



News from the Criminal Division

Message from Prosecutor Sherri Bevan Walsh

At the end of this month, my office will lose one of our most valuable resources. Mary Ann Kovach, who has served as Chief Counsel throughout my tenure as Summit County Prosecutor, is retiring.

Mary Ann has one of the sharpest legal minds I've ever witnessed. She remembers every detail of every case she's ever worked on, and during her 34-year career, she has handled a lot of cases. She can take even the most complex concept -- DNA, for example -- and simplify it so that anyone can understand it.

Additionally, she is the toughest woman I've ever met. When Mary Ann first started her career in prosecution in the 1970s, the legal profession was still very much a good ol' boys network. On her first day in the criminal division of the Summit County Prosecutor's Office, the men in the office decided to haze Mary Ann by strewing the crime scene photos from a gruesome murder on her desk. Mary Ann calmly surveyed the photos, then stacked them up neatly and went to work.

What I most admire about Mary Ann is that she is brutally honest and straightforward. With Mary Ann, there is no question where you stand. She gets

the job done without worrying about stepping on toes. And she gets it done quickly.

The biggest lesson Mary Ann has taught my staff is the importance of always maintaining your composure. As attorneys, we are frequently in conflict with someone else -- usually the defense attorney -- both in and out of court.

It can be easy to lose your temper, but Mary Ann demonstrates a strong command of her composure. She maintains her ground, yet allows the other side ample opportunity to be heard. And then, instead of getting angry or indignant, she responds with an undercurrent of amusement at the ridiculous, illogical or even simply unacceptable position of the opposing party. What she has shown all of us is that if you can laugh at the ridiculousness of your opponent and not take that to heart, you can maintain control of the situation.

Please join me and the entire staff of the Summit County Prosecutor's Office in wishing Mary Ann Kovach the best of luck in her next chapter!

Stay safe,

Sherri B. Walsh

Upcoming Events

Please join me and members of my staff at the following free events. You can learn more by visiting our website:

*Female Self-Defense Class
Wednesday, July 24
6:00 - 7:30 p.m.
Northwest Family Recreation
Center, Akron*

*National Night Out
August 6
Times and locations vary*

*Child Support Solutions
August 16 & 17
9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
The Job Center, Akron*



Senior Safety Awareness Month

Senior citizens are a prime target for criminals. Seniors tend to have more assets than people in other age groups and they are less likely than younger people to report being victimized. Those who rely on caretakers are particularly susceptible to falling prey to criminals.

This is why I have a strong focus on teaching seniors how to protect themselves. My job is about more than punishing the bad guys. I always work hard to help the community become safer.

My first year in office, I designated September as Senior Safety Awareness Month. During this time I put the safety of senior citizens in the limelight by meeting with various senior groups to talk about scams and other crimes targeting our elders.

I also partner with Lt. Chad Cunningham of the University of Akron to teach self-defense specifically geared toward senior citizens. Just because you have a lot of life experience, doesn't mean you can't fend off an attacker. These classes are some of the most entertaining presentations I give all year!

Would you like Prosecutor Walsh to speak to your group about scams, crime safety or self-defense? Contact Merle Payne at (330) 643-2800.



Tough Prosecution

These defendants will be out of our community for a lengthy period of time thanks to the hard work of my assistant prosecutors:

Albert Finklea, age 49

- Rape (11 counts)
- Gross Sexual Imposition (10 counts)
- **Sentenced to life in prison**
- **Eligible for parole in 2098 -- after serving 85 years in prison**

Robert Roper, age 24

- Rape
- **Sentenced to life in prison**
- **No parole eligibility**

D'Juan Shabazz Shields, age 40

- Rape of a Child Under 13
- Gross Sexual Imposition (four counts)
- **Sentenced to life in prison**
- **Eligible for parole in 2023**

Justin Harris, age 29

- Aggravated Robbery (three counts)
- Firearm Specifications (three counts)
- Failure to Comply
- **Sentenced to 19 years in prison**

Guilty at Trial in June

Congratulations to the following assistant prosecutors for obtaining guilty verdicts at trial last month:

Teri Burnside (2)

Pete Daly (2)

Felicia Easter

Aaron Howell

Elliot Kolkovich

Brian LoPrinzi

Angela Poth-Wypasek (2)

Jennie Shuki

Colleen Sims (3)

Brian Stano

Ryan Stickel

Great job, prosecutors!



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.



July Top Cop

**Top Cop: Officers Mark Hockman, Rod Criss and Brian Cresswell, Akron Police Department
Nominated By: Assistant Prosecutor Mike Rickett**

In the early morning hours of July 21, 22-year-old Corey Hardison decided to move up in his gang. In his gang, the only way to do this is to kill someone.

Hardison found 35-year-old Karma Tamang, a Bhutanese immigrant, sitting in his car in a parking lot on Blaine Avenue. Hardison opened the passenger door, got in the car and shot Tamang in the head. Hardison then fled the area, throwing a backpack containing his gun and T-shirt into the backyard of a known gang house.

The day after murdering Tamang, Hardison and a fellow gang member stole a flat-screen TV from a home on Robinette Court.

Hardison then bragged to several

people about the murder and his newly elevated status within the gang.

Akron detectives found Hardison's DNA on the handle of Tamang's car door. They also found the backpack Hardison threw after the murder. The gun had Hardison's DNA, while Tamang's DNA was on the T-shirt.

Hardison pleaded guilty on June 14 to Murder with a three-year firearm specification, Participation in a Criminal Gang and Burglary.

Akron Police Officers Mark Hockman, Rod Criss and Brian Cresswell were instrumental in this case ending in a guilty plea.

These three officers did an outstanding job collecting

intelligence and assembling information on Hardison's gang. They provided assistant prosecutors Teri Burnside and Mike Rickett with

an extensive working file on the gang, which helped prove Hardison's motive for killing Tamang.

Additionally, Officer Brian Cresswell conducted a good interview regarding the burglary on Robinette Court that was associated with the gang's activity.

Judge Tom Teodosio will sentence Hardison on July 24.



Way to go, Officer Hockman, Officer Criss and Officer Cresswell!

SUMMIT COUNTY CRIME STOPPERS

Crime doesn't pay, but WE do!

Do you have information about a crime or criminal activity? Submit an anonymous tip to Summit County CrimeStoppers. Your tip could be worth up to \$2,000!

Call: 330-434-COPS (2677)

Text: TIPSCO plus your tip to CRIMES (274637)

Online Tip Submission: www.tipsubmit.com/webstips.aspx?AgencyID=1156

Facebook: Summit County Ohio Crime Stoppers



Meet a Prosecutor: John Galonski



Hire Date: January 2001

Title: Deputy Chief Prosecutor, Civil Division

Hometown: Macedonia, Ohio

Fun Fact: I was pound-for-pound the strongest in my high school class. I bench pressed 240 pounds and only weighed 145 pounds. Additionally, I'm married to Summit County Juvenile Court Magistrate Tavia Baxter Galonski. We have two children, Antonio and Gabriella.

Education: I earned my Bachelor of Arts in History from the University of Akron and my Law Degree from the University of Akron School of Law.

Background: I worked in private practice in Canton and as a paralegal instructor at E.T.I. Technical College prior to being hired at the Summit County Prosecutor's Office. I was the chief assistant prosecutor in the Child Support Enforcement Agency before joining the Civil Division in May.

Job Duties: I provide legal representation to Summit County and the townships of Summit County in civil proceedings. I also supervise all of the staff in the Civil Division.

Most Memorable Case: An airline pilot asserted numerous defenses as to why he couldn't be his child's father. This man asserted his defenses and proceeded to trial in spite of the fact that the Genetic Probability of Paternity Index was 1,296,989,598 to 1. In English, the likelihood that someone else was that child's father was a billion to one. The pilot was found to be the father of the child and was ordered to pay \$1,390 a month in child support.

Why I Wanted to Become a Prosecutor: I became a lawyer to make a difference in the lives of people. The Summit County Prosecutor's Office is a great place to make that happen.

Agency Spotlight: Humane Society of Greater Akron

Pawsibilities: The Humane Society of Greater Akron is a shelter that rescues and cares for abused and neglected animals until they are adopted. Pawsibilities was founded in 1968 to serve the Summit County animal population. It is the only animal entity in Summit County with the legal authority to protect injured, abused and neglected animals. The shelter has two Humane Officers who investigate animal cruelty cases and prosecute offenders.

Pawsibilities is open to the public Tuesday through Sunday. The shelter has dogs, cats, rabbits and guinea pigs available for adoption. A potential adopter is required to fill out a quick adoption profile and meet with an adoption counselor to ensure the best match

between human and pet. An adoption fee is required and is based on the age of the animal.



The humane society relies on the public to keep it in operation. The annual Pawsibility Ball will be held Saturday, September 21 at 6:00 p.m. at the Hilton Akron/Fairlawn located at 3180 West Market Street in Akron. For more information, call (330) 487-0333 or visit their website at <http://www.summithumane.org>.

Thank you, Pawsibilities, for all of the good you do on behalf of our furry friends!

Contact the Summit County Prosecutor's Office
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330-643-2800