



# **SHERRI BEVAN WALSH**

## **Summit County Prosecutor**

### **Newsletter**

#### **Issue I ~ 2011**

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## **Message from the Prosecutor**



Prosecutor  
Sherri Bevan Walsh

When I was elected in 2000, one of my priorities was to create a Division of Victim Services. Over the past ten years, that division has repeatedly proven its importance by supporting victims of crime and ensuring their voices are heard throughout court proceedings.

What many people may not realize is that the work of the victim advocates doesn't stop there. The director of my Victim Services Division, Kristen Arapp, sends letters opposing the release of violent criminals when they are being considered for parole. Sometimes the Ohio Parole Board continues their sentences and other times, they recommend parole. If parole is recommended and the victim opposes their release or we believe the person is not safe to be released back into society, we request a full-board hearing. A full board hearing is when the entire Ohio Parole Board reviews a case to determine if a criminal should be released.

Two recent cases highlight that long after criminals are sent to prison and victims try to put the pieces of their lives back together, the parole process can be very difficult as victims face the possibility of these individuals getting out of prison.

Early in the morning hours of October 21, 1972, Akron Police Officers Stephen Ondas and Phillip Brady were shot by Charles Hunt after trying to arrest him for a traffic warrant. Officer Ondas died and Officer Brady was seriously wounded but fortunately recovered. Hunt was sentenced to 16 years to life in prison. He has been reviewed by the parole board several times and has been repeatedly denied parole based upon the brutality of his crime. He is up for parole again on March 23 and my office is again opposing his release. This case is plain and simple: anyone who murders a police officer should never be released from prison. If Hunt is recommended for parole, my office will work with the victims to request a full-board hearing to present testimony against his release.



Officer Stephen Ondas

In 1981, two female bodies were found within a week of each other. One was the body of 15-year-old Joan Schaefer and the other was 19-year-old Sandy Jo-Hogue. Both had been brutally murdered by Thomas Gilbert, who is up for parole in April. While he was sentenced to 55 years to life and not likely to be released back into society, those whose lives changed forever with those murders are very frightened by even the thought that he is up for parole. I am opposing his release and my Victim Services Division is working with the victims to guide them through this parole process. If you wish to send a letter to oppose either Hunt or Gilbert's release, please write to: Ohio Parole Board, Department of Rehabilitation and Correction, 770 West Broad Street, Columbus, OH 43222. Make sure to include Hunts name and inmate number (A136074) and Gilbert's name and inmate number (A165154) on all correspondence.

## **Keeping Pace Technology and Kids**

Just when parents got the computer in a central location and learned how to set up Facebook pages, the game is changing...again.

Today's technology allows kids to move beyond the borders of our home — such as smart phones, laptops, ipads, and handheld gaming systems — to interact in the virtual world without our constant oversight. They can Tweet, Facebook, send emails, and use mobile game devices to stay connected from almost any location.

Predators have figured out how to stay connected in the same way. According to CyberTipline, the nation's hotline for reporting sexual exploitation of children, 223,374 reports were made in 2010, which was nearly double that of 2009. The use of social networks and online games has given predators more opportunities to engage our children.

Similarly, gaming systems such as the Nintendo Wii, Xbox and Sony Playstation have Internet access as do the handheld DSi and iPod. These devices allow the kids to enter virtual games with total strangers. If those strangers are predators, they may pry for additional information about where they live, age, and other personal information.

To keep up, conversations with teens have to be ongoing with clear ground rules. Focus on "friending" and privacy settings and the importance of not sharing information about yourself, as innocent as it may seem.

Finally, staying up to date on the latest technology and where it could potentially lead your teen is the best way to make sure they are not revealing personal information that could put them in danger.

Questions? E-mail Laurie Cramer  
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We're on the Web!

[www.co.summit.oh.us/Prosecutor/Index.htm](http://www.co.summit.oh.us/Prosecutor/Index.htm)

## Top Cops!

**Top Cops: Det. David Piekarski,**  
Sagamore Hills Police Dept.

and

**Investigator Brian Peterman,**  
State Fire Marshalls Office and,  
**Northfield Firefighters**



**Nominated by:** Prosecutor Jay Cole

*State of Ohio vs. Raymond Stewart*

The **Northfield Center Fire Department** responded to a call from a neighbor that a house was on fire. Right away, firefighters were suspicious about how the fire started. After risking their lives to save the defendant's family, who unbeknownst to them were not in the house, Northfield firefighters got the fire under control. After they called for assistance from the **State Fire Marshall, Investigator Peterman** was brought onto the scene. Over the next two days, Peterman and his canine determined that the fire was incendiary in nature and was caused by the lighting of an accelerant in the master bedroom.

**Det. Piekarski** interviewed the defendant and obtained cell phone records, including the tower information, which blew a hole in the defendant's alibi. When Det. Piekarski testified about how the phone records showed that the Defendant was in the area at the time of the fire and in fact, kept going back to check on its progress, it helped to obtain the conviction. Stewart was found guilty at trial and sentenced to eight years in prison.

**Way to go, Top Cop and Firefighters!**



## GUILTY at TRIAL!

*Congratulations to Prosecutors Jon Baumel, Teri Burnside, Michael Cody, Jay Cole, Felicia Easter (2), Tom Kroll, Kevin Mayer, Katherine Milane, Angela Poth-Wypasek, Justin Richard, Dustin Roth, Dan Sallerson, Brian Stano, and Nicole Walker, who obtained GUILTY verdicts at trial in January.*

**Great Work, Prosecutors!**

## MEET THE VICTIM SERVICES DIVISION

In 2001, the Victim Services Division was created as a full-time unit with a director, seven full-time and one part-time Victim Advocate, and an administrative assistant.

Prior to the creation of the Prosecutor's Victim Services Division, many Victims of non-violent crimes were overlooked. Now, all victims are notified at each level of the criminal justice system including: arraignment, pretrials, status hearings, pleas, sentencing, motion hearings, and judicial release. The program is designed to provide information and support to Victims of crime as their case proceeds through the criminal justice system.



Front row: **Sherri Bevan Walsh** with **Kristen Arapp**, Director; Back row: Victim Advocates **Lance Pressley, Maureen Vos, Kim Subotin, Jean Workman, Theresa Sroka, Claudia Sengos**, former part-time advocate, **Nancy Foye-Cox** and **Mark Beckwith**. Not pictured: **Joyce Thorley**.



## That's Outrageous!

**What a punk!**

Cory Buckley, 22, of Akron, pled guilty to a multitude of charges related to breaking into a 70-year-old woman's home. Cory wore a "Joker's" mask (think Batman) and made her stay in the bathroom by taking her canes so she couldn't walk out. He made her stay there while he ransacked her house for over two hours. He then stole her car and rolled it as he tried to get away. Fortunately, the police saw him and when they caught up to him, the knife fell. They knew something was up. Cory was sentenced to 10 years in prison.

**Wasn't there a better way to get out of the mortgage?**

It's not every day that you go to prison for burning down your own house. Raymond Stewart, 38, of Sagamore Hills, was in foreclosure and had refinanced the mortgage four times. Each time he refinanced he increased the amount he owed on the principal. Stewart set the house on fire to collect the insurance money but it didn't work out quite like he planned. He was sentenced to eight years in prison, ordered to pay \$61,000 in restitution to Allstate, and had to pay for the fire investigation, which was more than \$2,600. Do the math.

**Now that is outrageous!**