



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

## A Message From Prosecutor Walsh

# Myths of Sexual Assault

What is your first thought when you hear the word **RAPE**? What about when you hear **SEXUAL ASSAULT**? The images most people have are often attributed to myths about these crimes as well as how victims are often portrayed in the media. Here are some facts for you to think about.



Rape and Sexual Assault are **both criminal acts of violence** and the victims **may or may not have obvious physical injuries**. Being a victim of sexual assault is a very traumatic experience. Trauma can impact memory and brain function. Trauma can impair rational thought and cause recall of the events to be delayed and difficult. Memories can be fragmented. This can cause the victim to be misunderstood. People will sometimes doubt the victim, especially if the victim is a child.

**It is also rare that a child comes forward immediately following an assault.** We have seen hundreds of cases in Summit County where a person comes forward years after the

assault. It may be hard to believe, but the victim may not want to expose the person who did this to them.



Kids are taught about stranger danger. They're taught not to get into a vehicle with someone you don't know. Run, yell, scream – do anything to get away.

But what happens when the perpetrator is someone they know – someone they trust? Maybe it's a relative, or a family friend, or mom's boyfriend; it's someone who builds trust with the victim and someone the victim cares about.

Those who commit sexual assaults against children don't want to get caught. They befriend the victim and buy them things. They may also threaten the victim that if they tell, the family will break up. Or it's a special 'secret' between the two. Plus, the victim may think the behavior is normal and may not know any better. They could think it's just

something everyone goes through, and just another reason the rape or sexual assault is not reported.

The lack of reporting, as well as minimal evidence, such as DNA, can make these cases difficult to prosecute.

Just some things to think about when you hear a rape or sexual assault survivor tell their story. Keep an open mind to the trauma the victim has experienced and how that can affect memory. Keep in mind, if a victim's memory of certain events is delayed or fragmented, that does not mean the victim is lying.

And remember, there is help for victims of sexual assault. Please contact the Rape Crisis Center of Medina and Summit Counties 24-hour crisis hotline at 330.434.7273 or 800.906.7273. The Battered Women's Shelter of Summit and Medina Counties is also a great resource. Their 24-hour crisis hotline is 877.414.1344 for Summit County and 888.395.4357 for Medina County.

Stay safe,

*Sherri B. Walsh*



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# In The Community

The Summit County Prosecutor's Office once again had a strong presence in the community. On September 19, we took part in the **10th Annual Stand down for Homeless Veterans** at the Firestone VFW Post 3383 on West Waterloo Road.



We were honored to help provide needed items for those less fortunate. Everything from toothbrushes and soap to laundry bags and clothing.



Thank you to everyone who helped and donated. We appreciate what you do and the impact you make on our community.



We take great pride in helping people in our community. Several times a year we purchase, prepare and serve lunch at **Open M**. On September 29, several members of the Prosecutor's Office volunteered



and served food to about 150 people. Our employees also donate the money to buy the food.

Open M provides a variety of programs to assist Summit County citizens, including an emergency food pantry, and job placement.

Thank you to everyone who attended our **Senior Safety Self-Defense** presentation on September 8 at the Barberton Active Adult Center. It was wonderful meeting everyone.



And we also had another successful Mother-Daughter Self-Defense class. On September 24th, we travelled to **Manchester Christian Church**. About 50 people came out to learn potentially life-saving



techniques, presented by members of our office and University of Akron Lt. Chad Cunningham.

If you would like to have a self-defense presentation, please contact Jennifer Watson at 330.643.7915 or [watson@prosecutor.summitoh.net](mailto:watson@prosecutor.summitoh.net)

And we had such a great time at one of our favorite annual events—the **Senior Safari at the Akron Zoo!** We



staffed a table and provided helpful safety information for Seniors and passed out hundreds of our safety calendars.

Hundreds attended the event, and got a first hand look at one of the jewels of our area. From Grizzly Ridge to Tiger Valley, the Akron Zoo is a wonderful place for people of all ages!



# Avery's Corner

# Keeping The Community Safe

September was another busy month for me. But I had a great time, even though my tail is tired from wagging so much!



At the beginning of the month, I was able to take part in Valor Court graduation in Judge Corrigan-Jones' courtroom. It was such an honor to give our veterans a little boost after they bounce back from a difficult time.



But sometimes my job is rough. This is one of my favorite moments.

This girl showed so much strength when confronting the person who did some pretty bad things.



Thankfully, the bad human pled guilty. I am so happy I am able to help victims, especially children. And they give good hugs! That's probably the best part.



## GUILTY VERDICTS

### September 2015

Congratulations to the following assistant prosecutors for obtaining convictions at trial in September:

- |                      |                               |
|----------------------|-------------------------------|
| <i>Teri Burnside</i> | <i>Tom Kroll</i>              |
| <i>Nick Buzzy</i>    | <i>Kevin Mayer</i>            |
| <i>Pete Daly</i>     | <i>Joe Miller</i>             |
| <i>Jon Hart</i>      | <i>Angela Poth-Wypasek(2)</i> |
| <i>Dustin Roth</i>   |                               |

**Great Job Prosecutors!!!!**



## Tough Prosecutions

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

### Kevin Golec, 53

- Murder
- **LIFE IN PRISON**

### Michael Hendon, 23

- Aggravated Murder
- Attempted Murder
- Aggravated Robbery
- **LIFE IN PRISON**

### Edgardo Cheverez, 26

- Aggravated Murder
- Repeat Violent Offender
- **LIFE IN PRISON**

### James Fudge, 21

- Rape of a Victim Less Than 13 Years of Age
- Assault on a Police Officer
- **LIFE IN PRISON**

### Mareshah Livingston, 24

- Voluntary Manslaughter
- **7-Years in Prison**



**Help Us Go Green!**

Contact Melanie Hart at [hart@prosecutor.summitoh.net](mailto:hart@prosecutor.summitoh.net) to receive this newsletter by e-mail



# October Top Cop

## Bath Police Detective David Ellinger

Nominated by Assistant Prosecutor Angela Walls-Alexander

This case was one of the more difficult to come to the Summit County Prosecutor's Office. A woman kidnapped, raped, and abused. Eventually Bath Police arrested Richard Novotny for the crime. Novotny eventually pled guilty and is currently serving a seven-year prison sentence.

I nominate Bath Police Detective David Ellinger for this month's TOP COP award. Det. Ellinger went above and beyond his duty to make sure justice was served for the victim in this case.

Det. Ellinger showed genuine concern for not only the victim's safety but for the safety of the

defendant's mother because she was also terrified of him.

Det. Ellinger's investigation was top notch. His documentation was superb. He made sure we had photographs and evidence to corroborate the victim's statement, along with key information which made prosecuting Novotny that much easier.

One quality which stood out was Det. Ellinger's willingness to follow up on the investigation and



prosecution of the case. He was in constant contact with the Prosecutor's Office and took great care when communicating with the victim. This made the process less difficult for her.

Det. Ellinger followed the case from beginning to end, giving valued input on the resolution of this case.

Many of these traits are common among law enforcement. However, Det. Ellinger's effort stood out.

**Congratulations  
Det. Ellinger & Good Job!**

## Senior Safety Calendar

## Domestic Violence Grant

**SENIOR SAFETY AWARENESS  
2016 CALENDAR**

Meet Avery II, our facility dog.

Avery's primary job is to provide emotional support for crime victims and witnesses.

Calendar Sponsored by Summit County Prosecuting Attorney Sherri Bevan Walsh

Our 2016 Senior Safety Awareness Calendars are here! Lots of great information to help you not become a victim.

If you would like a calendar for yourself or your group, please contact Jennifer Watson at 330.643.7915 or [watson@prosecutor.summitoh.net](mailto:watson@prosecutor.summitoh.net)

The Summit County Prosecutor's Office is proud to announce we are the recipients of a nearly \$750,000 grant from the Department of Justice's Office of Violence Against Women .



The money will be used to fund the office's Domestic Violence Unit, which consists of three prosecutors and one investigator.

"This money is vital in prosecuting felony domestic violence cases," said Prosecutor Walsh. "It allows the cases to be handled by specially trained professionals in a manner that ensures offenders will be prosecuted."

The Summit County Prosecutor's Office Domestic Violence Unit was created in 2004 to hold offenders accountable even without the victim's testimony at trial.

# Tree-Trimming Scam Alert

As Autumn arrives and the leaves begin to change to beautiful hues of red, orange, and yellow, many homeowners notice they may need some help. Those bare tree limbs hang dangerously close to windows, decks, awnings, and garages.

But beware! Now is the time many scammers are on the streets, looking to take advantage of you. Recently, the Akron Police Department notified our office that they are seeing an increase in tree trimming scams.

Many times, people will come and knock on your door. They look legitimate. Maybe it's a man and woman, dressed professionally; one may have a clipboard. The one with a clipboard walks with the homeowner to the backyard, describing what they will do to properly cut down and clean up overgrown tree limbs.

As this happens, the partner quietly slips away, goes inside the home, and steals anything of value. Jewelry, money, electronics, gone!

Police tell us the most recent increase in this scam involves people targeting the elderly.



Remember, you do not have to answer your door. If you did not call a company or invite someone to come by, then just tell them to go away. Also, many communities have no soliciting laws. You can still be polite, even speak through the door without opening it. Just be more aware so you don't become a victim.

## Domestic Violence Awareness Month

## Healing Stones

October is National Domestic Violence Awareness month. On average, 24 people per minute are victims of rape, physical violence or stalking by an intimate partner in the United States. That's more than 12 million women and men over the course of a year.



But you can do something. Wear purple during the month to raise awareness.

Donate time, and if you can, money. We can all work to break the silence.

Call the **Summit County Domestic Violence** hotline at 888.395.4357 for help.

The Summit County Prosecutor's Office has a team of highly trained prosecutors dedicated to assisting domestic violence victims. And Summit County is the only county in the state with a courtroom dedicated to handle felony domestic violence cases.

Our victim advocates do phenomenal work. They are at the victims side from day one, helping them navigate the court system. Our victim advocates keep victims informed of court dates and any new information concerning their case.

But they are also incredible artists. These are pictures of just a few of the healing stones our victim advocates have painted.



These stones are specifically in commemoration of the trial of the man charged with killing Akron Police Officer Justin Winebrenner. Our victim advocates have made hundreds of healing stones for a number of different victims.

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