



FROM THE OFFICE OF
SUMMIT COUNTY PROSECUTOR
SHERRI BEVAN WALSH

A MESSAGE FROM PROSECUTOR WALSH

SEASON OF SCAMS!

The holidays are here and it's time to celebrate with family and friends.

Many of us are on the lookout for the perfect gift. For some, that means a gift card to their favorite store. But don't let the holiday season turn into a season of scams!

If you're looking to buy gift cards this holiday season, pay close attention because scammers are increasingly using gift cards as a way to steal your money.

One way is the gift cards are opened, redeemed, then re-sealed and sold again. Scammers often copy the card number and PIN, then carefully place the card back in the rack, often behind other cards.



The Better Business Bureau has some suggestions to make sure you don't get a bogus card.

- Look for any tampering or tears of the gift card package before purchasing.

- Any scratches on the card that might indicate something on the card might not be right.

- Signs that a sticker was placed over the original bar code.

- Be very cautious of re-sell sites advertising gift cards at steep discounts. It's best to buy gift cards directly from the store.

- Don't delay using a card, because the longer a card sits around, the more likely a cyber-criminal can steal the balance.

- Register your card if given the option.

- Find out if a gift card has any strings attached. Some have a certain timeline to be used.

Lots of stores have big discounts for those last minute shoppers. If you're heading out to get that perfect gift—and perfect bargain—remember these important tips so a criminal doesn't target you.

- Try to shop during daylight hours. If you must shop at night, take a friend or family member.

- Be alert of your surroundings. Always look around to see if someone is following you.

- If possible, do not carry a purse or wallet. If you do carry a wallet or purse, be extra careful. They are the prime targets of criminals in crowded shopping areas.



- Keep a record of all of your credit card numbers in a safe place at home in case you lose your credit card.
- Avoid overloading yourself with packages. It is important to have clear visibility and freedom of motion to avoid mishaps.

Follow these simple tips to keep you and your family safe when hitting the stores during the holiday season.

As always, stay safe.

Sherri B. Walsh



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IN THE COMMUNITY

CRIME & PUNISHMENT

The holiday season is here and the Summit County Prosecutor’s Office wants to make sure the community has information to minimize a person’s chance of becoming a victim of crime.

Around 50 people attended our recent FREE Women’s Self-Defense class in Cuyahoga Falls. A special thank you to Cuyahoga Falls Mayor Don Walters for helping at the event!



Attendees learned ways to escape if someone tries to grab you. Information included tips on how to decrease the chances of being targeted by criminals.

Those include:

- Try to shop during daylight hours. If you must shop at night, take a friend or family member.
- If possible, do not carry a purse or wallet. If you do carry a wallet or purse, be extra careful. They are the prime targets of criminals in crowded shopping areas.
- Stay alert to your surroundings.
- Trust your instincts. If you are out shopping and something doesn’t feel right, contact the store manager to have someone escort you to your vehicle.

Congratulations to Emmah Cottrill, a 7th grader at Springfield Junior High School, for winning our 2023 Safety Kids Calendar contest. Emmah’s poster urging kids not to do drugs will be on the cover of our 2023 calendar.

Also, a big congratulations to everyone who entered, including all of the 53 winners. This is the 22nd year of the contest, which features posters on Prosecutor Walsh’s 12 Rules to Stay Safe.



The contest is open to 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students throughout Summit County.

TOUGH PROSECUTIONS

These defendants will be locked up for a lengthy period of time thanks to our dedicated Assistant Prosecutors:

Eugene Wells, 27

- Murder
- LIFE IN PRISON

Hakeim Mitcham, 27

- Murder
- LIFE IN PRISON

Salah Mahdi, 29

- Murder
- LIFE IN PRISON

Robert Krohmer, 43

- Rape
- LIFE IN PRISON

Aaron Roberts-Byrd, 30

- Murder
- LIFE IN PRISON

Dana Confere, 32

- Felonious Assault
- 14-to-18 YEARS IN PRISON

Adarus Black, 19

- Murder
- LIFE IN PRISON



GUILTY VERDICTS

November 2022

Congratulations to the following assistant prosecutors for obtaining convictions at trial.

Rimma Avanesyan

Chris Delisio

Kevin Mayer

Felicia Easter

Devorah Pasternak

Emily Hall

Jennie Shuki

Brian LoPrinzi

Brian Stano

Joe McAleese

GREAT JOB PROSECUTORS!



AVERY'S CORNER

EQUITY & SOCIAL JUSTICE

I just love helping hoomans—no matter where I am.

I recently had to travel all the way to Cleveland to help two small hoomans who saw something really bad.

I had a good time in the car ride knowing I was going to help.

Thankfully the small hoomans did great in court and the jury convicted the hooman who did the bad thing.

Although I spend the majority of my time in Summit County's main courthouse, I sometimes get to sit with hoomans who are in juvenile court.

I did just that recently. Although it's a new experience, I'm glad I still get to help.



I want to make sure my four-legged and furry friends are safe during the holidays.

- Make sure your Christmas tree is anchored. That way one of my furry friends won't knock it over!
- Also, even though they smell nice, keep mistletoe and holly away from pets. They can cause tummy trouble and sometimes worse. Fake plants are the way to go!
- Who doesn't love the glitter of tinsel! I know my kitty kat friends do. They love to swat at it and chew on it. But it's bad for them. You don't want an emergency trip to the vet to ruin your holiday.

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www.facebook.com/

[SummitCountyProsecutorAveryII](https://www.facebook.com/SummitCountyProsecutorAveryII)



The Summit County Prosecutor's Office "Ambassadors for Equity & Social Justice" was formed to work toward bringing people of different backgrounds and cultures together. Each month the Ambassadors share thoughts in making our community a better place to live. Here is an article from one of the group's members.



December of this year kicks off a year-long campaign to promote and recognize the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). On December 10, 1948, the United Nations adopted this document that had been drafted by representatives of many different cultures and nations.

After the second world war, many nations felt it was necessary to have set universal human rights that provided freedom and equality to ALL humans. The document contains 30 rights that have become a benchmark for countries when it comes to human rights. The first Article of the UDHR, and often the most quoted is, "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights."

The theme for the 75th anniversary is "Dignity, Freedom, and Justice for All." With rising tensions over the last few years from the Covid-19 pandemic, as well as economic instability, racial injustice, and conflict throughout the world, the rights guaranteed in this



international document are at risk. The United Nations hopes this year-long campaign will help remind us of the benchmark the UDHR sets by increasing global awareness.

Take a look at the 30 rights of the UDHR [here](#). If there is one which feels particularly important to you, consider taking action to protect that right.

Other ways to take action are to use #StandUp4HumanRights on social media and review the [resource guide](#) provided by the United Nations.



Help Us Go Green!

Contact Melanie Hart at hart@prosecutor.summitoh.net to receive this newsletter by e-mail



TOP COP

AKRON FIRE DEPT. ARSON INVESTIGATOR

GABRIEL COTRUFO

NOMINATED BY ASST. PROSECUTOR DEVORAH PASTERNAK

Our TOP COP nominations are usually for local law enforcement officers whose work had a tremendous impact on one of our cases.

This time, an Akron Fire Department Arson Investigator is our TOP COP. The dedication and creativity of Arson Investigator Gabriel Cotrufo led to us securing a conviction.

Summer Huston was living in a house with five other people. Huston thought someone stole from her and messed with her stuff, so she set the place ablaze and took off.

People heard Huston make incriminating statements before she left the house. However, what really solidified the case was all the jail call research Investigator Cotrufo did, uncovering incriminating statements, including multiple calls.



The most important call Investigator Cotrufo located was not so obvious.

Roughly 40 minutes after the first 911 call went out, Huston’s boyfriend called her on a recorded line from the county jail. During the call Huston repeats three times that she just burned down the house. This call was critical to the case and was uncovered because Cotrufo did social media research and found the connection between Huston and an individual in jail and started listening to **his jail calls** to see if he talked to her.

Because of all of this extra work we were able to get convictions on several aggravated arson charges.

Huston is currently serving a 3.75—to—5.75 year prison sentence.

Thank you Investigator Cotrufo!

HAPPY RETIREMENT!

CONGRATS MICHELLE!

Congratulations and happy retirement to Bath Police Lieutenant Richard Munsey. Lt. Munsey is retiring after serving with the Bath Police Department for 51 years!

Lt. Munsey just received the Officer of the Year award from the Ohio Prosecuting Attorneys Association.

Below is a picture of Lt. Munsey surrounded by members of the Summit County Prosecutor’s Office at the recent awards ceremony.

Also pictured is Wayne County Assistant Prosecutor Angela Poth-Wypasek, who was named Assistant Prosecutor of the Year. Angela is a former Summit County Assistant Prosecutor.



The Summit County Prosecutor’s Office says congratulations and good luck to Assistant Prosecutor Michelle Cordova, who was elected last month to serve as Stark County Family Court Judge. She starts her new position at the beginning of the year.



Michelle has a wealth of experience and has been with the Summit County Prosecutor’s Office for two years.

We will miss her in the office but know she will do a great job in her new position.

Congratulations again Michelle, and good luck!



WHY I'M A PROSECUTOR

EMILY HALL

"Why I'm A Prosecutor" gives our prosecutors the chance to tell their own story and why being a prosecutor is so important to them.

Emily Hall, an assistant prosecutor in our Criminal Division, talks about why being a prosecutor is so important to her



• WHY DID YOU BECOME A PROSECUTOR?

When I went to law school I knew I wanted to be a prosecutor. As a child, as cliché as it sounds, I always watched Law & Order with my mom and grandparents. I always thought it was so cool. The prosecutors fought for the community and in my mind, going to law school, that's what I wanted to do. There was no other type of law I wanted to practice. When I was a teenager I became serious about going to law school, but I always liked the idea of law school. By the time I got to high school and college I thought I would give it a try.

• WHAT'S THE BEST PART OF BEING A PROSECUTOR

The best part of being a prosecutor is that I love when I can get justice for a victim. Whether that is by trial or by plea, I love that feeling of being able to help them. When I see that look on their face after their case has been wrapped up — that's the best feeling.

• WHAT'S THE MOST DIFFICULT PART OF BEING A PROSECUTOR?

The most difficult part about being a prosecutor is just being exposed to the worst parts of life on a fairly routine basis. We occasionally have a chance to step back to take a breath, but it can be difficult to deal with.

You can watch Emily's complete video on our website, Facebook and YouTube page.

ARRIVE ALIVE FOR CHRISTMAS & NYE!

Arrive Alive is back for the Christmas and New Year's holidays!

The Summit County Prosecutor's Office is once again teaming up with Summit County Sheriff Kandy Fatheree to provide FREE or reduced fare rides home within Summit County during the Christmas and New Year's holidays. There are 600 codes available for each holiday for a \$20 credit for LYFT.

From 6pm Friday, December 23rd through noon Monday December 26, use the code SUMMITXMAS22 for the \$20 credit for LYFT.

From 6pm Friday, December 30 through noon Monday January 2, 2023, use the code SUMMITNYE23 for the \$20 credit for LYFT.

Please don't drink and drive—Arrive Alive!


PROSECUTOR
SHERRI BEVAN WALSH


SHERIFF
KANDY FATHEREE

Present

ARRIVE ALIVE

Celebrate the holidays responsibly!
Have a designated sober driver or use Arrive Alive.

A FREE Ride Home in Summit County

MERRY CHRISTMAS	HAPPY NEW YEAR
From 6pm Friday Dec. 23 to 12pm Monday Dec. 26	From 6pm Friday Dec. 30 to 12pm Monday Jan. 2
Use lyft for a FREE ride home in Summit County (up to \$20) Use Code SUMMITXMAS22 For Christmas (Limit 600 one-time use codes)	Use lyft for a FREE ride home in Summit County (up to \$20) Use Code SUMMITNYE23 For New Years Eve (Limit 600 one-time use codes)

The life you save may be your own!

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