



April 2014

News from the Criminal Division

Message from Prosecutor Sherrri Bevan Walsh

April is a special month for those of us who work on behalf of victims of crime. April is Child Abuse Prevention Month and Sexual Assault Awareness Month. In addition, National Crime Victims' Rights Week is observed April 6-12.

Throughout this month, you'll be seeing information from my office and other agencies about events and resources for victims of crime.

My office will cap this busy month by participating in Rape Crisis Center's 9th Annual Walk A Mile in Her Shoes on April 25 at Lock 3 Park in Akron. You can learn more and register your own team at www.firstgiving.com/22485/9thWalkAMile.

There are many other ways to show your support of crime victims. One of the most powerful is by volunteering. If you have a little time to spare to a worthy cause, contact the Victim Assistance Program, Battered Women's Shelter of Summit and Medina Counties or the Rape Crisis Center. They provide an important service to our community and can always find a way for someone to help.

In the spotlight this month are the people who devote each day to personally helping victims: victim advocates. They are often one of the first people to interact with victims following a crime. And they stay with the victims throughout the life of their case.

Even after the case is resolved, the advocates will contact victims anytime something happens with the

case, such as an upcoming parole hearing or request for judicial release.

My office has full-time victim advocates who help victims understand the criminal justice system and their rights as victims. The advocates also provide victims with information about other available services.

Being a victim of a crime is stressful and changes your life in ways you might not expect. It is easy to become overwhelmed when you add to that suddenly finding yourself involved in the criminal justice system.

Advocates try to alleviate some of the stress of having to repeatedly rehash one of the worst moments of your life and facing in court the person responsible.

They make sure victims are kept up-to-date on the case progress, explain what is happening and provide support during meetings with prosecutors and court appearances. They will even read impact statements to the court on behalf of victims at sentencing.

Victim advocates are truly special people. They provide compassion to people who have experienced incredibly traumatic events, while ensuring that those people are able to have a voice throughout the process. Victim advocates often help crime victims take the first step toward putting their lives back together.

Thank you to all of the victim advocates who tirelessly work to ensure the victims' voices are heard.

Stay safe,



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Your Voice Matters

If you're like me, you are frequently asked to show support for one cause or another. Sometimes it's as easy as liking a page on Facebook. Other times you are asked to sign a petition or even donate money.

My office tries to limit asking for such support unless the need is great. But when we do ask, I am always humbled by the response.

At the end of February, we asked people to sign an online petition urging the Ohio Parole Board to deny parole to Victor Logan. Logan participated in a 1986 robbery and kidnapping that left a University of Akron student dead. More than 1,300 people signed the petition.

We certainly can't take all the credit. The family of Susan Soldierson, the young woman who was murdered, has taken an active role in this case. They are vocal advocates for the daughter, sister and aunt who was brutally stolen from them.

It can often be hard to see how something as simple as signing a petition can make a difference. While one signature may not carry much weight, 1,350 people united for a single cause is another matter.



Susan Soldierson

The Ohio Parole Board initially granted his parole. However, the family requested a full board hearing at which a representative from my office and the family could voice their concerns.

Armed with the facts of the case, the comments of the judge at sentencing and pages of petition signatures, my office and Susan's family persuaded the Parole Board to keep Logan in prison for at least another three years.

Thank you to everyone who took a few minutes to sign the petition. Your voice was heard.

It only takes a moment to add your name to a petition or click "Like" on Facebook. Yet these simple acts can have a great impact.

Thank you to everyone who has answered a call to support one of our causes. By showing your support, you not only send a message to the organization whose action you are trying to affect, but you are also telling my office and the victim's family that you care.

Tough Prosecution

These defendants are out of our community for a long time thanks to the hard work of my assistant prosecutors:

John Foster, age 45

- Aggravated Robbery (two counts)
- **Sentenced to 15 years in prison**

Keith Hickman, age 29

- Felonious Assault
- **Sentenced to 11 years in prison**

Eric J. Hartman, age 37

- Pandering Sexually Oriented Material (six counts)
- Sexual Battery (two counts)
- Extortion
- **Sentenced to eight years in prison**
- **Lifetime Tier III sex offender registration**

Guilty at Trial in March

Congratulations to the following assistant prosecutors for obtaining guilty verdicts at trial last month:

Teri Burnside

Brian LoPrinzi

Mike Cody

Kevin Mayer

Jay Cole (2)

Justin Richard

Joe Dangelo

Mike Rickett

Aaron Howell

Angela Walls-

Tom Kroll

Alexander

Great job, prosecutors!

Help us go green!

If you currently receive this newsletter on paper and would like to receive an electronic version instead, email Melanie Hart at hart@prosecutor.summitoh.net.



April Top Cop

Top Cop: Officer Daniel Radca

Nominated By: Assistant Prosecutors Greg Peacock and Dan Sallerson

On February 5, 2013, two young men were shot in the head in their Akron home. Jarrell Cunningham, 27, died immediately. Terrell Patterson, 21, survived two gunshot wounds.

Officer Daniel Radca of the Akron Police Department was one of the first to arrive. He found and followed a set of footprints in the backyard. That led him to a witness who saw the shooter arrive and leave.

This witness was able to describe what the shooter was wearing, including his shoes. He also gave a description of the car the shooter was driving.



When police arrested 20-year-old Bryan Giles, he was wearing the clothing described by the witness. And the tread on Giles' shoes matched the footprints found by Officer Radca.

Additionally, the witness' description of the shooter's car matched the car belonging to Giles' girlfriend.

Officer Radca's quick thinking and solid police work at a brutal crime scene helped to quickly solve this case.

Finding and preserving the footprints in the backyard led to evidence that connected Giles to the shooting.

Officer Radca provided strong and compelling testimony that helped to secure a guilty verdict.

On January 28, a jury found Giles guilty of:

- Aggravated Murder,
- Attempted Murder,
- Aggravated Burglary,
- Aggravated Robbery,
- Felonious Assault,
- Tampering with Evidence and
- Receiving Stolen Property.

Judge Alison McCarty sentenced Giles to life in prison. He will be eligible for parole after serving 62 1/2 years in prison. Giles will be 81.

Way to go, Officer Daniel Radca!

Agency Spotlight: Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction Office of Victim Services

My office works with a number of other agencies and organizations to ensure victims of crime receive the services and resources they need to successfully travel down the road to recovery. The Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction Office of Victim Services is one such agency.

The Office of Victim Services offers a variety of options to help victims cope with the aftermath of the crime. Some of the services offered include petitioning the parole board for full hearings and community education regarding policies and procedures of the Department of Rehabilitation and Correction.

One of the most helpful services for crime victims is the victim notification program. This program allows crime victims to register to receive updates on the offender. This can include the offender's release date and

upcoming hearings on the case.

Victims can also register with VINE (Victim Information and Notification Everyday), which provides a comprehensive notification system. VINE provides information on an inmate's status 24 hours-a-day, 365 days-a-year. Anyone can call and get information about an offender in custody.

As a death row inmate approaches his execution date, the Office of Victim Services can help the surviving victims and their families prepare.

For more information regarding the Office of Victim Services, visit www.drc.ohio.gov/web/victim.htm or call 1-888-842-8464.



Meet an Employee: Amanda Burnette



Hire Date: February 2014

Title: Direct Indictment Liaison

Hometown: Wadsworth, Ohio

Fun Fact About Me: I was married in Las Vegas. No, it was not at a drive-thru.

Education: I earned a Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Justice Studies from Kent State University.

Background: I worked at the Norton Police Department for 13 years as a patrol officer. I was assigned to the detective bureau for two of those years. I also worked as an inmate services worker at the Summit County Jail and attended the Summit County Sheriff's Training Academy while there.

Job Duties: Gather Felony arrest paperwork for Grand Jury prosecutors. Get any evidence for prosecutors pertaining to any of their cases as needed. I also speak with victims and witnesses about their pending cases.

Why I Wanted to Join the Prosecutor's Office: I wanted to join the prosecutors office for the unique opportunities available to advance my career in law enforcement.

Female Self-Defense

Summit County Prosecutor Sherri Bevan Walsh and Sheriff Steve Barry are hosting a **FREE** female self-defense class in the gym at RBC Middle School in Twinsburg (10270 Ravenna Road in Twinsburg) on May 20, from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

The class is open to women of all ages and is absolutely free with no registration required. Come alone or with friends.

This will be our last class until the fall, so you don't want to miss it!

For more information, contact April Wiesner at (330) 643-8386 or wiesner@prosecutor.summitoh.net.

***County Employees: You can earn 70 Vitality Points for attending this class!**

Autism Awareness Month

April is also Autism Awareness Month. As the parent of a child with autism, I am all too aware of the unique issues facing the caregiver of a person with autism. The Autism Society of Ohio, Greater Akron provides valuable resources, education and advocacy. Learn more about the organization at www.AutismOhio.org.

If someone you love is on the autism spectrum or affected by another condition that makes it difficult to communicate, consider enrolling them in the Take Me Home Program. Take Me Home is a program offered by my office and the Summit County Sheriff's Office.

For more about the Take Me Home program, contact Leslie Knoblauch at knoblauch@prosecutor.summitoh.net or (330) 643-2800.

Congratulations Dodie Sacia!

Congratulations to Dodie Sacia, Court Watch Coordinator for the Rape Crisis Center of Medina and Summit Counties! Dodie was named the Justice League of Ohio's 2014 Advocate Model of Justice for her commitment to ending sexual violence.

Since 2008, Dodie has volunteered more than 6,200 hours at the Rape Crisis Center. She has monitored more than 500 sex offense cases in Summit County and attended more than 60 trials. Dodie was instrumental in the creation of the Ohio Alliance to End Sexual Violence as

well as enacting the policy of mandatory STI testing for defendants in sexual violence cases.

My office has worked closely with Dodie for many years, and she is a familiar face in the courthouse. This is a truly well-deserved recognition. Thank you, Dodie, for all you do on behalf of victims of sexual violence!



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