



FROM THE OFFICE OF
SUMMIT COUNTY PROSECUTOR
SHERRI BEVAN WALSH

A MESSAGE FROM PROSECUTOR WALSH

HUMAN TRAFFICKING AWARENESS

A new year is here, and with that comes a sense of hope. The new year is ahead of us, full of opportunities.

As we look forward with a sense of excitement and intrigue, we cannot help but look back on the past year to see where we've come and where we should go.

For 2018, I have a renewed push to help keep the community safe. Last year, Akron saw a jump in homicides. Forty two people were murdered in the city. That's 12 more than initially reported in 2016. Of the 42 homicides in 2017, seven were killed in a house fire the Monday after Mother's Day. I can assure you that my office will vigorously prosecute those responsible.

But there are other crimes in our community which are much more difficult to discover and solve.



One which impacts some of our community's most vulnerable citizens is human trafficking.

January is Human Trafficking Awareness and Prevention month. Ohio ranks fourth in the highest call volume to the National Human Trafficking Resource Center. The U.S. State Department estimates upwards of 800,000 individuals, mostly women and girls, are exploited.

Summit County Juvenile Court has a program to assist human trafficking victims. Restore Court provides support to victims and those who are at high risk which includes mentoring, counseling, and supervision.

In 2017, the Summit County Restore Court handled 87 cases. The majority of those victims either don't have contact with their biological parents, or have a difficult relationship with them.

SIGNS A PERSON MAY BE A HUMAN TRAFFICKING VICTIM

- Is not free to leave or come and go as they wish
- Works excessively long and/or unusual hours
- Is fearful, anxious, depressed, submissive, tense, or nervous/paranoid
- Avoids eye contact
- Is not in control of their own identification documents (ID or passport)
- Is not allowed or able to speak for themselves
- Claims of just visiting and inability to clarify where they are staying/address
- Has numerous inconsistencies in their story

Learn the signs of human trafficking. The more you know, the more lives you can save.

Stay safe,

Sherri B. Walsh



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IN THE COMMUNITY

The holidays may have come and gone, but the Summit County Prosecutor's Office is keeping the spirit of giving alive. Because of the generous donations of organizations, employees, and the public, we were able to provide gifts for local families who dealt recently with personal tragedy and were nominated by our Victim Services Division.



Office employees, including **Chief Investigator Ben Bergeron** and **Investigator Jesse LeMasters**, played the role of Santa's helpers by delivering gifts to these well-deserving families.



We would also like to thank the folks at the Little Tikes Company in Hudson for donating a number of items to make the holidays enjoyable for these families.

The Summit County Prosecutor's Office loves to give back to the community. We provide safety information, sponsor FREE Self-Defense Classes, and help raise money and supplies for people in need.



Our employees were out and about in December, helping ring in the holiday season by being "bell ringers" for the Salvation Army's annual fundraising event.



Thank you to everyone who donated their time and money to the cause!

We are also very proud of the employees who work in our Child Support Enforcement Agency.

In the most recent awards for outstanding performance, the Summit County Prosecutor's Child Support Enforcement Agency received five awards, including most improved collections, best performance paternity establishment, and best overall performance in the Metro Caseload Division. That includes the six largest counties in Ohio. This is the second year in a row CSEA was honored by the state for these achievements.

Our Child Support Enforcement Agency collects nearly \$84 million dollars each year and handles nearly 48,000 child support cases. Congratulations to everyone and we thank you for your work!



We are also saying goodbye to three employees who retired after decades of service to the community as employees of the Prosecutor's Office.

Thank you to **Rick Kasay, Carol Swan, and Deborah Boykin**. Combined, all three had nearly 60 years experience with the Prosecutor's Office! Thank you each for all you have done for the office and Summit County



Enjoy your retirement!!! We will miss you.





AVERY'S CORNER

2017 STATISTICS

I'm glad 2018 is here. But 2017 ended on a high note for me and a very special person. That's Cameron. He graduated from the Court's Turning Point Program.

Cameron is a good friend of mine and I am very proud of him. He has gone through a lot but made it. I know his family is so happy for him.



I hope he continues to find the strength to be clean and sober for years to come. I know

his family will be there with him every step of the way. It was certainly a wonderful Christmas and New Year knowing Cameron is doing well.

I also got to spend the holidays at one of my favorite places—Akron's Haven of Rest.



I have so much fun there meeting new humans. They seem so happy to see me.

I'm glad I can help brighten their day.

- **4,103 TOTAL DEFENDANTS - 117 MORE THAN 2016**
- **3,945 FOUND GUILTY OR PLED GUILTY**
- **96% CONVICTION RATE**
- **65 TRIALS**
- **67 HOMICIDE CASES**
- **15 INVOLUNTARY MANSLAUGHTER DRUG OVERDOSE CASES**



TOUGH PROSECUTIONS

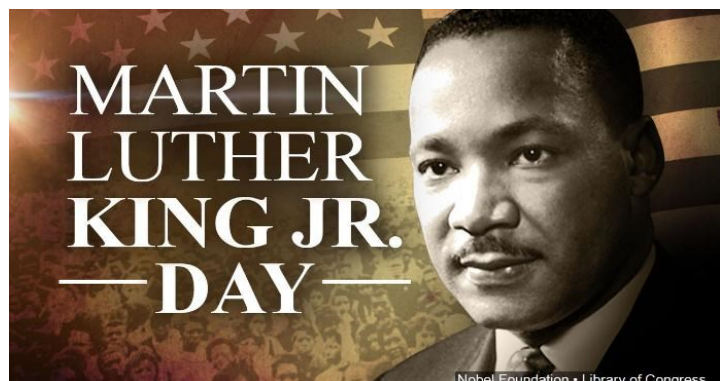
These defendants will be locked up for a lengthy period of time thanks to our dedicated Assistant Prosecutors:

Thomas Dunn, 20

- Aggravated Murder
- **LIFE IN PRISON**

Gary Franklin, 25

- Felonious Assault
- Escape
- **8 YEARS IN PRISON**



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SummitCountyProsecutorAveryII



Help Us Go Green!

Contact Melanie Hart at hart@prosecutor.summitoh.net to receive this newsletter by e-mail



TOP COP

AKRON POLICE DETECTIVE BEN SURBLIS

NOMINATED BY ASSISTANT PROSECUTORS TOM KROLL & BRIAN LOPRINZI

A crime scene can be chaotic, especially when the incident involves a large crowd. There are dozens of potential eyewitnesses to interview, as well as the challenge of securing the scene to make sure evidence is not compromised. Officers must coordinate with each other while gathering information to use for prosecution.

This is the reason why we nominate Akron Police Detective Ben Surblis. Detective Surblis was assigned to investigate the deadly shooting of Daniel Turner outside the Game 7 Bar & Grill in March of 2017. Turner was working as a security guard when someone standing at the corner of the building fired a gun. With the help of other officers, Det. Surblis had the shooter in custody within 24 hours. Finding and arresting the suspect in such a short amount of time was a team effort.



But what Det. Surblis did after is truly worthy of recognition.

Det. Surblis put together a complete and compelling case, overcoming many hurdles. None of the eyewitnesses were

able to positively identify the shooter, so Det. Surblis left no stone unturned. He sent video tapes to the FBI for enhancement and height analysis. He had a GPS unit from the suspect's mother's vehicle analyzed, which revealed invaluable evidence. He traced the escape route of the shooter and found a cellphone which turned out to be the

suspect's. Det. Surblis gathered evidence which proved the suspect was lying about where he was at the time of the shooting. With his extra efforts, Det. Surblis took a good case and made it even better. As a result, the defendant had no choice but to plead guilty to aggravated murder and was sentenced to life in prison.

For being this month's TOP COP, Det. Surblis receives a gift card to Street Treats Grill. Thank you Street Treats Grill for your support of law enforcement.

Great job and congratulations Detective Surblis!

EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR

Congratulations to Deborah Boykin for being honored as the 2017 Summit County Prosecutor's Office Employee of the Year!

Deborah just retired after being with the office for more than 20 years, performing a number of different roles.

As our front receptionist, Deborah was usually the first person everyone saw when arriving at the office. Deborah was always professional, intelligent, hard-working and one of the friendliest people around.



Congratulations again, and thank you for your dedication to the office and citizens of Summit County.

DOWNLOAD THE CSEA APP

The Summit County Child Support Enforcement Agency handles nearly 48,000 cases. You can do something to help streamline the process. Download the CSEA app.

Parents seeking child support can quickly find phone numbers, access forms, and get the agency's address and office hours.

Plus you can find out the different ways to make child support payments.

Just search CSEA in Google Play or iTunes.



WHY I'M A PROSECUTOR

Last month we began a campaign to inform the public about what it's like to be a prosecutor. Each month, an assistant prosecutor in our criminal division will explain why they chose to be prosecutors.

This month, Assistant Prosecutor Pete Daly opens up about why he chose to be a prosecutor.

• WHY DID YOU BECOME A PROSECUTOR?

I thought being a prosecutor would be a great way to serve the community, to do something which helped other people. It's interesting, it's challenging but I think it's a great way to give back to the community.

• WHAT'S THE BEST PART OF BEING A PROSECUTOR?

Handling those cases where at the end of everything you've made a difference and helped someone out. We deal with victims who have truly horrible things happen to them and they depend on us to work the case and do the best job we can to give them some sense of justice and that things will get better because we've done our job.

• WHAT'S THE MOST DIFFICULT PART OF BEING A PROSECUTOR?

I think just seeing the scope of horrible things people do to each other that until you do this work you just don't have an appreciation for and sometimes that can get difficult.

We take our responsibility to get at the truth to achieve a just result very seriously. It's not about getting a conviction, it's about making sure we get at what really happened and hold people responsible for what they've done.



You can watch Pete's complete video on our website - www.co.summitoh.net/prosecutor and on our Facebook page. Just search SummitCountyProsecutorOffice

AGENCY SPOTLIGHT

AKRON SNOW ANGELS

With 2018 here, many of us have made New Year's resolutions. For some, that means helping others who are less fortunate. That's where Akron Snow Angels comes in.

Started in 2015, Akron Snow Angels mission is to help our area's most vulnerable by providing basic essentials and building friendships, while inspiring others to do the same.

Akron Snow Angels provides warm clothing, blankets, toiletries, and lunch to those in need. From November



through April, volunteers "spread the warmth" twice a month by handing out thousands of items. Akron Snow Angels also identifies specific needs and attempts to connect those struggling with local agencies which provide those services. The goal is to make a difference in our community with necessary items which they are unable to provide for themselves.

If you would like to learn more about the organization, how to donate, as well as volunteer opportunities, head to their website— <http://akronsnowangels.com/>

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