



FROM THE OFFICE OF
SUMMIT COUNTY PROSECUTOR
SHERRI BEVAN WALSH

A Message From Prosecutor Walsh

Guilty or Innocent?

“Making A Murderer” is the latest hit on Netflix. If you haven’t watched it – or read the comments on your Facebook feed – “Making A Murderer” is a 10-episode docu-series which takes a closer look at a case from Wisconsin. Steven Avery was released in 2003 after serving 18 years in prison for attacking and sexually assaulting a woman. That conviction was overturned by DNA evidence. Two years after his release, as he was suing for wrongful conviction, Avery was arrested again, and ultimately found guilty for the brutal murder of Teresa Halbach. Avery and his nephew, who confessed he assisted in the crime, are currently serving life sentences.

“Making A Murderer” is the latest documentary focusing on criminal cases where questions were raised about the guilt or innocence of the defendant. The Netflix series tells the story of what some believe was a botched investigation. The story also points to investigators framing Avery for the murder. But it does not tell the whole story

A reporter who personally observed

and reported on the Avery murder trial in 2005 recently produced a podcast titled “Rebutting A Murderer”. In the podcast, Dan O’Donnell claims the film’s producers left out what he believes is key evidence. The original prosecutors in the Avery case have also made the same claim. O’Donnell adds that there is no question in his mind that Avery is guilty.

The Summit County Prosecutor’s Office conducts a monthly training session, where prosecutors learn and discuss the latest tools and techniques in law enforcement. But the most recent was a little different. Prosecutors viewed “A Murder In The Park”, a documentary which tells the story of Anthony Porter, who was convicted of murder in Chicago in 1982. Porter was released and cleared of the crime just hours before he was

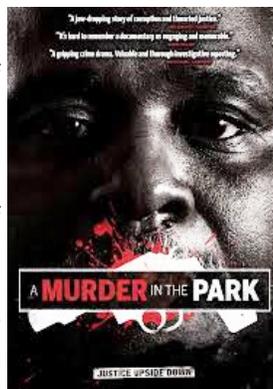
to be executed. David Protess, who was then a journalism professor at Northwestern University, led the charge to have Porter released. Students in his class contended Porter was wrongly convicted and even were able to get another man to confess to the crime. But this was not true.

It’s another story of manipulation, witness coercion and a rushed judgement. But this time, “A Murder In The Park” shows how an investigator working for Protess coerced another man into confessing to the crime. The documentary argues Porter, the person arrested, tried, convicted, and ultimately released, was indeed the killer.

So who is right? Is the justice system flawed? The Summit County Prosecutor’s Office handles over 4,000 felony cases each year. Prosecutors have an obligation to convict the guilty and present the truth. We take our duties seriously and stories of half-truths for the sake of entertainment makes our prosecutorial blood boil.

Stay safe,

Sherri B. Walsh



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[@ProsecutorWalsh](https://twitter.com/ProsecutorWalsh)

In The Community

The Summit County Prosecutor's Office started 2016 out in the community by helping people stay safe.

Prosecutor Walsh spoke to residents of **SarahCare Senior Center in Stow**. Those in attendance learned key information which could help them not become victims. The group was wonderful and a lot of fun! If you would like to have someone from the Summit County Prosecutor's Office speak to your group about safety, please contact Jennifer Watson at watson@prosecutor.summitoh.net.



January was **Human Trafficking Awareness Month** and the Summit County Prosecutor's Office is taking a stand against human trafficking.

Assistant Prosecutors Heaven Guest and Brian Stano took part in a free event sponsored by the Summit County Collaborative against Human Trafficking.

The event at The Elms Auditorium in Akron's Highland Square area provided information to the community about the issue.

And we had a wonderful time at **Grace Bible Church in New Franklin**.

Assistant Prosecutors John Galonski and Joe Fantozzi spoke to about 40 people, providing safety tips and key information about crime prevention.



We are also involved in training law enforcement. Each Wednesday, **Leslie Knoblauch** speaks to Summit County Sheriff's Deputies about our **Take Me Home Program**. Deputies learn about how to interact with a person who has difficulty communicating in an emergency situation.



We also brought the community to us! About two dozen high school students and teachers from **Hudson High School** and **Western Reserve Academy** stopped by the Prosecutor's Office to meet Prosecutor Walsh and learn about what we do. The sophomores, juniors and seniors are part of **Hudson's Junior Leadership program**

This is the 7th year students with the Leadership Program have visited the Prosecutor's Office.

Leadership Hudson introduces participants to Hudson city, business and community leaders with the goal that participants will serve Hudson in future leadership positions.

Thank you to everyone who stopped by.

Avery's Corner

Keeping The Community Safe

I love my job, but it can be tough at times. I met with several different children who were victims of horrible crimes. They were all so strong and I am so proud of them.



One was even able to face the person who did bad things to them. I was with her in court. The jury found the bad guy guilty.

I also had a wonderful time at my weekly visit to Akron's Haven of Rest.



The people there are so nice. It's one of the highlights of my week.

I always say you should be nice to everyone, because you never know who you'll meet.



For example, this guy. He's a hairless cat! Yep—HE HAS NO HAIR! I couldn't believe it. Even though he's a cat, he seemed nice.



Follow Avery II on Facebook at:

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

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GUILTY VERDICTS

January 2016

Congratulations to the following assistant prosecutors for obtaining convictions at trial in January:

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| Kassim Ahmed | John Hart |
| Jon Baumel | Tom Kroll (2) |
| Nik Buckmeier | Kevin Mayer |
| Pete Daly (2) | Joe Miller |
| Joe Dangelo (2) | Mike Rickett |
| Felicia Easter | Ryan Stickel |

Great Job Prosecutors!!!!



Tough Prosecutions

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

- | | |
|---|---|
| Justin Ramirez, 25 | Louis Delery, 24 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rape of a Child Under 13 • LIFE IN PRISON | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involuntary Manslaughter • MAXIMUM 11 YEARS IN PRISON |
| Brock Tipping, 32 | Jonathan Fedrick, 31 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Murder • Rape • LIFE IN PRISON | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Felonious Assault with a Gun • 14 YEARS IN PRISON |
| Robert Kolvek, 50 | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making & Possessing Meth • 12 YEARS IN PRISON | |



Help Us Go Green!



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

January Top Cop

**Akron Police Detectives Michael Schmidt & Tim Harvey
Nominated by Assistant Prosecutor Joe Dangelo**

The heroin problem across our country has reached epidemic proportions. The Summit County Prosecutor's Office is dedicated to prosecuting heroin suppliers and dealers.



That is why we are nominating Akron Police

Detectives Michael Schmidt and Tim Harvey. Their quality investigations and hard work has led to several arrests and long prison sentences.

In two of our most recent cases, the defendants pled guilty to involuntary manslaughter charges. Getting justice would not have been possible without the work of Detectives Harvey and Schmidt.

The first case involved Maycon Alvarez. Alvarez sold fentanyl to Zachary Smith, who later died after taking the drug. Investigators learned that prior to Smith's death, Alvarez sold fentanyl to an undercover informant. Detective Schmidt was able to track down a suspect and use rental car records to prove Alvarez was the one who sold the drug to Smith. Alvarez is currently serving an eight year prison sentence.

The second case involved two defendants, Tracy Vanhorn and Dyshawn Gray. In this case, Harry Martin died from using heroin. Detective Harvey worked tirelessly in tracking down the person who sold Martin the drug. He traced Martin's

cell phone calls back to Tracy Vanhorn. Vanhorn confessed to hooking Martin up with her heroin dealer. Detective Harvey then texted Dyshawn Gray from Martin's phone to set up another heroin buy. Gray sold heroin to Detective Harvey, who was working undercover. Gray was then arrested. Vanhorn, who agreed to testify against Gray, was sentenced to three years in prison. Gray is now serving a seven year prison sentence.

Throughout both investigations, Detectives Schmidt and Harvey went above and beyond in their work.

Congratulations & great job!

A Special Thank You

The Summit County Prosecutor's Office would like to send a special thank you to Northfield Village Police Detective Edward Carlile. Detective Carlile's work was key in a recent plea agreement and sentence.



On January 27, 2016, Louis Delery was sentenced to 11 years in prison, the maximum sentence allowed. Delery pled guilty to involuntary manslaughter, admitting to killing his infant daughter. Delery literally squeezed the life out of his own daughter.

Detective Carlile was relentless in getting to the bottom of what happened. And even though Delery gave investigators nine different accounts of what happened, Detective Carlile was able to put the pieces together for his investigation and prosecution.

Detective Carlile continues to do outstanding work, and is even a two-time winner of our TOP COP award.

Black History Month

February is Black History Month. 40 years ago, President Gerald Ford was the first U.S. President to proclaim February as Black History Month. The annual celebration recognizes the role African Americans have had in U.S. history. Black History Month's origins began in 1926, with celebrations during the second week of February to coincide with the birthdays of President Lincoln and Frederick Douglass. Also, on February 12th, the NAACP celebrates it's 107th birthday!

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Monday February 15th is Presidents Day. The Summit County Prosecutor's Office, as well as all city, county and federal offices, is closed in honor of the holiday.



Employee Spotlight

Meet Our New Law Clerk-Tax Division: Tabitha Stearns

Hire Date: November 23, 2015

Title: Law Clerk-Tax Division

Hometown: East Liverpool, Ohio

Education: I received a Bachelor's in Political Science from Youngstown State University, where I also minored in Latin American and African History.

Background: I was a research assistant at Akron Law School, Chair of Media Relations for the Public Health Law and Science Center, and Law Clerk at Corzin, Sanislo, and Ufholz.

Hobbies/Interests: Professional & College football as well as professional and amateur theatre and opera.

Fun Fact: I'm a trained singer and did opera in college. It was a fun hobby that I hope to continue in the near future. I am also friends with two NFL players, one for the Jets and another for the Broncos.



Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month

Parents will do anything to protect their children and keep them safe. That's why it is so important to understand and recognize the signs of violence in a relationship.

February is Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month. But there is vital information for everyone, any time of the year.

According to one national survey, one in three teens will experience some form of abuse in a dating relationship. Do you know the warning signs?

You can take a stand and empower your child to take action. If you notice any of these signs, it's time to seek help.

There are plenty of resources available to help. Visit www.loveisrespect.org for additional information or to chat with a counselor 24/7. You can even text for help. Just text "LOVEIS" to 22522. Parents can receive additional information by texting "PARENTINFO" to the same number—22522

You can also call the National Teen Dating Abuse Hotline at 1.866.331.9474 for more information.

The more you know, the more you can fight dating violence.

10 WARNING SIGNS OF AN ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIP

- *Checking your cell phone or email without permission*
- *Constantly putting you down*
- *Possessiveness*
- *Extreme jealousy or insecurity*
- *Explosive temper*
- *Isolating you from family or friends*
- *Making false accusations*
- *Mood swings*
- *Physically hurting you in any way*
- *Telling you what to do*

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