

SHERRI BEVAN WALSH
Prosecuting Attorney
County of Summit

NEWS
For Immediate Release:
Friday, May 1, 2009

CONTACT: Laurie Cramer
Phone: (330) 643-2800

18 Year Old Pleads Guilty to Felonious Assault on a Police Officer

(Akron) ... Summit County Prosecutor Sherri Bevan Walsh announced today that Earl Jeffery McMorrow, 18, of Barberton pled guilty late yesterday afternoon to **Felonious Assault on a Police Officer**, a felony of the first degree. He also pled guilty to **Aggravated Vehicular Assault**, a felony of the third degree, **Failure to Comply**, a felony of the third degree, **Resisting Arrest**, a felony of the fourth degree, **Breaking and Entering**, a felony of the fourth degree, **Receiving Stolen Property**, a felony of the fourth degree and Driving Under the Influence, a first-degree misdemeanor. McMorrow will be sentenced by Judge Judith Hunter on June 2, 2009. He could face up to 25 years in prison.

Prosecutor Walsh said, "We are fortunate that Summit County didn't lose another officer by the actions of the defendant. He could have killed Barberton Officer Brandon Watson, and certainly caused him serious bodily harm that continues to impact him today. McMorrow's behavior is inexcusable and we will be asking the court to sentence the defendant to prison."

McMorrow went on a crime spree on February 10, 2009, breaking into a garage, stealing a truck, then joy riding in the stolen truck while getting high on prescription drugs, marijuana, and cocaine.

Barberton police tracked down McMorrow and pulled him over. During his joy ride he picked up three other passengers. After he was pulled over, McMorrow appeared to comply with the police while his friends got out of the car and got down on the ground. However, when Officer Watson approached the driver's side, McMorrow threw the car into drive and began to flee. In attempting to stop the truck, Watson became trapped on the truck's running board. McMorrow then drove the truck over a snow bank, between a tree and an apartment building, leaving Officer Watson trapped between the truck and gas meters where he was suspended in mid air.

Watson was able to taser McMorrow, even though he could not feel his legs, and McMorrow was taken into custody. Emergency crews were called. Broken gas meters caused a gas leak and police were fearful of an explosion. The apartment building was evacuated and Officer Watson was removed by the fire department and transported to the

hospital. He suffered a broken pelvis and has still not returned to full-time duty with the Barberton Police Department.

A blood draw revealed McMorrow was under the influence of cocaine, marijuana and prescriptions drugs.