. He waived his right to a jury trial and decided to try his luck before Judge Hunter. Judge Hunter found Hudson guilty of two counts of Murder, special felonies, and two counts of Felonious Assault, a felony of the second degree.

Good job, **Assistant Prosecutors Jay Cole and Margaret Kanellis** for getting the conviction on this case!

## HELPFUL TIPS FOR THE HOLIDAYS!



As the holidays approach, many of us are spending more time shopping. Those who carry purses need to be extra careful because purse snatchings often increase at this time of the year.

The best advice to avoid purse-snatching is to consider *not* carrying a purse. Instead, use a small wallet that holds your driver's license, a credit card, and some cash. Place it in a front coat pocket or front pants pocket. It is rare for a robber to approach a woman who is not carrying a purse and demand money. However, there are some important things to remember:

- Always walk with confidence.
- Hold your purse firmly over your shoulder and make it obvious that you have a tight grip on it.
- Be aware that women also steal purses!
- Be aware that most purse snatchings occur in broad daylight in busy parking lots of stores and malls.
- Be suspicious of cars driving past you slowly, as many purse snatchers grab purses from their vehicles.
- Finally, if a purse snatcher *does* try to take your purse, do not fight with him or her. The thief will usually end up with what they want anyway, and there is no need for you to be injured in the process.

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

**Detective Dan Lance**  
**Bath Police Department**

**Nominated by: Assistant Prosecutor**  
**John Green**



Throughout the month of June, **Michael Wells**, 26, of Akron, went door to door in Bath, offering his tree-trimming services to residents. Wells would request payment in advance and then not complete the work. Homeowners would then have to pay someone to complete the work or clean up the mess themselves. Wells also took property belonging to the homeowners, including beer, a tarp, and a shovel.

As it turned out, Wells was also wanted by Stow Police on a warrant for the same offense, and other jurisdictions were also investigating him.

**Detective Dan Lance of the Bath Police Department** investigated the case and discovered that Wells' list of victims spanned Summit County, and included senior citizens. He tracked down and apprehended Wells, then spent countless hours interviewing the victims and building the case against him.

Assistant Prosecutor John Green handled this case and nominated Detective Lance as this month's *Top Cop*. On November 5, 2007, Wells pled guilty to Grand Theft, a felony of the fourth degree, and Theft from the Elderly, a felony of the fifth degree. Judge Thomas Teodosio sentenced him to eight months in prison.

**Way to Go, Top Cop!**

### Outrageous Crime of the Month



A jury convicted **Chetankumar P. Patel**, 33, and **Minaxiben P. Patel**, 50, both of Twinsburg, of **Aggravated Murder, Tampering with Evidence**, a felony of the third degree, and **Gross Abuse of a Corpse**, a felony of the fifth degree.

The two were convicted for their roles in the death of Sejal Patel, 28. On July 1, 2005, investigators discovered Sejal's body in the back of her 2001 Mercedes SUV at the Daimler Chrysler stamping plant on East Aurora Road, a short distance from Sejal's home.

Chetankumar was married to Sejal, a mother of two young boys. Minaxiben is Chetankumar's mother, Sejal's mother-in-law.

Their two co-defendants, Rupal Patel, of Norton, and Vijay Patel, of Pennsylvania, pled guilty earlier this year and testified against the mother and son at trial. The two co-defendants were sentenced to 15 years to Life and Life with the Possibility of Parole after 20 Years, respectively.

**Assistant Prosecutors Brian LoPrinzi and Mike Carroll tried this case, which was, truly Outrageous!**

## Meet Assistant Prosecutor Mike Todd

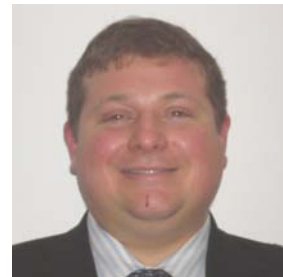
**Position:** Assistant Prosecuting Attorney

**Hire date:** May 29, 2007

**Home Town:** Medina, Ohio

**Law Degree:** Case Western Reserve University School of Law

**Years experience:** 2.5 years



**Little Known Fact:** When I was in Korea serving in the Army, I was the only American on our post's Korean wrestling team. I competed with the Koreans in numerous events and what made it interesting is that match-ups were chosen by the home team. Since I was one of the bigger guys wrestling, the home team often placed me against the fastest, smallest guy in the hopes that he would be quicker than me. The Koreans treated me very well. They ultimately nicknamed me the "Tank."

**Most memorable case:** I represented a man charged with criminal trespass and criminal damaging. He was convinced that police, politicians, and neighbors were involved in a conspiracy to give him a criminal record. He stated it began when he spoke out at a public meeting. He wanted me to defend him by uncovering this conspiracy and he asked me to request the Judge to recuse himself, as he was afraid the Judge was part of the conspiracy as well. He ultimately pled guilty to one misdemeanor and paid restitution.

### GUILTY!

*Congratulations to Assistant Prosecutors **Beth Aronson, Mike Carroll, John Green (2), April Keller-Drumm, John Mascolo (2), Greg Peacock, Angela Poth-Wypasek, Jennie Shuki, Mike Todd, and Angela Walls-Alexander** who each had juries return GUILTY VERDICTS at trials in October!*

### Did You Know?

Identity thieves may open fraudulent checking accounts in the name of the person whose identity has been stolen. If you are having problems opening a checking account, it could be because an identity thief has opened accounts in your name. If you think this has happened, you can check by contacting the federally regulated consumer reporting company Chex Systems, Inc. and request a free copy of a report concerning checking accounts that have been opened in your name.



If you discover fraudulent accounts, contact the bank involved to close the account and contact Chex Systems, Inc. to dispute the account. You can contact Chex Systems, Inc. at 1-800-428-9623 or chexhelp.com.