



Summit County Prosecutor's Office News from the Criminal Division

October 2011

A newsletter for residents of Summit County from the Summit County Prosecutor's Office

A MESSAGE FROM PROSECUTING ATTORNEY SHERRI BEVAN WALSH



You may have noticed some unusual purple lights throughout the city. They are in honor of Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

Although most of us think domestic violence is something that only affects other people, it is unfortunately more common than any of us would like to believe. Consider these sobering facts:

- 25% of women and one out of every 13 men will experience domestic violence during their lives¹
- Women 20 – 24 are most likely to be abused²
- Approximately 3 million children witness domestic violence every year³
- Domestic Violence kills three women in America every day⁴
- 105 people in Ohio died in 2010 as a result of domestic violence⁵

¹ Presidential Proclamation – National Domestic Violence Awareness Month; October 3, 2011

² Victim Assistance Program

³ Victim Assistance Program

⁴ Presidential Proclamation – National Domestic Violence Awareness Month; October 3, 2011

⁵ Ohio Domestic Violence Network

In my office, we are working to put an end to the cycle of violence. This month the first court in Ohio to handle only felony domestic violence cases started right here in Summit County. This means one judge and a select team of prosecutors, probation officers and victim advocates will work in the court, which will bring more consistency to the way those cases are handled.

Additionally, for the fourth time in a row my office was awarded a large grant from the Department of Justice to help fund our Domestic Violence Unit. The grant will also partially fund the domestic violence court.

These are just our latest efforts in combating domestic violence. You can read more about them on my [website](#) and on page 2.

If you or someone you know is suffering abuse, there are many resources available to help:

- Battered Women's Shelter: 888-395-4357
- Ohio Domestic Violence Network: 800-934-9840
- Victim Assistance Program: 330-376-0040

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HELP US GO GREEN!

If you currently receive this newsletter on paper and would like to receive an electronic version instead, email Melanie Hart at Hart@prosecutor.summitoh.net.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE COURT

The first felony domestic violence court in Ohio officially opened in Summit County on October 1, 2011.

As of October 1, all new felony-level domestic violence cases will be heard by Judge Paul Gallagher and handled by a dedicated team of representatives from the Summit County Prosecutor's Office, Summit County Probation Department, the Batterer Intervention Program, Victim Assistance Program and Battered Women's Shelter.

The domestic violence court is expected to see approximately 350 cases each year. Of those cases, about one third will qualify for intensive supervision, a hyper vigilant form of probation that requires offenders to participate in a batterer's intervention program, substance abuse treatment or other programs the court deems necessary.

The court's overall goal is to ensure consistency and hold offenders accountable for their actions.

AN INTERN'S VIEW

By Barbara Fernandez

My experience at the Juvenile Division of the Prosecutor's Office has been quite different than the other jobs or internships I have had throughout law school. I have been able to gain a lot of courtroom experience by sitting in on various hearings and trials.

While I am not directly involved with victims or defendants, I have been able to see different aspects of a case and how it all comes together in the end in front of the Magistrate or Judge. I have been able to take part in reviewing evidence from doctors, psychiatrists and caseworkers and have also been able to speak to caseworkers and get a better sense of what they do and how they help the prosecution put on its case.

Before interning here, I had no idea that so many parties were involved when litigating a Dependence and Neglect case. Not only is the caseworker essential, but so are the parents, possible foster parents, family members, guardian ad litem and any doctors or mental health professionals who may be testifying. The best case I have seen is when all of

these important parties, including the assistant prosecutor, come together to further the same goal: doing what is best for the child or children involved.

Barbara Fernandez is an unpaid intern with the Juvenile Division. She attends University Akron School of Law.

To apply for an internship with the Prosecutor's Office, contact Lisa Holdt at holdt@prosecutor.summitoh.net or 330-643-2796.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE GRANT

The Summit County Prosecutor's Office was awarded a two-year \$749,949 grant from the Department of Justice Office on Violence Against Women.

The grant is used to fund the Domestic Violence Unit, which includes a probation officer, assistant prosecutors, an investigator, an advocate from Victim Assistance Program and an advocate from the Battered Women's Shelter. The grant will also partially fund the domestic violence court.

This is the fourth time the Prosecutor's Office has been awarded this grant.

GOOD MORNING AMERICA

I was recently featured on a "Good Morning America" segment showing viewers how to find unclaimed funds. Thanks to the hard work of our staff at the Child Support Enforcement Agency, we were able to locate a local woman with more than \$8,000 in our unclaimed funds account.

You can watch the clip at: <http://abcnews.go.com/GMA/video/unclaimed-money-kids-finding-lost-child-support-payments-14719994?tab=9482930§ion=1206852&playlist=14720884>.

Unfortunately, we still have people on our unclaimed funds list and are working to find them. Please take a moment to look at our unclaimed funds list at <http://www.co.summit.oh.us/prosecutor/unclaimedmoney.htm>. If you recognize anyone on the list, ask them to contact CSEA at 330-643-2765 or 800-726-2765.

HALLOWEEN SAFETY

Halloween is always a fun time of year. And keeping in mind a couple simple safety tips will ensure you and your little goblins are safe, too.

- Ensure children only approach lit houses and remain in a group
- Keep lit pumpkins away from doorsteps and walkways where they could come into contact with kids' costumes
- Make sure children know not to eat candy before an adult carefully examines all of it – discard anything not in sealed, original packaging
- Make sure hats, wigs and masks do not obstruct vision and will not slip down over the face
- Drive slowly through neighborhoods and keep a close watch for children
- Carry a flashlight to see and be seen
- Remind children to look both ways before crossing the street and to be careful walking through yards that could have decorations or other items on the ground

Have a safe and spooky Halloween!

OPEN M LUNCH

My office regularly participates in community service activities set up by our community relations committee. A few weeks ago we served lunch at Open M, an organization that serves those in Akron with extremely limited resources.



Judge Kathryn Michael and Prosecutor Sherri Bevan Walsh

Akron municipal judge Kathryn Michael joined members of my staff from the criminal division and the Child Support Enforcement Agency to provide a

lunch of pizza, applesauce, chips and cookies. We also handed out Halloween bags to the kids.



Summit County Prosecutor's Office employees assemble lunch plates.

For more information about Open M, visit <http://www.openm.org/>.

TOP COP

Top Cop: Summit County Sheriff Deputy Wes Dobbins

Nominated By:
Assistant Prosecutor Dustin Roth



On the morning of May 17, a Northfield man noticed two masked men walking through his backyard toward his home. When the intruders, Robert Linde and Angelo Santamaria, started tampering with the lock on the sliding back door, the man called 911 and hid in a secure location.

When the homeowner heard the police arrive, he left his hiding space, but Linde and Santamaria were still in the house. They attacked the victim, wrestling him to the floor and placing him in a chokehold. During the struggle, Deputy Wes Dobbins, a SWAT team member and United States Marine, entered the home and arrested Linde and Santamaria at gunpoint. In media reports, the victim credited Dobbins with saving his life.

That's why Deputy Wes Dobbins of the Summit County Sheriff's Department is October's Top Cop.

Way to go, Deputy Dobbins!

MEET AN INVESTIGATOR



Name: Rodney "Joe" Sands

Hire Date: January 2004

Title: Chief Investigator

Hometown: Lakemore, Ohio

Education: Police Academy at the Tallmadge Police Department, Police Executive Leadership College (sponsored by the Law Enforcement Foundation), FBI National Academy

Background: I started my career at the Summit County Engineer's Office, then joined the Lakemore Police Department. I was the Lakemore Chief of Police for 17 years.

Something People Don't Know About Me: My wife and I have three children. They are all adopted.

Job Duties: As the investigator assigned to the Domestic Violence Unit, I conduct investigations for domestic violence cases, collect 911 calls, deliver subpoenas, accompany

the unit's assistant prosecutors to meetings with their victims and witnesses and find victims and witnesses when they don't show up for court.

As the chief investigator, I am also responsible for ensuring that all investigative requests that come into our office are taken care of.

Most Memorable Case: My most memorable case is a domestic violence case from when I was with the Lakemore Police Department. The defendant shot and killed her live-in boyfriend in the back with a shotgun as he ran down the steps. She took all the money in his pockets and fled the scene.

GUILTY AT TRIAL

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

Aaron Howell
Tom Kroll
Brian LoPrinzi (2)
Kevin Mayer (3)

Stephen Nuemeyer
Dan Sallerson (3)
Nicole Walker

We didn't have a single "Not Guilty" verdict during the month of September!