



FROM THE OFFICE OF
SUMMIT COUNTY PROSECUTOR
SHERRI BEVAN WALSH



THE SENIOR NEWS

Message from Prosecutor Sherri Bevan Walsh

During my 20 years as Prosecutor, I have seen many horrible crimes committed in our community. Crimes against our most vulnerable are the hardest for me to comprehend. The Summit County Sheriff recently reported finding an 87-year-old woman dead during a welfare check. Her body was bound and battered. This story was very upsetting. As of now, no arrests have been made.

Our senior years are when we finally have time to sit back and relax. We have worked hard our entire lives to provide for our family. The hope is once we reach retirement age, we use that time to truly enjoy our lives. Unfortunately, my office prosecutes crimes against the elderly on what seems like a daily basis. A large number of these cases involve theft, including trusted family members who have become caretakers for their elderly relatives. It is disheartening to think that those closest to us could take everything we worked for our entire lives.

As my parents enter their 80's, I want to think they are safe. They live in a nice neighborhood with many family members able to help them at any time. But, I also know the reality of crimes against the elderly. I can give them the tools and knowledge to help them stay safe, but they ultimately need to take action. And that includes having a plan.

It is very important that you plan for your future while you are of sound mind. Trust is vital in your planning. If you are not comfortable with one person handling your affairs, have another person also oversee matters to ensure your needs are met.

Plans are also important when you are out and about. What will you do if someone approaches you? Rehearse a plan where you tell yourself what you will do if you are attacked or approached by a stranger. That includes basic safety techniques like keeping your pocketbook secure against your body and having your keys ready to get in your car. You can also contact a store manager if you feel uneasy about walking to your car. Also, try to go shopping with another person. There is always strength in numbers.

I cannot stress enough the significance of reporting a crime. Embarrassment, fear, retaliation, and reporting a loved one are some of the reasons these crimes are not reported to police. Please trust that the main priority of my office, as well as police, is to ensure these criminals are caught and punished so another person does not experience the same fear and abuse.

I always suggest starting a buddy system with a friend where you check in with each other daily. Discuss any concerns with your buddy and give support when needed.

There are many resources available for seniors. Summit County InfoLine at 2-1-1 or (330) 376-6600 has a list of service providers for the elderly. Also, Sheriff Steve Barry has a Senior Watch Program where residents can register for deputies to regularly check on them. To register, call (330) 643-8617.

Look for us at these Upcoming Events!

February 25, 2020, 6pm-8pm

Free Self-Defense Class
Tallmadge Rec Center
46 N. Munroe Rd., Tallmadge 44278

March 12, 2020, 5:30pm-8:30pm

Community Support Services Art of Recovery
Art Showcase at E.J. Thomas Hall

March 14, 2020, 9am-4pm; March 15, 2020, 11am-3pm

Stow-Munroe Falls Community Showcase
Stow-Munroe Falls High School
3227 Graham Rd., Stow 44224

March 28, 2020, 8am-2pm

Cuyahoga Falls Community EXPO
Natatorium, 2345 Fourth St., Cuyahoga Falls

May 13, 2020, 11am

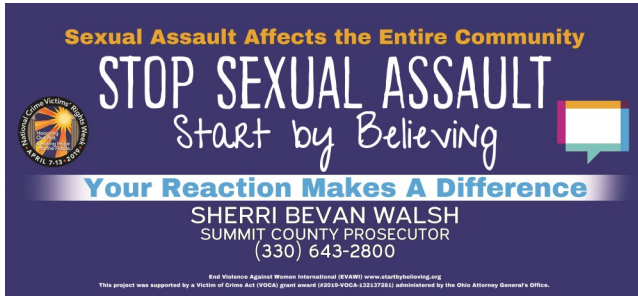
WAKR Luncheon
St. George Fellowship Hall
3204 Ridgewood Rd., Copley
(330) 869-9800, \$14.00

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Visit our Senior Safety Website:
www.co.summit.oh.us/prosecutor



WAKR sponsored Senior Luncheon at the St. George Fellowship Hall



Please join me in supporting crime victims, specifically survivors of sexual assault. Start By Believing is a public awareness campaign launched by End Violence Against Women International. It was created to end the cycle of silence and change the way society responds to sexual assault.

Sexual Assault affects our entire community. If our reaction to sexual assault victims comes from a place of belief instead of doubt, victims will be more likely to seek help and report what happened to them. Victims who receive this response have fewer physical and psychological symptoms. If we prepare friends, family and professionals to respond positively, victims will be able to provide more information that will assist with the investigation and more offenders will be held accountable.

This campaign provides an opportunity for our community to say “we hear you, and we are here to help.”



(Pictured are Terri Heckman, Executive Director of the Battered Women’s Shelter, Prosecutor Sherri Bevan Walsh and Leanne Graham, Director of the Victim Assistance Program, pledging to support sexual assault victims.)

How Will You Respond To Crime Victims?

WHAT TO DO

Start by Believing

Be Supportive

Ask How You Can Help

Avoid “Why” Questions

WHAT TO SAY

“I believe you.”
 “I’m sorry this happened to you.”
 “I’m here for you.”

“You can tell me as much or as little as you want.”
 “It’s not your fault.”

“What can I do to support you?”
 “Would it help if I stayed with you?”
 “Do you want me to go with you to the hospital or police?”

“Why” questions can sound accusatory and make survivors blame themselves.

Did you know?

A new task force has been established in Summit County to oversee the care that elders receive in nursing homes and other senior facilities. It is called the Summit County Nursing Homes and Facilities Task Force. Their mission is to help seniors maintain their dignity and feel safe in an environment entrusted by their loved ones.

The 18-person task force will review the conditions of senior facilities and make recommendations and advocate for the elderly when needed. These meetings are open to the public and held in the Greater Akron Chamber conference room in the AES Building, 388 S. Main St., Suite 205. The next meeting is scheduled for February 18. For more information, call (330) 643-2725.