



SHERRI BEVAN WALSH

Summit County Prosecutor

Newsletter

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Message from the Prosecutor



**Prosecutor
Sherri Bevan Walsh**

We recently prosecuted a case that reminded me of how dangerous traveling can be. Many individuals travel often for their jobs, or for just family vacations. Either way, traveling to unknown places can make us more vulnerable to becoming the victim of a crime because we are not as familiar with our environment.

The case to which I am referring, with Defendant Latroy Turner, affected four victims who were staying at three different area hotels. The first victim was a Columbus businessman. He went to get ice and was forced back into his room at gunpoint by Turner, who robbed him of his cell phone, computer, GPS, personal money and everything else of value. He forced him to strip off his clothes and to go out on the balcony, where Turner locked the door behind him.

The second victim was a Detroit businessman. He heard a knock on the door and opened the door, assuming it was room service, which he had called a few minutes earlier to order dinner. Turner barged into the room with a gun and robbed the man of his jewelry, computer and other valuables. Similarly, he forced the man to strip and lie on the floor.

The final and worst offense involved two victims, a couple staying at a hotel. The man had left the door ajar because he knew his girlfriend would be returning soon. Turner came into the room with a gun and forced the man to strip naked. When Turner heard a knock on the door, he made the male victim ask who it was. When the victim's girlfriend responded, Turner opened the door and pulled her into the room. She was raped by Turner in front of her boyfriend.

Turner was found guilty on December 16, 2008 of Aggravated Burglary, Aggravated Robbery, Robbery, Receiving Stolen Property, Felonious Assault, and Rape. He will be sentenced on February 10 and faces a maximum of over 100 years in prison.

I want to emphasize that it is never the victim's fault when they are attacked. We have all been in hotel rooms where we got ice, opened the door thinking it was room service, or left the door ajar waiting on someone to return — and fortunately did not become victims of a sick criminal.

This case should give us all pause to think through again that in order to stay safe, we have to be aware of our environment and take extra precautions.

Prosecutor Walsh's Travel Safety Tips

Request rooms:

- Away from stairwells, ice machines, vending machines, basements, exit doors or refuse rooms
- Near (but not next to) the elevator to avoid walking down long corridors
- Women traveling alone should request concierge or key serve floors if possible

Stay alert:

- Ask hotel staff for a map of the area and familiarize yourself with your surroundings and the hotel
- Do not enter your room if someone appears to be watching you or loitering nearby; go to where people are; report concerns to front desk
- Do not get on the elevator with someone who looks out of place/suspicious

Staying in a room:

- Never use the deadbolt to leave the door propped open
- Completely close the room curtains, especially in the evening, or if you will be returning in the evening
- Hang the "Do Not Disturb" sign on the outside of the door knob when you exit and leave a light and radio/TV on to discourage burglars
- ALWAYS use the peep hole before opening the door to identify the person knocking

TOUGH PROSECUTION

On October 17, 2008, Dominique Nolen, 24, chose to drive drunk and tragically took the life of Billy Owens, 43, of Akron.

Billy was walking across the street to a friend's car when Nolen, who was driving without headlights at 50 mph in a 25 mph zone, hit the victim with such force that she threw his body 185 feet. It was her third OVI. She wouldn't cooperate with a breathalyzer test but thanks to the new law, her blood was taken at the hospital where it revealed that she was almost three times the legal limit of intoxication.

Billy, whose family said was a kind and gentle man who helped everyone, became another victim of drunk driving.

Nolen was sentenced to seven years in prison and left behind three young children without a mother.

Drunk driving takes the lives of many. It's really a simple choice. Don't do it.

Great job, Assistant Prosecutor Greta Johnson.

Questions? E-mail Laurie Cramer:
cramer@prosecutor.summitoh.net

We're on the Web!

Top Cop

Detective Russ McFarland
Akron Police Department



Nominated by: Assistant Prosecutor Charlene Hardy

Det. Russ McFarland was the lead detective on the Lee Hardy case. Lee Hardy held a woman against her will and violently raped her. Det. McFarland worked tirelessly on this case, as he does with all of the cases he handles.

While preparing for the trial of Lee Hardy, Det. McFarland prepared an outstanding notebook that Assistant Prosecutor Charlene Hardy (no relation) said, "took the place of any trial notebook I would have to do - and then some." The notebook made it much easier to follow the events that occurred on the evening of the crime, both at the start of preparation for trial and throughout the actual trial. Det. McFarland made himself available to follow-up on anything needed, including locating the victim (she had moved), and providing her transportation to and from court. Det. McFarland's hard work resulted in the conviction of Lee Hardy on charges of Kidnapping and Rape; he was also found to be a Sexually Violent Predator. The end result was a 20 years to life sentence.

Det. McFarland has always been ready and willing to assist in any way he can not only on his cases, but other cases as well if it would get another violent offender off of the Akron streets. And, he always did it with a smile on his face.

Det. McFarland's is retiring after 37 years with the Akron Police Department. His dedication to his job and the victims of the crimes he investigates was a true asset to our office. Upon his retirement, we thank him for his service and dedication and we wish him all the best!

Thank you, Top Cop!

ICE (IN CASE OF EMERGENCY)

A paramedic came up with the concept of "ICE" and it is catching on quickly. As cell phones are carried by the majority of the population, all you need to do is store the number of a contact person or persons who should be contacted during an emergency under the name "ICE". For more than one contact name, simply enter ICE, ICE2, ICE3, etc. It's a great idea that could make a difference!

GUILTY!!!!



Congratulations to Assistant Prosecutor's Charlene Hardy, Richard Hoeningman, Greg Peacock, Angela Poth-Wypasek, Justin Richard, Colleen Sims, Mike Todd, Margaret Tomaro and Mike Tripi, who obtained guilty verdicts in trials in the month of December!

MEET ASSISTANT PROSECUTOR Jon Baumoe

Position: Assistant Prosecutor



Hire date: January 2009

Hometown: Shaker Heights, Ohio

Law degree: University of Cincinnati College of Law

Background: Jon served 14 years in the Stark County Prosecutor's Office. He also worked as a lawyer for the U.S. Department of Education for two years. He has taught at Mt. Union College, Ohio CLE and Ohio Peace Officer's Training Academy.

Little known fact: I played rugby on the University of Cincinnati Law School Rugby Team called the Barristers. At the time, we were the only law school in the country with a rugby team.

Most memorable case: David Thorn. Thorn, who was tired of paying child support, had a man slit the throat of his son's mom for \$300. This crime was committed in front of the victim's five children, including the defendant's own. The murder for hire resulted in a conviction of Capital Murder with a sentence of Life Without Parole. The actual killer testified for the State against Thorn.

THAT'S OUTRAGEOUS!



Marquita Ross, 22, of Akron, helped to carjack a pregnant woman's car in the Summit Mall parking lot during the 2007 Christmas shopping season by demanding her keys as the woman was unlocking the door of her vehicle.

When the victim refused to give Ross her keys and got into her vehicle, Ross's co-defendant — Antony Jeffries — then tapped a gun on the car window and told her to get out of the car and leave her purse. The victim got out of her car and threw her keys at the defendants and ran into the mall for help.

Ross pled guilty on December 9, 2009 to Aggravated Robbery and was sentenced to six years in prison. Jeffries is serving 10 years in prison for his role in the crime.

Now that is outrageous!