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# News from the Criminal Division

August 2012

## Message from Prosecutor Sherri Bevan Walsh

An interesting coincidence occurred recently in my office. We had three rape cases, all involving young girls, on trial during the same week. I don't think we've ever had three rape trials at once.

I had hoped my message this month would be about how proud I am of the prosecutors who handled these difficult cases and won convictions.

I am very proud of them. Unfortunately, the outcomes were not as we expected.

The juries on two cases found the defendants guilty. However, the jury on the third case found the defendant not guilty.

In our eyes, all three of those cases should have resulted in swift guilty verdicts. The cases were fairly similar, so we were at first confused why one defendant went free.

Then we realized that the only defendant found not guilty was the only one who denied having sexual contact with the victim.

Rape cases are extremely difficult. They are emotional and complicated, and often our case rests on whether the jury finds the victim or defendant more credible.

With the proliferation of crime shows on TV, the public has come to expect cases that are clear-cut. Just like on TV, they expect to see every detail of the crime unfold before them. Reality does not give us the opportunity to have all crimes on videotape.

Juries often comment after trial that there just wasn't enough -- or the right -- evidence for them to convict. They have told us this even when they believe the victim.

Jurors often tell my assistant prosecutors that they would have convicted, if only there were more DNA or a full confession or a corroborating witness or security footage that wasn't so blurry or some other piece of evidence those shows have taught the public to expect.

But the reality is that defendants don't always talk. There isn't always a video or photographs. -- and if there is, they are probably grainy. Most crimes are committed in secret, out of the view of others. Defendants often prey on the most vulnerable in hopes they will not be believed.

This so-called "CSI Effect" adds to our burden of proof. But we continue to do our best to build a case with the available evidence and hope that the jury can separate what makes good TV from reality.

While we are successful in the great majority of our cases, our hearts go out to the victims in those times we do not prevail.



Stay safe,

*Sherri B. Walsh*

# Agency Spotlight: Victim Assistance Program

Crime does more than just physical and psychological damage. Besides a trip to the hospital or some counseling sessions, victims and their families often need a safe place to stay, clothes and other personal belongings, assistance applying for compensation and other benefits and someone to advocate on their behalf throughout the criminal proceedings.

Although my office has a Victim Services Division with eight victim advocates, we still work closely with Victim Assistance Program to help victims and their families get the help they need.

**This year marks Victim Assistance Program's 40th anniversary.** In addition to providing victims and their families with referrals to area agencies, Victim Assistance Program staffs a 24-hour Crisis Line, offers advocates at the local courts and police stations, and works to educate schools and the community about the devastating effects of crime on individuals and families.

Thank you, Victim Assistance Program, for all you do! I look forward to many more years of working together on behalf of victims.

To learn more about Victim Assistance Program, visit its website at <http://www.victimassistanceprogram.org/>.



*Missy Klein, Victim Assistance Program community education liaison, and Prosecutor Walsh at a recent benefit for Victim Assistance Program.*

## Child Support Solutions

The goal of my Child Support Enforcement Agency (CSEA) is to help parents take financial responsibility for their children.

While extreme cases require more drastic measures, such as suspending a driver's license or even a felony prosecution, finding another way to get payments on track is much more beneficial to everyone involved.

There are a lot of reasons why a parent might not be current on payments. Sometimes it's the particular family dynamics, but often the cause involves economic factors. And once you get behind, it can be difficult to get back on track, especially if there is a warrant for your failure to pay.

CSEA has teamed up with a number of organizations to help parents not only address the issues preventing them from making their payments, but also to help those parents ease the sanctions imposed for failure to pay.

Among the services offered at the event are:

- License reinstatement
- Child support warrant resolution
- Application for waiver and compromise on arrears owed to the state
- Free genetic paternity testing
- Payment arrangements

This is a great opportunity for anyone who needs help getting back on track, and I am excited to be working with so many groups to do this.

Child Support Solutions is 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Friday, August 24 and Saturday, August 25 at The Job Center at 1040 E. Tallmadge Avenue in Akron. For more information, visit my website or call CSEA at (330) 643-2765.

**GET BACK ON TRACK WITH CHILD SUPPORT!**

Summit County Prosecutor  
**Sherri Bevan Walsh**  
presents  
**Child Support Solutions**

Friday, August 24 & Saturday, August 25  
9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

**Don't Forget Your:**

- Photo ID
- Existing court orders
- Proof of employment/unemployment
- Most recent pay stub

**We'll Help You:**

- Reinstate your driver's license
- Make payment arrangements
- Resolve outstanding child support warrants
- Determine if you qualify for waiver or settlement of past due support owed to the state
- Get information about employment assistance
- Take part in free genetic paternity testing
- Learn about Fatherhood Initiatives
- Resume writing
- Relationship counseling
- Financial literacy
- Computer training

**THE JOB CENTER 1040 E. Tallmadge Avenue, Akron, Ohio 44310**

# August Top Cop

**Top Cop:** Munroe Falls Police Detective **Robert Trexler**

**Nominated By:** Assistant Prosecutor Dan Sallerson



On the afternoon of May 12, 2011, a woman discovered her TV, camera and jewelry were missing from her Munroe Falls home. Police were unable to find any evidence other than a neighbor who had seen a maroon car in the driveway that afternoon.

Munroe Falls Police Detective Robert Trexler was assigned to the case. His first step was to ask other police departments if they had any similar burglaries.

Fairlawn police told Detective Trexler that some of the stolen items from Munroe Falls had been pawned at Summit Mall. Additionally, the person who pawned those items was a suspect in a Medina County burglary.

Detective Trexler then contacted the Medina County Sheriff's Office, who told him about a

traffic stop in New Franklin involving a maroon car. The car was driven by Aaron Bain, the person who had tried to pawn stolen items at Summit Mall.

Police found a camera and jewelry in the car. Although the passenger, Chad Rinehart, claimed to own the camera, the serial number matched that of the stolen camera.

Detective Trexler interviewed Bain, who said he was selling items for Rinehart. Bain agreed to show Detective Trexler where he had sold items for Rinehart. He became visibly nervous when Detective Trexler drove him by the burglarized home in Munroe Falls and ultimately admitted that he drove Rinehart to the home and acted as a lookout.

After getting a confession from Bain, Detective Trexler used cell

phone records to verify Bain's story. He subpoenaed cell tower records to determine the location of Rinehart's cell phone during the burglary and got a search warrant to see the text messages Bain sent to Rinehart during the time of the burglary.

Detective Trexler didn't stop with cell phone records. He also interviewed Rinehart's girlfriend, who gave a written statement implicating Rinehart and Bain in the burglary in Munroe Falls, as well as in other communities.

Thanks to Detective Trexler's thorough investigation, we had ample evidence to build a strong case against Rinehart that didn't rely on the testimony of a co-defendant. Rinehart pleaded guilty to Burglary and will be sentenced on September 4.

**Way to go, Detective Robert Trexler!**

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## National Night Out

On Tuesday, August 7, my office joined neighborhoods and community groups throughout Akron in celebrating National Night Out.

The event aims to bring community residents, organizations, law enforcement and other government agencies together to reinforce the idea that crime can be reduced if we all work together.

This is always a fun event, and this year was no exception. Assistant prosecutors and victim advocates from every division in my office met with residents at 15 locations throughout Akron.

Thank you to the City of Akron for organizing this event, and special thanks to all of the residents who came out to show their support!



# Meet Assistant Prosecutor Ryan Stickel



**Hire Date:** July 2007

**Title:** Assistant Prosecutor

**Hometown:** Stoutsville, Ohio (population 581, according to the 2000 census)

**Education:** I double-majored in Politics and Philosophy at Cornell College. I earned my Juris Doctorate at Capital Law School.

**Background:** I married my high school sweetheart and moved up here after 18 months in private practice in Columbus. In private practice I focused mainly on criminal defense and appellate work. I also taught Public Administration for Rio Grande University and Philosophy for Ohio Dominican.

**Fun Fact About Me:** I grew up on the edge of the Appalachian parts of Ohio and often had to chase off our property the turkeys, chickens and other farm animals that were kept in the area.

**Job Duties:** I handle felony cases in front of Judge Stormer.

**Most Memorable Case:** Posing as a sort of twisted grandfather figure, Bill Chesrown lured young girls who were runaways and drug addicts into his home. He gave the girls money, drugs and use of his hot tub. He also had hidden cameras set up in the bathrooms and kept a collection of tapes from those cameras that went back at least 10 years full of hours of footage of young girls undressing in his bathrooms. By the time I got the case, Chesrown had graduated from watching to starting to touch the girls. My courtroom partner and I managed to identify all of the victims (there were at least eight different girls on these tapes) and secure convictions regarding the tapes and the touching. Chesrown was sentenced to seven years in prison.

**Why I Wanted to Become a Prosecutor:** At first, I didn't. I thought the best way to defend the constitution was to defend the criminals. My time in criminal defense convinced me that my place was on the other side of the table. I've slept much better since.

## Guilty at Trial

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

Nik Buckmeier

Tom Kroll

Teri Burnside

Angela Poth-Wypasek (2)

Joe Fantozzi (2)

Dustin Roth

Brad Gessner

### 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](mailto:hart@prosecutor.summitoh.net).

Contact the Summit County Prosecutor's Office  
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[www.co.summit.oh.us/prosecutor](http://www.co.summit.oh.us/prosecutor)