



# SHERRI BEVAN WALSH

## Summit County Prosecutor

### Newsletter

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### Message from the Prosecutor



Prosecutor  
Sherri Bevan Walsh

Earlier this month, I had the honor of speaking at the Take Back the Night rally, an annual event in which our community protests sexual violence against women. It is a rally to show our support for victims and also to educate the community about the dynamics — and effects — of sexual assault.

Each October, we try to educate our community about violence against women. Although this month is often referred to as “Domestic Violence Awareness Month,” many take the opportunity to expand that to address all issues of violence against women.

I am proud to say that my Office fights violence against women every day of the year. Whether it is supporting women who are Victims of domestic violence or fighting for Victims of sexual assault, we do our best to provide support to Victims and ensure that their voices are heard in the judicial process.

One of the most disturbing cases on which I have ever worked was the case of Christopher Butts, the serial rapist who targeted the University of Akron area. He crawled through windows of three homes near the campus and threatened, strangled, and raped women who were sleeping inside.

Working with those women, and the fourth Victim, a single mother from North Hill, reminded me of why I am a prosecutor, and why I am committed to fighting for Victims. Thankfully, justice was served for these women when Christopher Butts was sentenced to 94 years to Life in prison for his crimes.

One of those fights was fought until the bitter end: the fight against Richard Cooley. Cooley was executed on October 14 for raping and murdering two young University of Akron students twenty-two years ago. My Office never stopped fighting for those two women, Dawn McCready and Wendy Offredo, sorority sisters who suffered a violent and brutal sexual assault by Cooley and his accomplice before being murdered.

Oftentimes, as in Cooley’s case, women who are murdered have also been sexually assaulted. We have a responsibility to those who do not survive their sexual assaults to ensure that their voices are not silenced as we seek justice.

Violence against women — in all its forms — comes at a staggering cost. When women are abused, exploited, violated, it affects everyone. We must never stop trying to help those who have been Victims, prevent others from becoming Victims, and we must continue to work together to ensure that our laws protect all women equally.

### Prosecutor Walsh’s Safety Tips

It is imperative that women take precautions to avoid becoming a victim of rape. Rape is a crime that is difficult to stop once it has begun. The best defense is prevention.

- **Take a self-defense class. Hopefully you can fight off a potential rapist but, if not, your struggle could create a scene that draws the attention of a passersby.**
- **Lock your doors and windows – all of them.**
- **Be observant of your environment. Have you noticed anyone who seems out of place, who has been lurking around your neighborhood? Call the police and let them check it out.**
- **If you are in a public place, scream and make a scene. If it does not attract help, at least you have a chance of distracting him so that you can escape.**



Unfortunately, if you find yourself in a dangerous situation, you have to make split-second decisions. You won’t have a chance to think through your options and many times there is absolutely nothing you can do.

Your only goal is to survive the attack.

### THAT’S OUTRAGEOUS!!



Robert S. Marzolf, 72, of Boone Street in Akron, was convicted by a jury on September 23 of three counts of **Child Enticement**. Marzolf, who has a prior conviction for a sexual offense against a small girl, tried to lure three pre-adolescent

children into his home. Luckily for these children, an adult witnessed Marzolf’s actions.

Marzolf told police that sex with children should be legal so that pedophiles don’t feel compelled to kill their Victims.

Judge Brenda Burnham Unruh sentenced Marzolf to three years in prison, *the absolute maximum that he could receive*, adding that she wished it could be longer. Marzolf was also classified a Tier I Sex Offender.

**Assistant Prosecutor Charlene Hardy handled this outrageous case. Good job!**

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

## Top Cops

Akron Police Department Crime Scene Detectives, SANE Nurse Valerie Prulhiere, BCI & I



**Nominated by: Prosecuting Attorney Sherri Bevan Walsh and Chief Counsel Mary Ann Kovach**

This month's Top Cops are actually a team of individuals who made the arrest and prosecution of Christopher Butts possible. The Akron Police Department has its own Crime Scene Investigative unit (CSI) and their work is superlative. They do a lot of good work with few tools. Unfortunately, we do not have the space to list all the officers who worked on this serial rapist case. From beginning to end, the officers involved put forth an impressive effort that resulted in the conviction of this sexual predator.

We would like to highlight the efforts of several key players who work behind the scenes and are often unknown contributors to solving crimes. Akron Police Detectives **William Bosak, Donald Frost, and David Hayes** processed the four crime scenes and secured vital pieces of evidence — palm prints, fingerprints, and blood — that placed Butts inside the homes. Specifically, they placed him outside and directly inside the windows he crawled through to assault two victims and a door he entered to assault another.

BCI & I experts **Heather Bizub, Chad Britton, Dale Laux, David Niemeyer, Michelle Snyder, and Stacy Violi** analyzed the prints and blood samples. Their DNA work — and testimony — helped cement the case against Butts. SANE nurse **Valerie Prulhiere** played a major role in the case as well, collecting samples and recording the Victims' injuries.

All of the officers involved in this case, from the Akron Police Department and the University of Akron Police Department, however, should be recognized for their contributions to building the case against Butts. Thank you!

**Way to go, Top Cops!**

### GUILTY!!!!

**Prosecutors had 17 jury trials in September and obtained guilty verdicts in 16!**

*Congratulations to Assistant Prosecutors Beth Aronson, Tom Bown (2), John Green (3-WOW!), Charlene Hardy (2), April Keller-Drumm, Susan Manofsky, John Mascolo, Greg Peacock, Angela Poth-Wypasek (3-WOW!), Omar Siddiq, Brian Stano, and Maggie Tomaro, who each got convictions.*

**GREAT JOB, ASSISTANT PROSECUTORS!**

## MEET ASSISTANT PROSECUTOR GRETA JOHNSON

**Position:** Assistant Prosecutor

**Years as an Assistant Prosecutor:** 4

**Hometown:** Wellington, OH

**Law degree:** University of Akron

**Little known fact:** I taught 9th and 11th grade English at Garfield High School before attending law school.

**Most Memorable case:** Recently, I prosecuted **Walter Sayre** for Rape, Kidnapping, Aggravated Robbery, Aggravated Burglary, and Felonious Assault. The defendant was released from prison after serving 14 years on a previous Rape case. Six months after his release, he attacked another victim. He raped the victim, threatened to kill her and stole much of her jewelry. The victim was able to give a detailed description of her attacker to an APD Detective who used new computer software to complete a sketch of the suspect. That sketch was turned into a "wanted poster" and placed in local businesses. A neighbor of the victim recognized the suspect as someone who tried to sell her stolen jewelry. She phoned police and the defendant was arrested. A DNA match further confirmed that the arrested suspect was the assailant. The victim's memory and determination in helping the police catch her attacker was the key to this prosecution. Walter Sayre pled guilty to all of the above charges and was sentenced to **19 years in prison.**



## Tough Prosecution...94 years to Life!



Between September 2007 and January 2008, Christopher Butts broke into four homes in Akron — three near the University of Akron campus — and raped and robbed women he found inside.

Prosecuting Attorney Sherri Bevan Walsh and Chief Counsel Mary Ann Kovach prosecuted Butts. During the trial, which ran several weeks, an abundance of DNA

and fingerprint evidence was presented, with BCI analysts testifying about the results.

A jury deliberated for several hours on August 12, before returning their verdict of guilty — of 20 felonies, including three counts of **Rape**, three counts of **Kidnapping**, and numerous other charges.

On October 16, Judge Paul Gallagher found Butts to be a Sexually Violent Predator. He later sentenced him to **94 years to Life** in prison, ensuring that Butts will never see the light of day again, and will never be able to harm another woman.