



# SHERRI BEVAN WALSH

## Summit County Prosecutor

### Newsletter

#### September 2007

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

## Message from the Prosecutor



Prosecutor  
Sherri Bevan Walsh

This is the sixth year that my office has celebrated **September** as **Senior Safety Awareness Month**. I believe that we owe it to our senior citizens to help ensure that they are safe and able to enjoy their "golden years."

Increasingly, the "golden years" are not as relaxing and enjoyable as we'd like them to be. That is due to individuals who prey on senior citizens they see as vulnerable members of our community. Seniors are often targets of scams, cons, thefts, and other offenses.

I am committed to prosecuting criminals who exploit and abuse our senior citizens to the fullest extent of the law. Of course, a vital component of this commitment is senior citizens themselves. When armed with information and knowledge, senior citizens can stop being afraid and help prevent crime.

I spend all year focusing on senior activities, although September is our busiest month. I speak to senior groups about **identity theft** and **crime safety, offer self-defense classes** in conjunction with the University of Akron Police Department, and participate in numerous conferences and expos.

My Office reaches out to seniors through our quarterly Senior Newsletter as well as our **Senior Safety Awareness Calendar (2008 is now available)** that lists practical tips to help educate senior citizens. We also provide information about area agencies that can help with issues unique to our older population.

If you would like to know more about our senior programs or would like to schedule a crime safety speech, please call Lisa Holdt at (330) 643-2800.

## Senior Citizen Crime Statistics

It is an unfortunate reality that senior citizens fall victim to crime. In fact, crimes against seniors are on the rise.

In 2006, Summit County had an estimated 867 theft-related reports involving a victim who was 60 or older. **That total represents a 33% increase from 2005, when there were 651 such reports.**

All in all, there were 2,201 reports of offenses against senior citizens. Again, that total is a significant increase from 2005, when offense reports totaled 1,626.

It is important to note that crimes against senior citizens are committed by men and women alike, young and old, and of all races. Senior citizens also need to realize that nighttime poses no greater risk of crime; in fact, over the past two years, offenses occurred more often during the day than at night.

## Take Me Home!

In April, 2007, Sheriff Drew Alexander and I launched the **Take Me Home** program to better support our citizens with disabilities — such as autism, Down Syndrome, developmental or cognitive disabilities — who may have trouble communicating in a law enforcement situation. Recently, **senior citizens** who suffer from **dementia** or **Alzheimer's** have been added to the program. The database is only accessible to law enforcement personnel. The system includes a picture, demographic information, and caregiver contacts. If a person in the **Take Me Home** program is encountered alone by a police officer, the officer can access the database by name or by the person's description to locate their enrollment record. With the information at hand, the officer can appropriately assist the person. For more information, visit our Web site at [www.co.summit.oh.us/prosecutor](http://www.co.summit.oh.us/prosecutor) or contact Sgt. Brian Westover at (330) 643-2181 or Laurie Cramer at (330) 643-2800.

## Consumer Alert!!

### Work-at-Home Scams

The idea of being your own boss and making great money while never leaving the comfort of your own home can capture the imagination of a lot of people. In fact, an enveloping-stuffing scheme did just that. Twenty thousand or so people received fliers in the mail stating that a company called Monitor Publishing would pay \$10 for every envelope stuffed and returned if they paid the company anywhere between \$79 and \$169. This company claimed that a person could earn \$2,000 to \$5,000 and promised they would send a check within 10 days.

Unfortunately, the 20,000 people who fell victim to this scam never received a check in the mail. In most cases, the envelopes these people stuffed came back to them undeliverable. The money was never returned to the ones who fell for the scam and phone calls to Monitor Publishing were never returned.

These work-at-home scams succeed because they harness people's vision of America as the land of opportunity. They work because people find a flier in their mailbox at the same time they have been laid off from their job or when bills start to pile up. Think twice when receiving a letter in the mail that claims you can be your own boss and make thousands of dollars a month without leaving your kitchen table. Research the so-called companies before sending them money, and ask yourself if the promises they make seem too good to be true.

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 Cops

**Detective Jim Scarl**  
**Officers Greg Feketik and Tom Mason**  
**Twinsburg Police Department**



**Nominated by: Assistant Prosecutors**  
**Greg Peacock and Jennie Shuki**

**Detective Jim Scarl** of the Twinsburg Police Department and **Officers Greg Feketik and Tom Mason** did a superb job in the investigation into the death of 8-month-old Makaila Clay in August 2006.

Michael Clay, the father of the infant, was tried and convicted for the murder of Makaila in August. The jury deliberated for only 2 ½ hours before reaching a verdict. **Defendant Michael Clay is currently serving a sentence of 15 years to life in prison.**

Det. Scarl did an extremely thorough, detailed investigation in this case. He worked with the Prosecutor's Office before the defendant was even charged in order to make this the strongest case possible. He and Officer Feketik interviewed numerous potential witnesses and preserved blood and physical evidence for trial.

Det. Scarl then continued to assist **Assistant Prosecutors Greg Peacock and Jennie Shuki** in the preparation prior to trial, as well as during the trial itself. Further, Det. Scarl testified at trial and was very organized and direct in his testimony to the jury.

A special thanks also goes out to the **Twinsburg Fire Department EMTs, Capt. Steve Bosso, Brian Cyphert and Steve Velemesis**, for their assistance and testimony in this case. They met with Assistant Prosecutor Shuki on numerous occasions to review the case and made themselves available whenever she had follow-up questions or concerns.

Their testimony was an integral part of the trial as they were the first responders on scene treating the infant, and the first ones to have contact with the defendant after the assault on the baby. Moreover, their attention to detail in documenting what they observed on the day of the murder was very significant during the trial.

In summary, Det. Scarl and all those involved from the Twinsburg Police and Fire Departments were tremendously dedicated to this case and that dedication resulted in Michael Clay's conviction.

## Outrageous Crime



*Prosecutor Walsh Votes on Her Pick for the Most Outrageous Crime Against Senior Citizens*

**NEVER OPEN THE DOOR TO STRANGERS...EVEN A YOUNG PERSON!**

*A juvenile under the age of 18 came running up to a house in broad daylight, clearly flustered and agitated. Concerned that the young man needed help, an older married couple saw him and opened the door. The juvenile came rushing in and stabbed both of them, leaving them with very serious injuries.*

*Prosecutor Walsh saw the victim at a crime speech recently and she reported that she and her husband were doing well. Unfortunately, this outrageous crime shows that our best intentions may not be our safest.*

## Meet Assistant Prosecutor Greg Peacock

**Position:** Assistant Prosecuting Attorney, Violent Crime and Child Abuse Units; Courtroom Supervisor

**Hire date:** November 1998

**Home Town:** Wooster, Ohio

**Law Degree:** University of Akron

**Years experience:** Attorney for 14 years; 9 years with the Prosecutor's Office



**Little Known Facts:** I grew up on a farm and helped deliver more than 20 Holstein calves. One of them got first prize at the County fair. I can recite all the states in alphabetical order in less than a minute.

**Most memorable case:** Lately, my cases have been more sad than memorable. But back in 2001 Ladon Putnam was on trial for attempted murder for trying to kill street thug Cravanas Moore. At a house on Thornton Street, Ladon had Cravanas on his knees ready to shoot him execution style. Cravanas jumped up, pushed the gun away and ran up the stairs. Putnam shot him in the rear end. At trial, Putnam's gang member friends lined the back of the Judge's courtroom. Amazingly, all the witnesses appeared for trial including guys who were inside the house during the shooting. The defense attorney made a big issue about Cravanas giving a false name when he went to the hospital. Cravanas maintained that the hospital told him to use a false name to protect himself, but we had nothing to corroborate that story. Prior to closing arguments Brad Gessner, who had just started at our office that week, came over to my trial. I told him my predicament with the false name. Brad searched through the medical records and found an obscure nurse's note about why the false name was given. I used that in my rebuttal close and Putnam was convicted.

## GUILTY!

*Congratulations to Assistant Prosecutors **Dan Sallerson and Emily Laube-Haughton** who each had three juries return **GUILTY VERDICTS** at trials in August!*

## Prosecutor Walsh Appointed to Chair State Victims Assistance Advisory Committee

**Prosecutor Sherri Bevan Walsh** has been appointed by **Attorney General Mark Dann** to chair the State Victims Assistance Advisory Committee.

The Committee is made up of the chair plus 18 members who are appointed by the Attorney General. The Committee reviews and advises the AG's Office on crime victim services, financial assistance allocation for victim services programs, and policy initiatives as they relate to supporting victims of crime.