



Summer 2005

**FROM THE OFFICE OF SUMMIT COUNTY
PROSECUTOR
SHERRI BEVAN WALSH**

THE SENIOR NEWS

September is Senior Safety Awareness Month!

As your prosecutor, I am committed to protecting senior citizens who can be especially vulnerable to crimes involving physical, emotional, and financial exploitation. Turning 65 is supposed to be marked by the “golden years,” with more time for family, hobbies and relaxation. Sadly, too many seniors fall prey to telemarketing scams, in which con artists take advantage of their victim’s often trusting natures. My office has handled a number of cases in which persons scammed the elderly by pretending to be caring for them, but instead robbed them of some of their hard-earned nest eggs. We also have learned of instances where persons pretend to be in trouble, and ask for monetary help because of car “breakdowns” or other catastrophes, only to make off with the unwitting victim’s money. Identity Theft is another major concern I address in talks to seniors. I let the thousands of seniors I have talked to since taking office in 2001 know that it is okay to say NO THANKS! when they suspect someone may be trying to trick them by trying to get private information such as Social Security numbers or checking information that may deprive them of their money dishonestly.

My office works closely with the police and other agencies in our com-

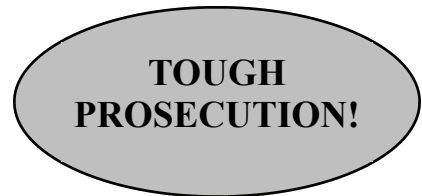
munity to combat crimes against senior citizens, including elder abuse. If you would like a list of agencies in the community that deal with senior citizen issues, please call my office at (330) 643-2796.

Since 2002, I have declared September as Senior Safety Awareness Month to educate as many seniors as possible about con artist scams, purse snatching, shopping tips and how to protect their homes. My office publishes a Senior Safety Awareness calendar containing practical tips for each month that we distribute to as many senior groups as possible, and a newsletter that we distribute quarterly. During September, we also sponsor self-defense classes in different areas each year in which a police officer instructs seniors on hands-on ways to protect themselves just by using car keys, a cane or simple maneuvers to escape a criminal’s grasp.

I am also giving a crime safety speech this month to several groups and my office is involved year-round in numerous senior-related activities geared to arming seniors with good-sense approaches to keeping themselves healthy and safe in our communities. These include the Health and Travel Expo at the John S. Knight Center and the Summit County Elder

Abuse Prevention Coalition at Summa in the Firestone Auditorium.

If you belong to a group that would be interested in hearing my crime safety speech or if you would like further information, please contact Lisa Holdt at (330) 643-2796.



Richard Williams, 25, was convicted of crimes against a 72 year old victim and sentenced to 19 years in prison. Williams kicked in the victim’s door and when confronted by the victim in his dining room, told the victim he had a gun and would shoot him if he didn’t hand over his car keys and money. He then ordered the victim into his bedroom and told him not to come out until he had left. Williams was later stopped for a traffic violation in the victim’s car.

Ongoing concern: Don’t put your life in jeopardy over personal items. In this case, the victim did the right thing in handing over his keys and money.

PROSECUTOR’S OFFICE RECEIVES NATIONAL AWARD

Prosecutor Walsh’s Child Support Enforcement Agency was recently awarded “The Most Improved Child Support Program in the Country” at a National Child Support Association annual conference in Cincinnati.

53 University Ave., 6th Floor
Akron, Ohio 44308
(330) 643-2800
Fax: (330) 643-2137
E-mail: holdt@prosecutor.summitoh.net

WE'RE ON THE WEB!

**WWW.CO.SUMMIT.OH.US/
PROSECUTOR**



During Senior Safety Awareness Month, an American Slovenian Pensioner shows Police Sgt. Cunningham that she will not be a victim!

PROTECT YOUR HOME FROM BURGLARY!

Burglary is an all too common crime. Many of us have had our home burglarized in the past or know someone who has had that experience. Although we can never totally prevent our home from being burglarized, there are ways in which we can minimize the chance that the burglar will select our home.

Burglars, like other criminals, do not want to get caught. They typically look for homes which are easy to enter. It is rare for burglars to break a window in your home while you are sleeping at night in order to gain entry. That is way too noisy and the burglar is much more likely to get caught. Instead, burglars typically look for unlocked doors, unsecured sliding glass doors, and open or unlocked windows.

Please consider the following tips to protect your home from burglary:

1. Do not assume that your home will not be burglarized during the daylight hours. Last year, there were twice as many burglaries committed in the City of Akron during the day compared to the evening where the victim was age 65 years or older.
2. Do not assume your home will not be burglarized because you live in a "safe neighborhood". Burglaries occur in all areas of our community.
3. Consider calling your local police department to check the security of your home. Most police departments are happy to provide this service free of charge.
4. Do not open your door to strangers and do not let a stranger enter your home. Many burglaries are committed by con artists who gain access to your home.
5. Do not leave first floor windows open when you are not home or while you are sleeping at night.
6. Do not leave your house unlocked while doing yard work in your back yard.
7. Give your house a lived-in look if you are going on a trip.
8. Stop newspaper and mail deliveries if you are going away.
9. While the majority of burglaries occur when you are not home, please remember that if you ARE home, do not confront the burglar. Try to get out of your home or lock yourself in a room and call the police.

**Visit our Senior Safety website:
www.co.summit.oh.us/prosecutor/srcitsafe.htm**