



# SHERRI BEVAN WALSH

## Summit County Prosecutor

### Newsletter

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### Message from the Prosecutor



Prosecutor  
Sherri Bevan Walsh

If you have a teenager in your home, or a pre-teen for that matter, you've heard of **MySpace**. In fact, you're probably battling over your child's excessive use of MySpace.

By last count, more than 200 million people were on MySpace, one of the most visited Internet sites. This might not be the "cool" or "in" thing to do, but I strongly encourage parents to not allow their children on MySpace.

MySpace is largely unchecked and users can, and do, hide behind a cloak of anonymity. Case in point: Michael Kairis. This Ohio sex offender befriended a woman on MySpace. When she agreed to meet him, he raped her six-year-old daughter in her home.

More than 16,000 sex offenders live in Ohio. Although they are required by law to register with local police, their Internet activities largely go unmonitored. Last year, after MySpace turned over subpoenaed records, Ohio Attorney General Marc Dann identified 470 registered sex offenders who had profiles.

If you choose to allow your child to use MySpace, don't think that privacy settings will keep them safe. For instance, MySpace doesn't verify the age of its users. If a 40-year-old sexual predator says he is 15, no one checks his ID to confirm that.

Finally, I urge parents to consider using Internet monitoring software. My Office recently partnered with Sheriff Drew Alexander and Judge Linda Teodosio to purchase a software program called "Computer Cop." Computer Cop is a simple disk that provides an account of the Web sites and images that have been viewed. If you are concerned about chat rooms or instant messaging, such as AIM, Computer Cop allows you to monitor keystrokes, which will log conversations in a detailed report. Computer Cop will not only give you peace of mind when your child is online, it will help you ensure your child's safety. If you would like a copy, please call my Office at (330) 643-2800.

### Tough Prosecution

On April 23, 2007, a jogger discovered the beaten body of Susan Christian-Yates in Mount Peace Cemetery. The woman's body was lying in front of a gravestone and a cross had been placed over her eye.



Phillip L. Jones, 37, was charged with her rape and murder. Jones had previously been convicted of the attempted rape of a 16-year-old girl. While in prison, he became an ordained minister.

When Jones testified during his trial in December, he told jurors that he had consensual sex with the Victim. He claimed that he had placed his hands around the Victim's throat at her request, and that her death was an accident.

The jury didn't believe him and convicted him on all counts on December 17. A month later, Judge Mary Spicer sentenced him to Death in accordance with the recommendation of the jury. Assistant Prosecutors **Brian LoPrinzi** and **Becky Doherty** did an outstanding job prosecuting this case.

### Beware of Medicare/ Insurance Scams!



Medicare is NOT reissuing cards to its beneficiaries, nor would beneficiaries be asked to provide such sensitive information.

Recently, a Medicare beneficiary in Michigan reported receiving a phone call from a man who claimed that Medicare was reissuing cards to beneficiaries. The caller requested sensitive information, stating that they needed bank account numbers and the Medicare number in order to issue the new card. The beneficiary, wary that this might be a scam, asked the caller to send the request in writing. As suspected, the written request never arrived.

Unfortunately, this type of scam could be perpetrated on Medicare, as well as private insurance, beneficiaries. Do not fall for it!

Once a con artist has your bank account number, they can easily withdraw funds or make purchases using your bank account. Never give out your personal information over the phone, as no reputable company or organization would request it in this manner. If you receive a call such as this one, contact your Regional Medicare office or your health insurance provider. They take such scams seriously and will make every attempt to gather additional information in order to identify the individuals targeting their beneficiaries for identity theft.

Questions? E-mail Laurie Cramer:  
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We're on the Web!  
www.co.summit.oh.us/prosecutor

## February Top Cop



**Detective David Moore**  
**Copley Police Department**

**Nominated by: Assistant Prosecutor Charlene Hardy**

This month's **Top Cop**, **Detective David Moore of the Copley Police Department**, worked diligently to solve the aggravated robbery of the First Merit Bank in Copley as well as 13 other aggravated robberies of businesses throughout several jurisdictions.

Detective Moore was assisted by detectives and officers from several jurisdictions, in particular by former Top Cop Daniel Lance, of the **Bath Police Department**. Other supporting departments were the **Akron Police Department**, **Cuyahoga Falls Police Department**, **Tallmadge Police Department** and **Springfield Township Police Department**.

Dets. Moore and Lance worked tirelessly investigating the case and then, after Robert Owens, 48, and Christopher Santacroce, 28, were indicted, they provided organized documentation that made it much easier to prepare for trial on the numerous counts of the indictment. They also followed up frequently to see what else was needed, continued to work on the case and responded immediately to requests, and came to the office several times to be certain everything was in order. They also appeared at court sessions as well as the plea and sentencing hearings.

Assistant Prosecutor Charlene Hardy prosecuted Owens and Santacroce and recommended **Detective Moore** as this month's **Top Cop**.

Once Owens and Santacroce had been convicted, the detectives continued to pursue the possible participation of two females that were believed to be involved in the case. Their continued efforts resulted in an indictment for Tampering with Evidence for co-Defendants Gretchen Crawford and Stacy Morgan.

Due to Dets. Moore's efforts, along with Det. Lance,, we were able to resolve the case against two of the Defendants prior to trial, with Owens taking responsibility for all fourteen robberies and Santacroce pleading to the First Merit robbery. Owens is currently serving a 15-year prison sentence and Santacroce is serving a six-year sentence. The case against Gretchen Crawford has also been resolved and a warrant has been issued for Stacy Morgan.

**Way to go, Top Cop!**

## MEET THE VIOLENT CRIME UNIT

My Office's **Violent Crime Unit** is comprised of five senior assistant prosecutors; **Mike Carroll**, the unit's chief assistant, **Becky Doherty**, **Margaret Kanellis**, **Brian Lo-Prinzi**, and **Greg Peacock**. This team of prosecutors handles the most serious cases from grand jury to the trial phase. They also advise police during investigations of homicides and offenses involving firearms. Last year, the Violent Crime Unit disposed of 34 homicide cases with 32 convictions. Two of the cases were dismissed; one because an essential witness disappeared and the other because an essential witness refused to testify. Four of the 34 cases were Aggravated Vehicular Homicides.

These are the prosecutors who are on the front lines of some of the most memorable – and horrendous – cases that go through this office. Donald Craig, who is sitting on death row for raping and killing two Akron girls in the mid-1990's, was prosecuted by this Unit. In fact, almost every case with a death sentence possibility (except Domestic Violence cases) goes through these prosecutors. They also handle **baby killers, child molesters, rapists, violent robbers**, and those who are generally at the bottom of the barrel.

### GUILTY!

*Congratulations to Assistant Prosecutors **Shari Barton-Harrell, John Green, Charlene Hardy, Leonard Hazelett, Shauna Hill, Margaret Kanellis, April Keller-Drumm (2), Susan Manofsky, Greg Peacock, Brian Stano, Michael Tripi, and Nicole Walker** who each had juries return GUILTY VERDICTS at trials in January!*

### That's Outrageous!



On February 25, Linda J. Sanders, 49, of Akron, pled guilty to 11 counts of theft-related offenses stemming from a December 7, 2007 robbery of an elderly woman. Sanders was sitting in a vehicle in the parking lot of Acme on Manchester Road when she reached out the window and grabbed a purse belonging to a 74-year-old woman. The Victim held onto the purse, even when Sanders' accomplice, Richard Pallas, began to drive away. The Victim was dragged 15 feet before she let go of the purse but luckily was not injured.

Shortly after, Sanders used the Victim's credit cards to buy items at a local gas station. She acted distraught, saying that the credit cards belonged to her mother, who had just passed away.

Pallas pled guilty to Aggravated Robbery on Feb. 22 and was sentenced to five years in prison, after agreeing to cooperate with prosecutors. Sanders, who faces up to 20 years in prison, will be sentenced by Judge Patricia Cosgrove on March 25.

**Great job, Greg Peacock, in prosecuting this outrageous case!**