

## **Cincinnati Enquirer: Dad held infant in assault**

*BY: Jennifer Baker*

*August 24, 2009*

ELMWOOD PLACE – A father was arrested and charged over the weekend with attacking his wife while holding their 8-month-old infant.

Bobbie Joe Miller, 21, is held at the Hamilton County jail on charges of child endangering and domestic violence.

He was taken into custody following a physical assault on his wife about 4 p.m. Sunday after the two argued at a residence in the 600 block of Park Avenue, court records show.

He is accused of holding their baby while shoving his wife and pushing her around on the floor.

Then, he screamed at her to take him home, so they got into a pickup truck and headed toward northbound Interstate 75, records state.

But instead of taking him home, she drove into the parking lot of the Elmwood Place police station on Maple Street.

When he realized where they were, he jumped out of the truck and took off.

She told police she circled around to try to find him. He began kicking in the front of her windshield and broke it.

Someone called police, and an officer arrested Miller

## **Akron Beacon Journal: Husband falsely accused of child rape wins 2.1 million from ex-spouse**

*BY: By Phil Trexler*

*August 21, 2009*

The flier went out to neighbors in bold letters: CHILD RAPIST.

The text contained the name and address of the accused with more bold words: BE ALERT! PROTECT YOUR CHILDREN.

Rodd Sutton, formerly of Akron, was the target of the flier. It was another part of his contentious custody dispute that began more than 10 years ago with his ex-wife, Victoria Douglas.

Police and Summit County Children Services investigated the rape complaint in 2004, when Douglas alleged her husband had inappropriate contact with their daughter, now 10.

Authorities found the charges untrue, but that didn't stop the ex-wife from passing out the fliers to neighbors.

The husband, 46, then went on the offensive, suing his ex-wife and her mother.

A Summit County jury this month sided with Sutton, awarding him more than \$1.2 million in damages for defamation, invasion of privacy and intentional infliction of emotional distress.

Sutton's attorneys, Tim Hanna and James Campbell, said collecting the settlement might be an issue, but the case is about more than money, they said.

"Maybe it's not about the issue of collecting," Campbell said. "Maybe it's about the principal of vindicating this guy and showing you can stand up for what you believe in."

Neither Douglas nor her attorney, Larry Shenise, were available for comment.

Paper consumes the dockets of the ex-couple's divorce and civil lawsuits with hundreds of entries and countless reams of motions filled with allegations of child abuse and drug use, as well as contempt of court findings against each side over visitation and other issues.

The case took a more public turn when Sutton sued over the fliers distributed to neighbors. It happened after complaints of sexual abuse lodged against the husband by the ex-wife in 2004.

Douglas, 44, made the allegations to Akron and Springfield police, Akron Children's Hospital and Children Services.

Each agency found no evidence of abuse.

Sutton's attorneys contend Douglas transferred a house in Lakemore from her name to her mother, Rosemary Douglas, to save it from possible loss in the defamation lawsuit.

A jury awarded Sutton \$136,000 from his former mother-in-law for the property transaction. Victoria Douglas now resides in Florida with her daughter.

The case was heard by a jury and Judge Alison McCarty. Campbell said the only question asked by jurors was whether they could give Sutton more money than he was seeking.

### **Dayton Daily News: Kettering mother arrested for selling sex; child in home**

*By Kelli Wynn*

*August 25, 2009*

KETTERING — A Kettering woman was arrested on Saturday, Aug. 22, after police said she left her 8-month-old baby home alone while she sold herself for sex outside of a local business.

Lori Richards, 25, of Gracemore Avenue, has been charged with a first degree misdemeanor charge of child endangering and third degree misdemeanor charge of soliciting in Kettering Municipal Court, according to online court records.

Richards' arrest occurred about 9 p.m. on Saturday outside a bar on East Dorothy Lane, according to a Kettering police incident log.

Police received a call stating that a "female was standing outside the door offering sex for exchange of money," according to the log entry.

Police dispatched to the scene approached Richards, who matched the description of the woman described by the caller.

The log said, "Talking with her, they discovered she may have left her 8-month-old baby unattended in her apartment. Checking her apartment, they found her 8-month-old baby boy asleep in a swing with no one else in the apartment...Richards admitted she was attempting to exchange sexual favors for \$40 to \$120."

Police on the scene called Montgomery County Children Services Board and the baby was placed in the custody of his grandparents.

A pre-trial hearing for both misdemeanor charges has been scheduled for Richards on Aug. 31 in the chambers of Judge Robert Moore.

### **Cincinnati Enquirer: Girl wanders off, grandma charged**

*By Jennifer Baker*

*August 25, 2009*

LOVELAND – A grandmother was arrested and charged Monday after her 6-year-old granddaughter went missing for some two hours over the weekend.

Susan Hahn, 53, is held this morning on a child endangering charge at the Hamilton County jail.

She is accused of failing to watch her granddaughter while she played outside Hahn's Park Avenue home, according to Loveland police.

The girl wandered off and boarded a church bus, said Loveland Officer Kurt Degue. She was found about two hours later in Madeira.

The incident is the second time in a month the girl has slipped away from her grandmother, police said.

An investigation into the case continues.

### **The Columbus Dispatch: Father on trial for beating of 2-month-old girl**

*BY: Erin Dostal*

*August 26, 2009*

A South Side man is on trial in Franklin County Common Pleas Court, accused of beating his infant daughter and breaking her ribs, neck and legs.

Joshua Carse, 23, of Linwood Avenue, is charged with three counts of felonious assault and four counts of child endangering for injuries to Kaleah Carse.

Assistant County Prosecutor Megan Jewett, in her opening statement to jurors, said Carse neglected a "duty all parents have toward their children."

Carse's defense attorney, Sheryl Munson, urged jurors to look beyond the "horrific" nature of the case to the evidence that is presented.

Kaleah was about 10 weeks old when she was taken to Nationwide Children's Hospital on July 11, 2008, by her maternal grandmother, Lori Trembley.

After performing a skeletal survey and a CAT scan, doctors found fractures as well as brain damage and signs of malnutrition.

Dr. Frederick R. Long, a pediatric radiologist at Children's Hospital, said the baby's femurs, or thighbones, were disconnected from her hip bones, which is an uncommon injury.

She also had a bony mass in her neck, a likely sign of trauma, he said.

Fractures throughout her body appeared to have occurred over weeks, Long said, because the bones were at various stages of healing.

Dr. Jeremy Larson, an emergency-room doctor at Children's, testified that rib fractures in a child as young as Kaleah "are probably due to a non-accidental injury. All of these injuries have to be suspicious."

Doctors suspected internal injuries because the baby was unusually irritable. She cried with any movement and had days-old bruises on her back.

"A 2-month-old can't tell me what hurts where," Larson said. "They just cry."

If convicted on all counts, Carse could be sentenced to 53 years in prison.

Today, Kaleah is doing very well, said Doris Calloway Moore, a spokeswoman for Franklin County Children Services. Nearly 16 months old, she lives with her maternal grandmother. She has had a slight delay in walking ability, Moore said.

Kaleah's mother, 19-year-old Marlo Trembley, is scheduled for trial on Sept. 14 on one charge each of child endangering and permitting abuse.

### **The Cleveland Plain Dealer: \$1M bond for mom in child's death**

*By: Janice Morse*

*August 26, 2009*

HAMILTON – A judge set bond this morning at \$1 million for a Butler County mother of five who is accused of killing her 35-day-old son.

Asuncion Avila-Villa, 25, stood silently before Judge Daniel Gattermeyer in Hamilton Municipal Court as Municipal Prosecutor Mary Dudley read the allegations.

A few spectators in the courtroom, who were there for other cases, covered their mouths as they heard Avila-Villa was accused of murder, child endangering, abuse of a corpse and tampering with evidence.

She was arrested Tuesday, a day after she called 911 to report her son had been missing since Sunday from her apartment on Shuler Avenue in Hamilton.

Authorities say the child was never missing and Avila-Villa made the false report after killing her child and putting him in the trash.

Authorities say this is the first time in decades that a Butler County mother is accused in a fatal beating of her own child.

The baby, Israel Santos, suffered a crushed skull, a broken arm and other injuries authorities won't talk about.

Butler County Coroner Richard Burkhardt ruled the death a homicide and said the child had been dead for a day or two by the time police discovered his body amid trash that they had brought from Avila-Villa's apartment to the police station as part of their investigation of the missing-child report.

The child's teen father is not a suspect, police say.

Today in court, when Gattermeyer asked whether she worked, she shook her head, "no."

When he asked whether she was going to get an attorney or needed a court-appointed one, she replied, "I need one." Those were the only words she spoke during the few minutes she spent in court.

Gattermeyer set her next court date for Sept. 2. At that hearing, prosecutors are required to present some of the evidence against Avila-Villa, to show "probable cause" -- whether there is enough evidence to convince a judge that a crime probably happened and that Avila-Villa may have committed it.

That date would be canceled if Butler County Prosecutor Robin Piper is able to push the case through a grand jury and obtain an indictment before then.

Piper has said he will try to persuade the grand jury to indict Avila-Villa on charges that could bring the death penalty if she is convicted.

That means her attorney would have to be chosen from a short list of lawyers who are certified by the Ohio Supreme Court to handle death-penalty cases.

### **Toledo Blade: Toledo mother gets shock probation in son's death**

*BLADE STAFF*

*August 26, 2009*

A Toledo mother, who was sentenced to prison for failing to protect her young son from the abuse of her boyfriend, was granted judicial release in Lucas County Common Pleas Court Wednesday.

Antoinette Hairston, 27, was sentenced Nov. 6 to four years in prison after entering a plea to involuntary manslaughter. Because she was given credit for the time spent in custody before her plea, Hairston had completed nearly half of that prison term.

Judge Gene Zmuda granted her release and instead placed her on five years of probation, including six months in the Correctional Treatment Facility. He also requested a mental health evaluation and said he intended to order her into certain programs once those results were available.

The judge also added that Hairston would return to prison if she violated conditions of her release.

Hairston was arrested after her 23-month-old son Tayvon Evans died after being subjected to weeks of abuse by her then boyfriend, Mitchell Moore, 22.

Moore, entered an Alford plea Sept. 25 to one count each of involuntary manslaughter, felonious assault, and felony child endangering. He was sentenced to 18 years in prison.

Judge Zmuda acknowledged that Hairston wasn't the one who inflicted the serious injuries on her young son. But he reminded her that she failed to do anything to protect him.

According to an autopsy report, the toddler died Dec. 26, 2007, as a combined result of dehydration, sepsis as a result of E-coli in his blood stream, and an internal infection cause by a laceration to his bowels.

He also had cuts on his wrists, a significant burn on his leg, and bruising, lacerations, and injuries to his head, chest, and back.

## **Cincinnati Enquirer: Mom's tearful defense rejected**

*By Kimball Perry*

*August 27, 2009*

Kellie Lewis admits she abused her hospitalized infant to get attention but tearfully begged a judge Wednesday to treat her as if she has a mental illness and spare her from prison.

Hamilton County Common Pleas Judge Melba Marsh refused, saying it was her job to protect the 8-month-old child Lewis abused. The judge rejected Lewis' defense of Munchausen's Syndrome by Proxy - just the fourth time that defense has been used in Hamilton County in 20 years, prosecutors said.

"I am here today, Your Honor, because I have done some horrible and dangerous things to my daughter," a crying Lewis told the judge.

"As a mother, I am very ashamed of what I've done."

What she did, doctors and police said, was withdraw blood from her daughter and insert items into her rectum, hoping to get the attention of doctors who couldn't figure out why the infant wasn't getting better despite having seven blood transfusions in 10 days.

Lewis, 27, of Milan, Ind., gave birth to the child, her fourth, prematurely. The child had medical problems - the mother said - ever since.

The infant was sent Aug. 8, 2008, to Cincinnati's Children's Hospital where doctors did a battery of tests and couldn't discover why she was losing blood or why her diaper was filled with fresh blood - until the mother was seen using syringes to take blood from her daughter and putting it in her diapers. Doctors were prepared to operate on the child until the mother was seen taking the blood. That is a perfect example, doctors and mental health professionals testified, of Munchausen's, a disorder that results in someone - usually parents and almost always mothers - of hurting their children to gain attention for themselves. "Words can't explain how sorry I am," Lewis said, adding that she took blood from her daughter at least five times while the girl was in Children's.

Her attorney, Tom Heekin, battled for months to try to get Lewis sentenced to counseling to deal with what he and Lewis insisted was a mental illness. But prosecutor Anne Flanagan called for a prison term for Lewis, noting the several blood withdrawals and a resulting 46-day hospital stay could have killed the infant.

Flanagan suggested had Lewis done the same things to another child, she would

have been thrown in prison long ago.  
The child is recovering in foster care.

The judge noted that Lewis herself was a child whose mother often took her to doctors with various ailments, actions so disruptive that Lewis had to be home-schooled. She learned, the judge suggested, to emulate what happened to her and did the same things to at least one of her children.

"You were probably a victim yourself," Marsh told her. "One isn't born with Munchausen's Syndrome by Proxy. It is learned."

That's why, the judge added, she wanted to end the cycle now - and keep the child safe.

"My job is to protect (the infant) at all costs," Marsh said. "(She was) brought back from the brink of death."

Lewis pleaded guilty in May to felonious assault and child endangering in exchange for prosecutors dropping five other charges. She faced a maximum prison sentence of 18 years, but Marsh sent her to prison for eight years.