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Prosecutor Walsh Declares September as Senior Safety Awareness Month

AKRON, Ohio (Friday, September 02, 2016) – Protecting our seniors has been one of the main priorities of the Summit County Prosecutor’s Office. That is why Summit County Prosecutor Sherri Bevan Walsh, has declared September as Senior Safety Awareness Month.

“I am very concerned about crimes targeted toward senior citizens. My office has been very proactive in protecting Summit County residents, especially seniors, and giving them information so they do not become victims,” said Prosecutor Walsh. “I felt this was an important enough issue to devote an entire month to reaching out to the community and giving people the tools they need to protect themselves.”

Throughout the entire month of September, the Summit County Prosecutor’s Office will be involved in community events, educating as many senior citizens as possible about scams, criminal activity, and how to protect your home.

Many seniors grew up in a time when a business deal was sealed with a handshake and trust. According to the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), older people are quicker to believe promises and may not take action when they’ve been scammed. Because of this, criminals will target seniors, whether it’s through the Grandparent Scam or a phone call demanding money for an unpaid bill.

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Here are some tips to remember so you do not become a victim:

- Never send money or give out personal information such as credit card numbers, bank account numbers, dates of birth, or Social Security numbers to unfamiliar companies or unknown persons.
- If you have doubts about a telemarketer's legitimacy, be sure to ask for their company's name and address, along with a phone number where they can be reached at a later time.
- For elderly widows, if a caller asks for the man of the house, be sure not to say that there isn't one or indicate that you live alone.
- Talk to family and friends or call your lawyer, accountant or banker and get their advice before you make any large purchase or investment over the phone with a stranger.
- Check out unfamiliar companies with your local consumer protection agency, Better Business Bureau, the National Fraud Information Center, or other watchdog groups.
- Be sure to sign up for the Federal Trade Commission's Do-Not-Call-Registry. Telemarketers who continue to call you after you have registered are subject to penalties. You can sign up at www.donotcall.gov or at (888) 382-1222.
- Don't forget the power to simply hang up the phone when a stranger calls trying to sell you something you don't want!

Members of the Summit County Prosecutor's Office will be at the following events, providing safety information to the community:

- September 2, 2016 – Akron Zoo's Senior Safari - 10a-2p
- September 7, 2016 – Senior Safety Speech – 7:15pm - St. Matthew's Council of Catholic Women - 2603 Benton Avenue, Akron
- September 13, 2016 - Stand Down for Homeless and Displaced Veterans – 8a-3p - Firestone Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 3383, 690 W. Waterloo Road, Akron
- September 14, 2016 – Senior Safety Speech - 1pm –Kenmore Community Place - 894 Kenmore Blvd., Kenmore
- September 18, 2016 – PawFest - 10a-5p – Bow Wow Beach – Stow
- September 28, 2016 – Women's Self-Defense Class - 6p-8p –Kimpton Middle School - 380 N. River Road, Munroe Falls
- September 29, 2016 – Responding to the Needs of Victims – a FREE One-Day Conference – 8a-4:15p – Quaker Station, 135 S. Broadway, Akron

Topics Include:

Sexual Assault: Brain, Experience, Behavior, and Memory
Responding to the Needs of Elder Abuse Victims
Working with Special Populations
Caring for the Caregiver