



FROM THE OFFICE OF
SUMMIT COUNTY PROSECUTOR
SHERRI BEVAN WALSH

THE SENIOR NEWS

Since being sworn in as Summit County Prosecutor in 2001, my office has worked hard prosecuting thousands of serious crimes in Summit County.

In 2012, my office disposed of 3,710 felony cases, resulting in a conviction rate of 96 percent. Of the 125 cases that went to trial, 86 percent resulted in guilty verdicts.

Also in 2012, my office handled 255 cases against victims 60 years and older. These cases ranged from domestic violence, and theft from family members to cases involving assault and murder.

A recurring crime I see in my office against senior citizens is theft by neighbors, caregivers and family members. I suggest regularly checking your bank accounts and hiding your valuables. Be wary of visitors who are in separate rooms in your home. One could be distracting you while the other is taking your valuables.

If you are the victim of a crime, call 911 and write down details about the offender and crime immediately after it happens. These details will help law enforcement officials bring the criminal to justice.

Did You Know?

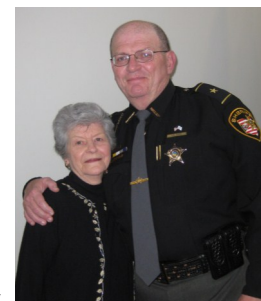
In September 2012, the state launched a new registration database accessible only by law enforcement officials that allows Ohio drivers to provide emergency contact information in case of a serious accident. Individuals may provide their name, address, telephone number and at least one emergency contact.

For registration, visit www.bmv.ohio.gov or submit via mail to the Bureau of Motor Vehicles, Bureau of Motor Vehicles, P.O. Box 16520, Columbus, OH, 43216-6520.



In 2007, Prosecutor Walsh partnered with the Sheriff's Office to launch a county-wide database for individuals who have difficulty communicating their names and information in an emergency situation. Called *Take Me Home*, this database contains photographs of the individuals along with disability descriptions and contacts that can be utilized by law enforcement officials if the individual is lost or strays from home.

Take Me Home has received inquiries both locally and nationally from areas hoping to start a program of their own. Every police department in Summit County participates and belongs to the program's Advisory Board.



For more information on how to register for *Take Me Home*, contact Leslie Knoblauch in the Prosecutor's Office at:

(330) 643-2800

or

Knoblauch@prosecutor.summitoh.net

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

Visit our Senior Safety
website:

[www.co.summit.oh.us/
prosecutor](http://www.co.summit.oh.us/prosecutor)



A group of seniors enjoying a card game at the Ellet Community Center.

CRIMES AGAINST THE ELDERLY

These are some of the cases involving crimes against the elderly our office prosecuted in 2012 and early 2013:

(August 27, 2012) Daniel E. Smelko: Plead-ed guilty to Murder and Felonious Assault for stabbing his 72-year-old mother in the chest with a steak knife at her Akron home in January 2012. After being contacted by the family for a welfare check, police found the woman dead in her bedroom and Smelko hiding in the upstairs attic. Smelko was sentenced to life in prison with parole eligibility in 2027.

(October 12, 2012) Dewand D. Hammett: Plead-ed guilty to two counts of Kidnapping, one count of Aggravated Burglary and two counts of Aggravated Robbery. In June 2012, Hammett came into the garage of a retired couple and demanded their money and jewelry at gunpoint. Hammett took \$450, jewelry and the keys to their minivan. Akron patrol officers later located the van at an apartment. They persuaded the resident to let them search his apartment, where they recovered the stolen items. Hammett was sentenced to 18 years in prison.

(January 23, 2013) Joseph R. Litten: Found guilty on July 16, 2012 for Rape and Kidnap-ping an 86-year-old female acquaintance. Lit-ten's DNA was found on the victim's clothing. The victim was able to identify her attacker at trial. Litten was sentenced to 20 years in pris-on and a lifetime registration as a Tier III sex offender.



SENIOR SAFETY AWARENESS
2013 CALENDAR



Calendar Sponsored by Summit County Prosecuting Attorney Sherri Bryan Walsh

Our 2013 Senior Safety Awareness Calendars were so popular, we had to order more. If you did not get one, call my office at (330) 643-8674 and we will mail one to you. If you belong to a senior group and would like a box of calendars, we will deliver

them to you. Or, if you are going to the below event, look for our booth and pick up one:

WAKR Senior Luncheon
Wednesday, May 8, 2013
Todaro's Party Center
1820 Peninsula Road in Akron

The cost is \$12.00 and includes lunch, more than 30 vendors, entertainment and prizes. Tickets go on sale April 8, 2013 at WAKR studios. Send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to WAKR Senior Lunch, 1795 W. Market St., Akron, Ohio 44313.

ALERT, ALERT, ALERT!

The Plain Dealer recently ran a story warning consumers of fake online coupons. The Better Business Bureau reports criminals are putting out these fake coupons to gain access to your personal information. Look for these red flags:



1. Coupon value higher than similar coupons.
2. Offers of gift cards in large amounts with the coupon.
3. Your personal information is needed.

You can check the validity of your coupon at:

www.couponinformationcenter.com