



FROM THE OFFICE OF
SUMMIT COUNTY PROSECUTOR
SHERRI BEVAN WALSH

A MESSAGE FROM PROSECUTOR WALSH
CONSUMER PROTECTION

March is here! It's a time when we begin to break free of winter's grasp and think of spring. That also means getting ready for some spring cleaning. For many, that also means taking a closer look at your finances.

The second week of March is traditionally designated National Consumer Protection Week. I suggest you keep a close eye on your finances year round, but this is the perfect time to make sure you understand your rights as a consumer and make well-informed decisions about your money.

The Federal Trade Commission began Consumer Protection week in 1998. Just last year, the agency received nearly 2.7 million consumer complaints, ranging from debt collectors, to identity theft and imposter scams.

In Ohio, tens of thousands of people each year fall victim to scams. Knowing how to identify and avoid these scams can help protect you and your family from losing money.

Imposter scams are the most common with nearly \$330 million dollars lost nationwide in 2017 to someone pretending to be a loved one in trouble, a government



employee, or someone else who just wants your money.

So how can you protect yourself? The majority of those who fell victim to these scams say they were contacted by phone. Scammers will prey on your emotions or threaten you with legal action if you don't pay immediately.

Remember, legitimate agencies DO NOT CALL or EMAIL asking for personal information, such as account, credit card or social security numbers. Never give out personal information unless you initiated the contact.

You can also block certain phone numbers from calling your cell phone. There are several free apps where you can create your own block list, either by number or by type of call.

Your cell phone may also come with built in features to block calls. You

must manage these lists on your own, and the device may limit the number of calls you can block. Since these features are built into the phone's operating system or come pre-installed, you may not need to download an app unless you want some more sophisticated features, like tapping into a database of blacklisted numbers.

There are also devices you can buy to hook up to your home phone which also block calls.

I suggest ignoring these calls—just don't answer them!!! Once you do answer, you are put on what's called a "suckers list". Scammers now know the number is active and will continue to call.

To find out more about protecting yourself from scams, visit the Federal Trade Commission's website at www.ftc.gov.

The Better Business Bureau of Greater Akron also has a great resource for consumers. The site has continuous updates on scams, as well as ways to secure your identity. Head to www.bbb.org for details.

As always, stay safe,

Sherri B. Walsh



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IN THE COMMUNITY

That groundhog may have other ideas, but for us, one sure sign of spring is the return of our FREE Women’s Self-Defense classes! About 65 people attended our latest event at **Samuel Bissell Elementary School in Twinsburg.**

Thanks to everyone who attended. They learned some important information and simple self-defense moves, including how to be more aware of your surroundings plus, how to escape if someone attacks you.

Our next FREE Women’s Self-Defense class is scheduled for Wednesday March 21st at Akron’s Buchtel High School. We hope to see you there.



Prosecutor Walsh was also honored to attend a very moving and important presentation to combat our area’s heroin crisis.

Members of **Rachel’s Angels** recently spoke at Akron’s St. Vincent-St. Mary High School. Rachel’s Angels is comprised of local teens who were friends with Rachel DeMaio.

Rachel was 17 when she died from a drug overdose. Rachel’s friends have made it their mission to speak to local teens and tell them about Rachel and why it is so important to stay off drugs.



About 600 students listened intently as Rachel’s friends told her story and talked about how one decision can change countless lives. You can learn more about the organization as well as schedule them to speak to your group by going to www.rachelsangels.org.

We were also in the community informing people of the best ways to stay safe. Prosecutor Walsh spoke to a group of retirees from the University of Akron during their monthly meeting.

The group learned about the latest scams and ways to stay safe and avoid becoming a victim of crime.



We love it when people come to the office to visit.

The ladies from Girl Scout Troop #91551 from the Green/Uniontown area spent some time in our office recently for a tour and discussion.

The group stopped in to meet with Prosecutor Walsh and learn more about our facility dog, Avery.

It was great meeting with the girls and their troop leaders.



February also brought the return of one of our favorite events—the WAKR Senior Luncheon at St. George Fellowship Hall in Fairlawn.

Thank you to everyone who stopped by our booth to grab some items and learn about how to stay safe. It was great seeing old friends and making new ones too!

The event brings together close to 400 seniors as they learn about vital health and safety information.



We hope to see you at the next event on May 23rd.



AVERY'S CORNER

KEEPING THE COMMUNITY SAFE

They say March comes in like a lion and goes out like a lamb. I do like the animal reference, but why can't it be March comes in like a Pit Bull and goes out like a Labrador/Retriever?

Either way, I was busier than that little rodent in Pennsylvania who says he can predict the weather!

I got to meet some new friends and help talk about why bullies are bad. I spent time with boys and girls at Kids Ahead Inc. in Mogadore. That's me with my human Mel and her grandson Landyn.



I love spending time at Akron's Haven of Rest. I'm not really sure what this little human had in his hand, but it smelled interesting.

I'm glad I was able to bring some fun and joy to him and his family.



One of my favorite places is the court that helps veterans who run into trouble.

I bring a small gift as the graduate completes a court ordered program.



GUILTY VERDICTS

February 2018



Congratulations to the following assistant prosecutors for obtaining convictions at trial.

Ty Graham

Brian LoPrinzi

Jeff Puthoff

Angela Walls-Alexander

GREAT JOB PROSECUTORS!

TOUGH PROSECUTIONS

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

Brandon Grether, 40

- Rape
- **LIFE IN PRISON**

Jessica Bodner, 40

- Rape
- **16 YEARS IN PRISON**

John Bird, 51

- Aggravated Vehicular Homicide
- **8 YEARS IN PRISON**

Kesean Brown, 25

- Involuntary Manslaughter
- **8 YEARS IN PRISON**



Help Us Go Green!

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



TOP COP

AKRON POLICE OFFICER MICHAEL THORNTON

NOMINATED BY ASSISTANT PROSECUTOR JEFF PUTHOFF

Arriving at a scene and not knowing what will happen next is one of the scariest situations for a law enforcement officer. Adapting to the unknown could be the difference between life and death.

We nominate Akron Police Officer Michael Thornton for a recent incident where he was quickly able to adapt and adjust to a very dangerous situation.

In September of 2017, Ofc. Thornton responded to a disturbance call with several men on a porch, including the defendant, Marico Johnson.

As officers approached, Ofc. Thornton spotted a large bulge in Johnson's shirt and waistband—indicative of a concealed gun. Johnson acted hostile and attempted to run away. Officer Thornton quickly apprehended Johnson.

Johnson fought with Ofc. Thornton, and the two wrestled on the ground for a short period of time. After subduing the defendant, Ofc. Thornton found that Johnson had a loaded gun. Thankfully, Johnson was not able to access or use his gun during the encounter.

Although use-of-force was required in a potentially life-threatening situation, Ofc. Thornton's body worn camera showed the officer remained professional and respectful to the defendant.



During our prosecution, Officer Thornton showed up at every meeting and was always well prepared. Because of Ofc. Thornton's work, Marico Johnson eventually pled guilty to carrying a concealed weapon and resisting arrest. Ofc. Thornton's actions also got a dangerous weapon off the streets.

As this month's TOP COP, Officer Thornton receives a gift card from Brubaker's Pub in Akron. Thank you Brubaker's for your continued support of law enforcement.

Congratulations Officer Thornton!

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

March is designated as National Women's History Month. The celebration grew from a 1981 Presidential Proclamation designating the week of March 8th National Women's History Week.

In 1987, Congress declared March as National Women's History Month. A special Presidential Proclamation is issued every year to honor the achievements of women.

A special thank you to all the women who have made Summit County such a great place to live.

FREE SELF-DEFENSE CLASS

Get ready to stay safe! Our next FREE Women's Self-Defense class is almost here.

Join us at Buchtel Community Learning Center's Middle School Gym at 1040 Copley Road in Akron on Wednesday March 21st, from 6pm to 8pm for potentially life-saving techniques.

We provide common sense tips to help people become more aware plus simple self-defense techniques in case a person is attacked. Hope to see you there!



FREE WOMEN'S SELF-DEFENSE CLASS

Sponsored by

Sherri Bevan Walsh

Summit County Prosecutor

AND

Chad Cunningham

Certified Instructor

No registration required!



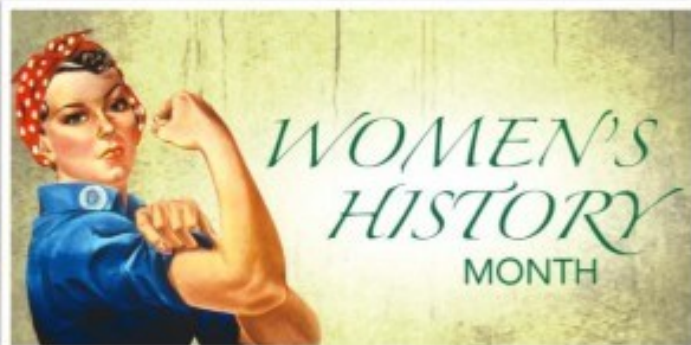
Wednesday, March 21, 2018
6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.
Buchtel CLC
Middle School Gym
1040 Copley Rd
Akron, OH 44320



- Learn simple techniques that could save your life!
- Verbal techniques
 - Free yourself from a chokehold
 - Learn the wrist breakaway
 - Escape if pinned to the ground
 - Practice kicks and slaps

GIVEAWAYS

For more information, contact:
Jennifer Watson
330-642-2702 JENWATSON@jsh.ohio.gov



WHY I'M A PROSECUTOR

JOE DANGELO

The Summit County Prosecutor's Office has a new campaign to help 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 a prosecutor.

This month, Assistant Prosecutor Joe Dangelo opens up about why he is a prosecutor.

• WHY DID YOU BECOME A PROSECUTOR?

As a young law student coming out of law school, I got a job with the Medina County Prosecutor's Office and that's where it all started for me. They were a tremendous influence on me and made me want to become a prosecutor and work for fighting for victims of crime and holding people accountable for the crimes they commit.



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

The best part about being a prosecutor are the days where you can really bring home justice for victims and hold people accountable for crimes they commit.

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

There are times and cases that you have where you can't control what is going on. Sometimes things happen that are outside of my control, whether it's before the case reaches my desk or whether it's during the course of the case. Sometimes things happen that are out of my control.

Joe's full "Why I'm a Prosecutor" video is on our website and Facebook page.

AGENCY SPOTLIGHT

SUMMIT COUNTY ADULT PROTECTION SERVICES

The safety of our most vulnerable citizens is a key part of the Summit County Prosecutor's Office mission.

We work closely with Summit County Adult Protective Services to ensure our older citizens are protected. Summit County Adult Protection Services (APS) investigates accusations of abuse, neglect, and exploitation of our seniors. That includes any signs of abuse or injury, confusion, wandering, refusal of medical care, dirty home, bed sores, malnourishment or other types of neglect.



Once APS is notified, a specialist meets with the adult to determine the need for protective services. If additional services are needed, the specialist works with the adult and their family to make the appropriate arrangements.

APS is part of Summit County Job and Family Services

If you suspect an adult may need protective services, you can contact APS by calling 330.643.7217.

Office of Summit County Prosecutor Sherri Bevan Walsh

53 University Avenue

Akron, Ohio 44308

330-643-2800

Sherri Bevan Walsh

Summit County Prosecuting Attorney

53 University Avenue, 6th Floor

Akron, OH 44308

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