




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

# THE SENIOR NEWS



As we approach the holidays, keep these tips in mind when shopping, traveling or visiting friends and family:

1. Hold on to that purse! With the hustle and bustle of the holiday season upon us, don't leave your purse unattended, especially in your shopping cart. Thieves watch for opportunities when you are not paying attention to steal your personal items. They also look for ways to distract you. A recent victim reported she was lured away from her cart by another shopper while a thief removed her purse from the cart. This was captured on video and the thieves were apprehended. However, they had already used her credit cards and stole her cash. Don't be a victim. Keep your purse on your arm or body while shopping, or avoid carrying a purse altogether. Instead of carrying a purse, keep your cash and credit cards in a front pocket.
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2. Even though you think you are in the safest of neighborhoods, always remember to close your garage door when you leave and when you come home for the day. With the onslaught of pill and heroin abuse in our communities, there are more drug addicted people who are driving around neighborhoods looking for valuable items to steal to fund their drug addiction. In a case our office handled last year, a group of people went around to several middle and upper class neighborhoods during daytime hours looking for and finding open garages to dart in and out of in order to steal lawn equipment and golf clubs to sell to support their drug habits.

3. My prosecutors have handled numerous cases involving stolen cars. In many of these cases, the theft was easy for the criminal—the keys were in the ignition with the car running and the doors unlocked. Are you guilty of warming up your car in the morning before going to work? Be advised that criminals target homes/cars in the early morning hours for “running cars”. Don't ever leave your car keys inside the vehicle. Cases involving criminals hot-wiring a car are few and far between, because most motor vehicle thefts involve the perpetrator using the victim's car keys. Often, people will run into a gas station, convenient store, or into their homes and leave the keys in their car only to find their car gone when they return.
  4. Reading e-mails, responding to texts, making phone calls or using headphones to listen to music makes one an easy target. Just like texting and driving, when you are paying attention to your smart phone, you are not paying attention to your surroundings. Walking to and from work to your vehicle, or leaving a shopping plaza and looking at your phone takes your focus off *who and what* may be around you. Always pay attention to your surroundings. If your face is buried in your smart phone, a criminal on the prowl can draw two quick conclusions: (1) you are an easy and distracted target, or (2) you have a mini computer in your hands that is at least one item worth taking. Criminals, like predatory animals, usually wait for a moment of opportunity and attack when they have an advantage. They look for the greatest opportunity of success and the least opportunity for resistance.
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If you would like to receive ongoing Alerts from our office on criminal activity happening in Summit County, email us at [hart@prosecutor.summitoh.net](mailto:hart@prosecutor.summitoh.net), call (330) 643-8674, or like us on Facebook.

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Watch our website for upcoming self-defense classes in 2015!

## ANOTHER HOME REPAIR SCAMMER CAUGHT!

On November 30, 2012, Lloyd McMillen was hired by a 74-year-old woman to repair her leaky roof. After McMillen said he completed the work, the victim paid him \$330.00 for the cost of the repair. Shortly after, the victim noticed the roof was still leaking. She attempted to contact McMillen without success. In February of 2013, the roof was inspected and it was discovered that repairs had not been made to the roof in 2012. McMillen refused to return any money. In August of 2013, a new roofing company successfully completed the repairs. Cuyahoga Falls Police investigated and McMillen was charged with Theft from the Elderly, a felony offense.



On December 15, 2014, McMillen was found guilty by a jury of Theft from the Elderly, a fifth degree felony. He will be sentenced by Judge Amy Corrigan-Jones on December 29, 2014.

**Before hiring anyone to work on your home, get at least three estimates or only deal with reputable businesses.**

Call the Better Business Bureau (330-253-4565) or check ([www.akronbbb.org](http://www.akronbbb.org)) for any complaints against a company.

I hope that McMillen's felony conviction sends a message to other scam artists to stay out of Summit County!

## SIGN UP FOR DIRECT DEPOSIT!

Arrange for all monthly checks to be deposited directly into your bank account. Criminals will watch their target's routines. With direct deposit, you don't have to worry about your check being stolen or lost. It also saves you time from going to the bank, as well as venturing out in bad weather.



The Take Me Home program has registered 1,600 individuals. It helps to reunite caregivers with individuals who may wander or have trouble communicating in an emergency situation, such as those with cognitive disabilities, Alzheimer's or dementia. The Take Me Home database is maintained by the Prosecutor's and Sheriff's Offices, and it is only accessible to law enforcement. There is no charge to be registered.

**DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE WHO COULD  
BENEFIT FROM REGISTERING IN OUR TAKE ME  
HOME PROGRAM?**

**DO YOU WANT TO LEARN MORE?**

CONTACT LESLIE KNOBLAUCH  
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## DID YOU KNOW?

Purse snatchings from cars at gas stations is on the rise. Police refer to these criminals as "sliders".



They target unsuspecting victims such as someone pumping gas and not paying attention to their surroundings. The criminals pull up to the car and casually open the passenger door, grab the purse and take off without even attracting any attention.

I suggest locking your passenger car doors when pumping gas, or keep your purse on you. Look around as you pump gas for any suspicious behavior. If running into the store to pay, take your purse and lock your car.