

The Daily Edition

50¢

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Wednesday, September 25, 2013

Trio charged in pill robbery



Jeremy Lipps



Lawrence Tuck



Timothy Burton

(see Trio pg. 4)

Former Gibson City Recorder Stole Money, Gave Herself Unauthorized Insurance Benefits

The former city recorder in the small West Tennessee town of Gibson stole more than \$24,000 and gave herself an unauthorized upgrade to her health insurance, the Comptroller's Division of Investigations has found. Auditors from the Comptroller's of-

fice worked in cooperation with agents from the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation on the case.

While working as city recorder, Shawnda West withheld at least \$24,267 in city funds for her own personal use. Also, she upgraded her insurance coverage

(see Fraud pg. 7)

It's a shame when ya can't even walk home either!

Steven Baugher, 58 Erick Lane Loudon, was charged with Public Intoxication. According to the report, Deputy

Palmer was dispatched to Sequoyah Rd. on a intoxicated person walking down the road. Dispatch did advise

(see PI pg. 3)

I'm being burned! Uh, no you're not.

David Clowers, 47 Evergreen Drive, Oneida was charged with DUI 1st. David was stopped for speeding Trooper Armes pulled behind him and activated blue lights. The defendant had exited the vehicle and was making exaggerated movements by brushing off his chest.

Trooper Armes asked what Clowers was doing and he stated that a cigarette had burned him. Trooper Armes

(see DUI pg. 4)



David Clowers

Public Corruption: Courtroom for Sale

Judge Gets Jail Time in Racketeering Case

In a case that exposed widespread corruption in a South Texas county's judicial system—reaching all the way to the district attorney's office—a former state judge was recently sentenced to six years in prison for taking

bribes and kickbacks in return for favorable rulings from his bench.

Abel Limas, 59, a lifelong resident of Brownsville, Texas, served as a police officer and practiced law before becoming a state judge in Cam-

(see FBI pg. 4)

Verse of the Day

Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our

bodies. — Romans 8:23

Obituaries

Edna M. Spoon
Odis F. Selvidge
James Harrison
McLendon

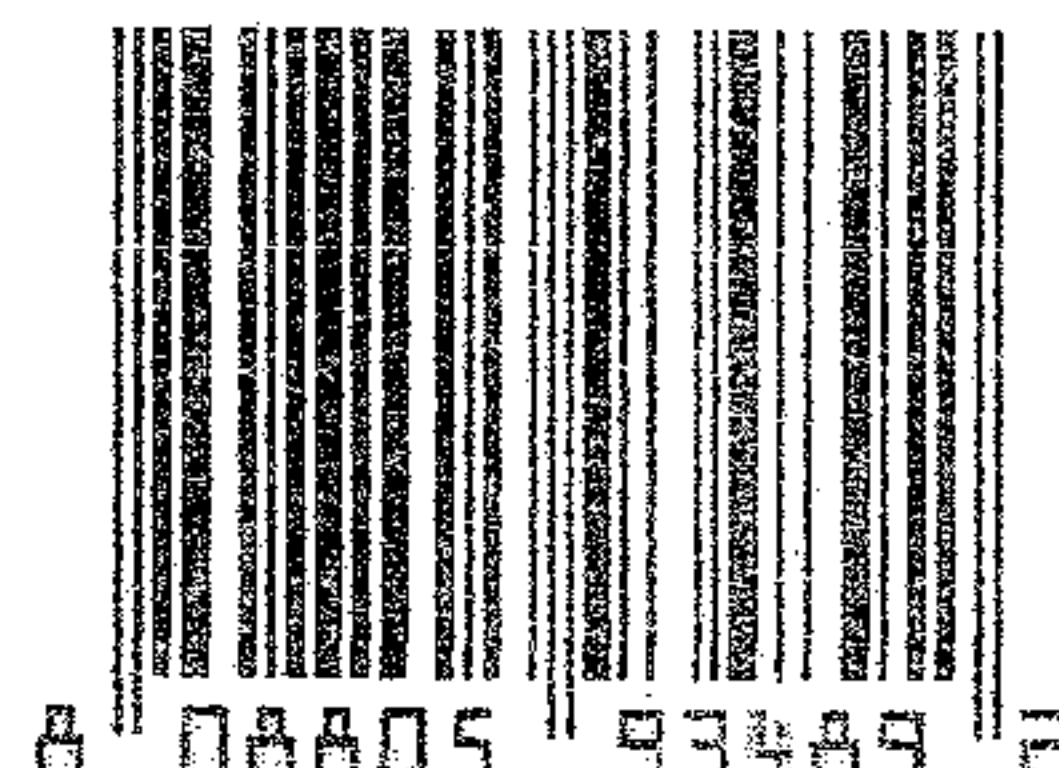
Wazzup

It sure was great getting to meet a real Lizard Lick Towing type guy named Chris in Jellico. Good luck in the repo and towing competition coming up!

Weather

Today: Mostly cloudy with a chance of a thunderstorm and rain showers. High of 75F. Tonight Mostly cloudy with a chance of rain. Fog

(Continued on page 6)



8 08805 93489 2

DUI

saw no evidence of a cigarette burn. When asked for his driver license he presented one and was told to have a seat in his vehicle. Trooper Armes went to defendant vehicle and could smell a odor

of marijuana emanating from inside the vehicle. Trooper also noticed that the defendant eyes were water and blood shot and the pupils were dilated, had dried mouth and sweating profusely.

Clowers license were suspended. K-9 per-

formed a search and alerted to the presence of contraband about the driver's door. Defendant was placed under arrest. Search of vehicle revealed a orange bottle containing 5 red pills two blue pills and one white

pill identified as Morphine, Oxycodone, and Opana. Defendant was asked to do field sobri-

ety test and could not perform them. Trooper Matthew Armes, THP made the arrest.

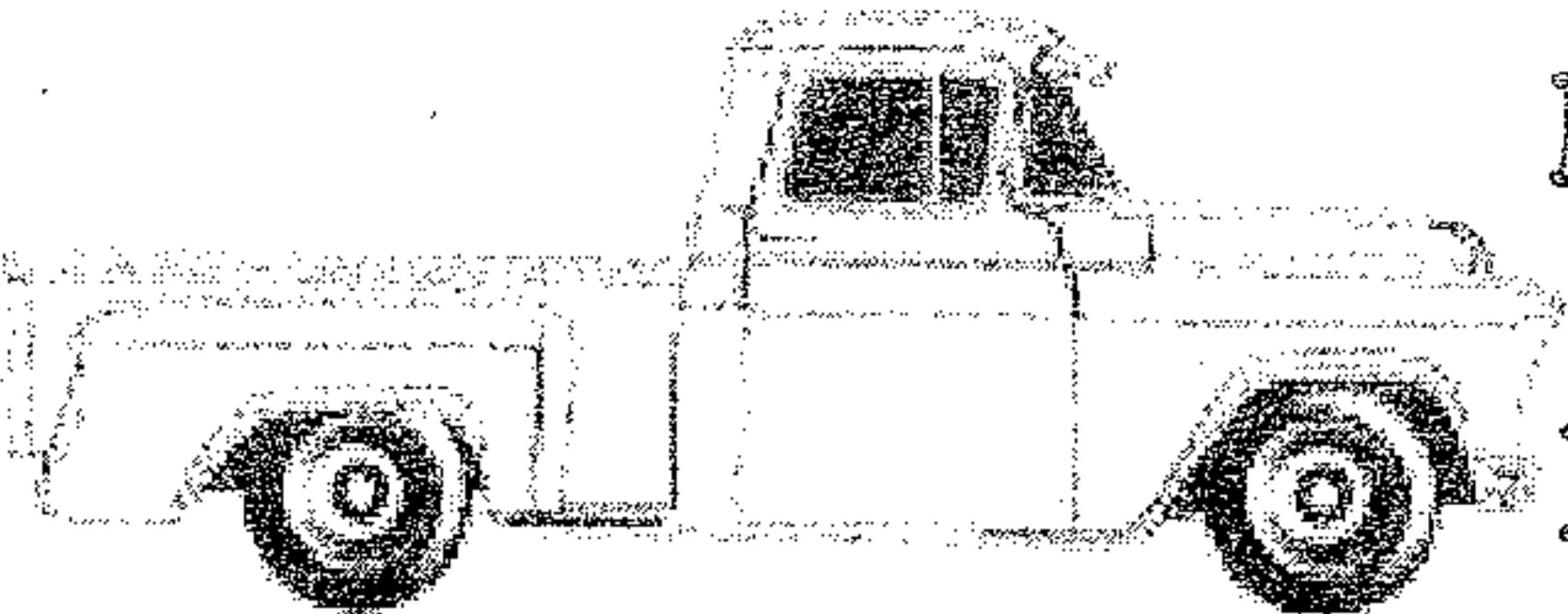
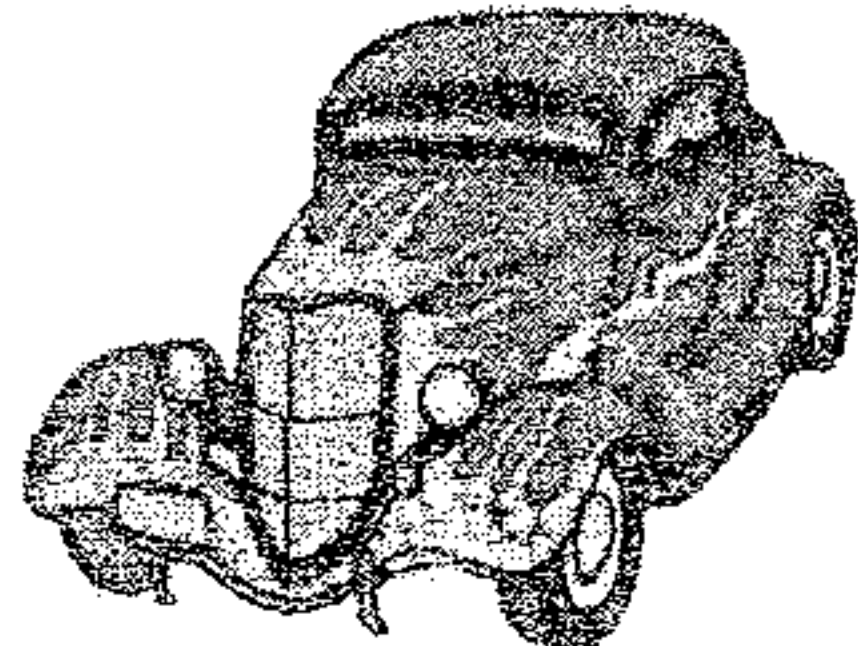
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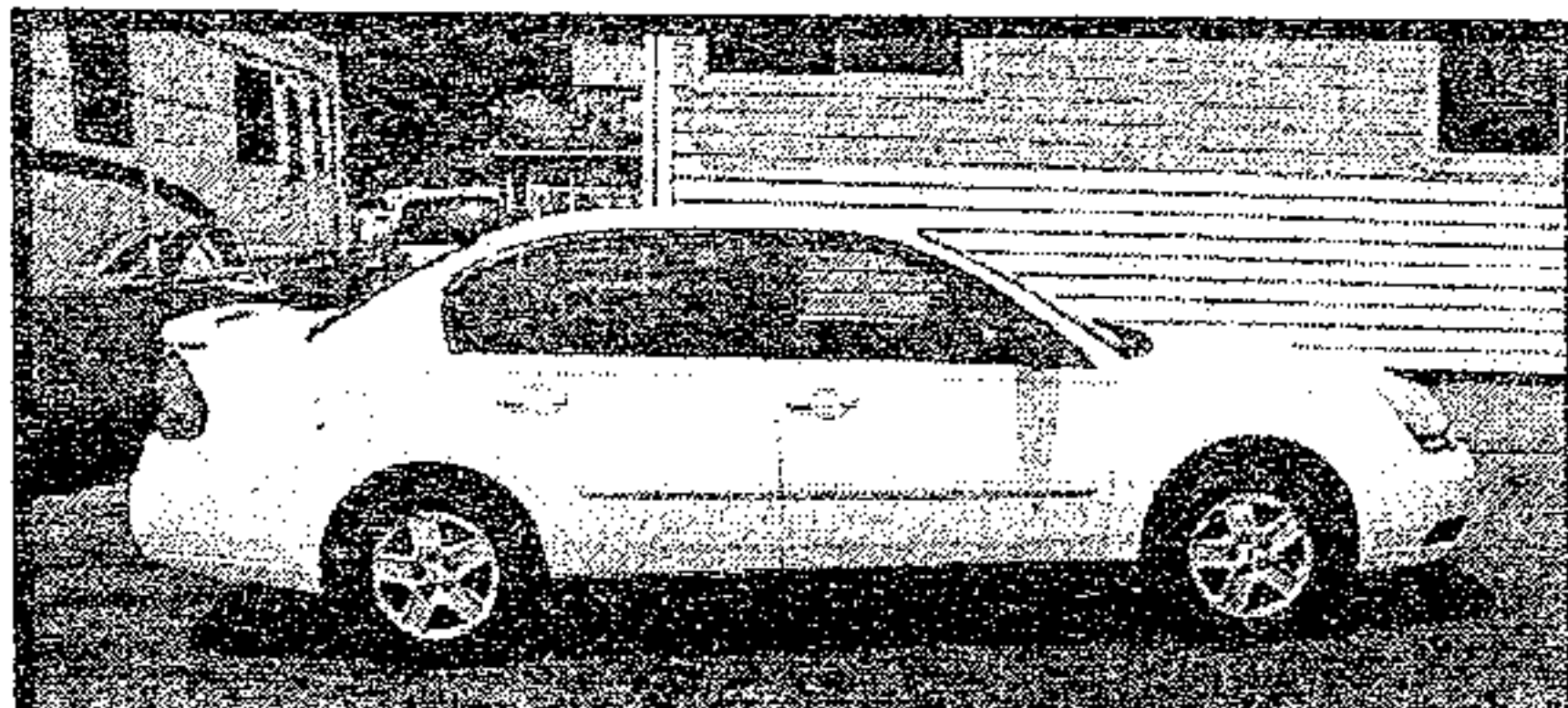


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PI

that the subject Mr. Steven Baugher was going to get into his vehicle at which time an off duty Officer advised Mr. Baugher he did not need to drive in his condition. Dispatch then advised that Mr. Baugher started to walk from the yacht club to his residence down Sequoyah Rd. Dispatch advised that the defendant had fell into the bushes off the side the road. When Deputy arrived on scene spoke with Mr. Baugher at which time Deputy could smell a strong

odor of alcoholic beverage emitting from his person. Steven Baugher was placed under arrest for PD. Deputy Kenneth Palmer LCSO made the arrest.

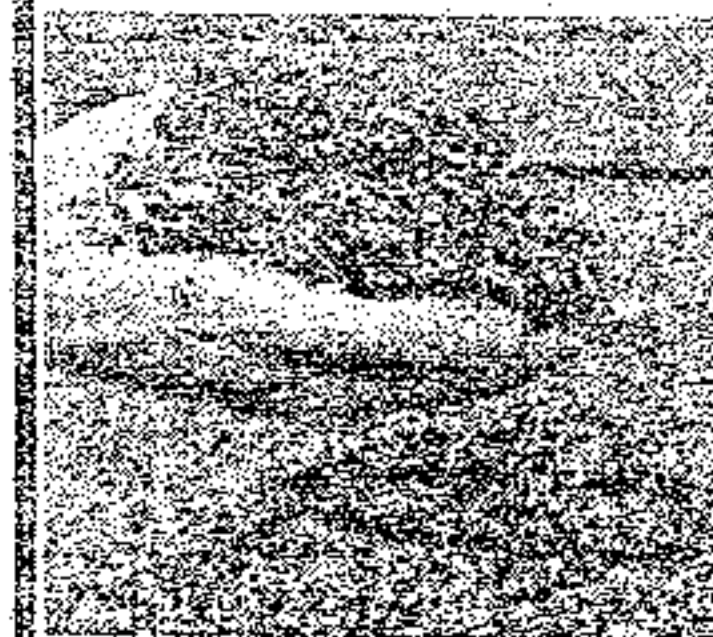
Police beat

Christopher Little, 24 HWY 360 Tellico Plains, was charged with DUI 1st. According to report Deputy Billy Hall stopped a gray vehicle for speeding. Identified the driver as Christopher Little. Mr. Little had a strong odor of alcoholic beverage emitting from his person. Mr.

Little speech was slurred and his eyes appeared watery. Mr. Little advised that he had consumed several alcoholic beverages and was unsure how many. Mr. Little did poorly on field sobriety test. Mr. Little consented to a blood test at FT. Sanders Loudon Medical Center, and transported to Jail. Deputy Billy Hall LCSO made the arrest.

Joseph Hodge, 47 Homeless was charged with Driving on revoked. Officer Keith Sennett LCPD made the arrest.

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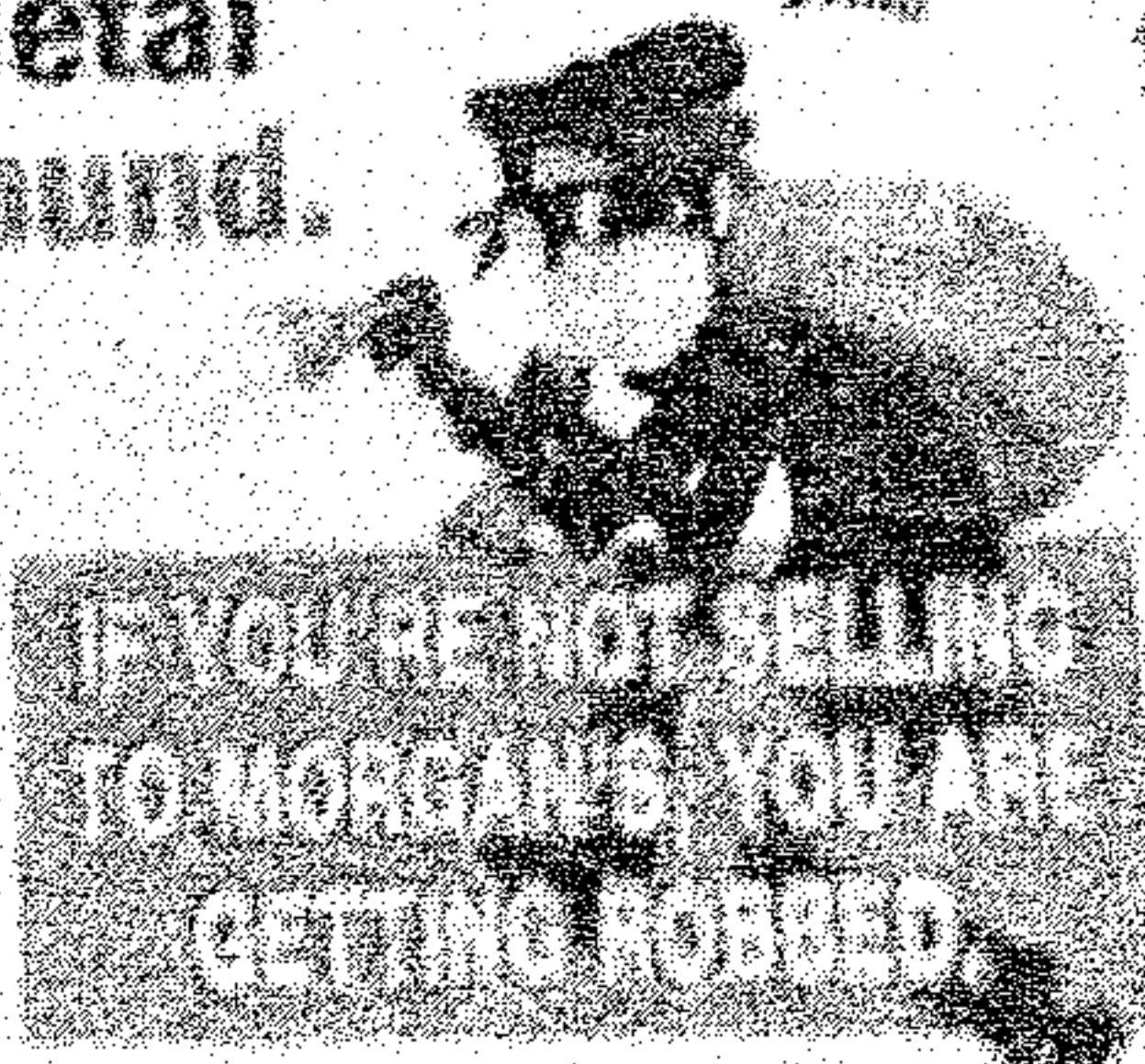
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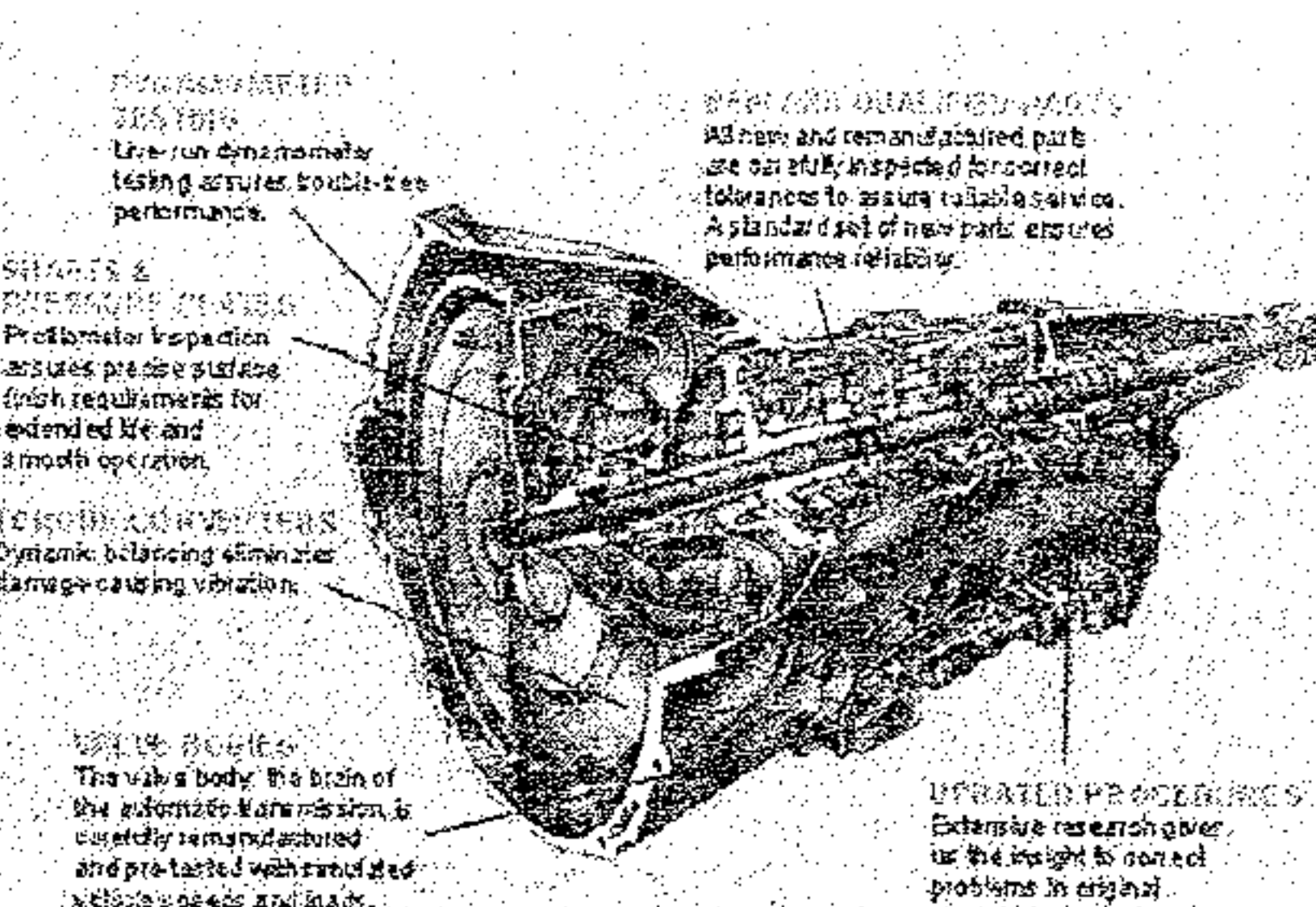
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Trio

Jeremy Lipps, 21 Georgia Ave, Knoxville was charged with Robbery, Assault, and Theft under \$500.

Lawrence Tuck, 20 Berrenger Station, Knoxville, was charged with Robbery.

Timothy Burton, 22 Banbury Road Knoxville was charged with Accessory after the fact.

According to the reports, Deputy Brandon Burley, LCSO responded to a burglary in progress at Chrisman Rd. The victim identified Jeremy Christopher Lipps as the main suspect in the robbery. The victim reported Jeremy did call him on multiple occasions wanting to visit him at his house. When Jeremy arrived at the residence he was with another male later identified as Lawrence Tuck where Lipps and Tuck entered the residence with victims permission, after entering the residence Lipps and Tuck forcibly held victim down and took his hydrocodone prescription medication. During the robbery Victim was injured with laceration to his left elbow and right knee by Jeremy Lipps, Tuck and Burton had the intent to commit a robbery on victim prior to arrival at his residence. All three were charged.

Deputy JC Schultz with Knox. Co. Sheriff Office assistance did arrest Timothy Burton on a Warrant for accessory after the fact on a robbery and assault that occurred earlier. Mr. Burton was arrested and transported to Loudon Jail. Deputy Brandon Burley, LCSO made the arrests.

Police beat

Jaime Guevara-Alfaro, 37 Murray Drive Westbury, was charged with Violation of Order of Protection. Deputy B Burley conducted a traffic stop on a silver vehicle for the move over law. After speaking with the driver Maria Alvarado it was determined that she did not have a valid license in the United States and also in the vehicle was Jaime Aldaro presented a New York driver license a run of the license through dispatch showed a active Order of Protection where Jaime was the

respondent. New York confirmed the Order and Jaime was placed under arrest. Deputy Brandon Burley LCSO made the arrest.

Kimberly Hodge, 45 Gardener Rd. Philadelphia, was charged with theft over \$1000 out of Monroe Co. SGT. Eddie Range LCPD was doing a welfare check on a passenger in this vehicle. Upon checking Ms. Kimberly Hodge through dispatch it was confirmed of a active Warrant out of Monroe Co. SGT. Eddie Range LCPD made the arrest.

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Fraud

to include her dependents, even though the town's board of mayor and aldermen had only approved coverage for her. The difference in the value of coverage was \$1,583.

West was fired from her job with the city and faces criminal charges.

The Division of Investigations released a report on the case today, which is available online at <http://www.comptroller.tn.gov/ia/>.

The report also highlighted other flaws in Gibson's money-handling and record-keeping procedures. Specifically, the report notes that West was given sole responsibility for

collecting, receipting, recording, depositing and reconciling all city collections — which meant there was no one in a position to oversee her work and possibly detect the theft. Also, collections of city funds weren't always promptly deposited in the bank and the city did not prepare daily reports on cash collections.

"Fraud, waste or abuse of public money simply cannot be tolerated," Comptroller Justin P. Wilson said. "Even in small communities, it's important

to set up some checks and balances in money-handling procedures so no single individual is in a position to improperly take money without being detected. I am encouraged that Gibson city officials have indicated that they have taken steps to correct that problem."

To report suspected cases of fraud, waste or abuse of public funds in Tennessee, call the Comptroller's toll-free hotline at 1-800-232-5454 or make a report online by visiting <http://www.comptroller.tn.gov/shared/safwa.asp>.

FBI

eron County in 2001. He served eight years on the bench, during which time he turned his courtroom into a criminal enterprise to line his own pockets.

"The depth of the corruption was shocking," said Mark Gripka, a special agent in our San Antonio Division who was part of the team that investigated the case. "What was more shocking was how cheaply Judge Limas sold his courtroom—\$300 here, \$500 there—in return for a favorable ruling."

There was plenty of big money involved as well. Limas received more than \$250,000 in bribes and kickbacks while he was on the bench. He took money from attorneys with civil cases pending in his court in return for

(see FBI etd. pg. 8)

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FBI ctd. from pg. 7

favorable pre-trial rulings, most notably in a case involving a Texas helicopter crash that was later settled for \$14 million. Referring to an \$8,000 payment Limas received in that case, our investigators listened on the telephone as he described the cash to an accomplice as eight golf balls. "Their code language didn't fool anybody," Gripka said.

Evidence also showed that Limas made a deal with the attorneys in the helicopter crash case to become an "of counsel" attorney with the firm. He was promised an advance of \$100,000 and 10 percent of the settlement—all while the case was still pending in his court.

Over a 14-month period beginning in November 2007, investigators used court-authorized

wiretaps to listen to the judge's phone calls. "That's when we really learned the scope of what he was doing," Gripka explained. The judge's nearly \$100,000 annual salary was not enough to support his lifestyle, which included regular gambling trips to Las Vegas.

In 2010, when Limas was faced with the overwhelming evidence against him, he began to cooperate in a wider public corruption investigation—and our agents learned that the Cameron County district attorney at the time, Armando Villalobos, was also corrupt. The investigation showed, among other criminal activities, that Villalobos accepted \$80,000 in cash in exchange for taking actions that allowed a convicted murderer to be released for 60 days without bond prior to reporting

to prison. The murderer failed to report to prison and remains a fugitive.

Limas pled guilty to racketeering in 2011. By that time, he had helped authorities uncover wide-ranging corruption in the Cameron County judicial system. To date, 10 other defendants have been convicted by a jury or pled guilty as part of the FBI's six-year investigation, including a former Texas state representative, three attorneys, a former investigator for the district attorney's office, and Villalobos, who is scheduled to be sentenced next month on racketeering, extortion, and bribery charges.

"During the course of this investigation, we interviewed over 800 people, including many local attorneys in Cameron County," Gripka said. "We hope this case shows

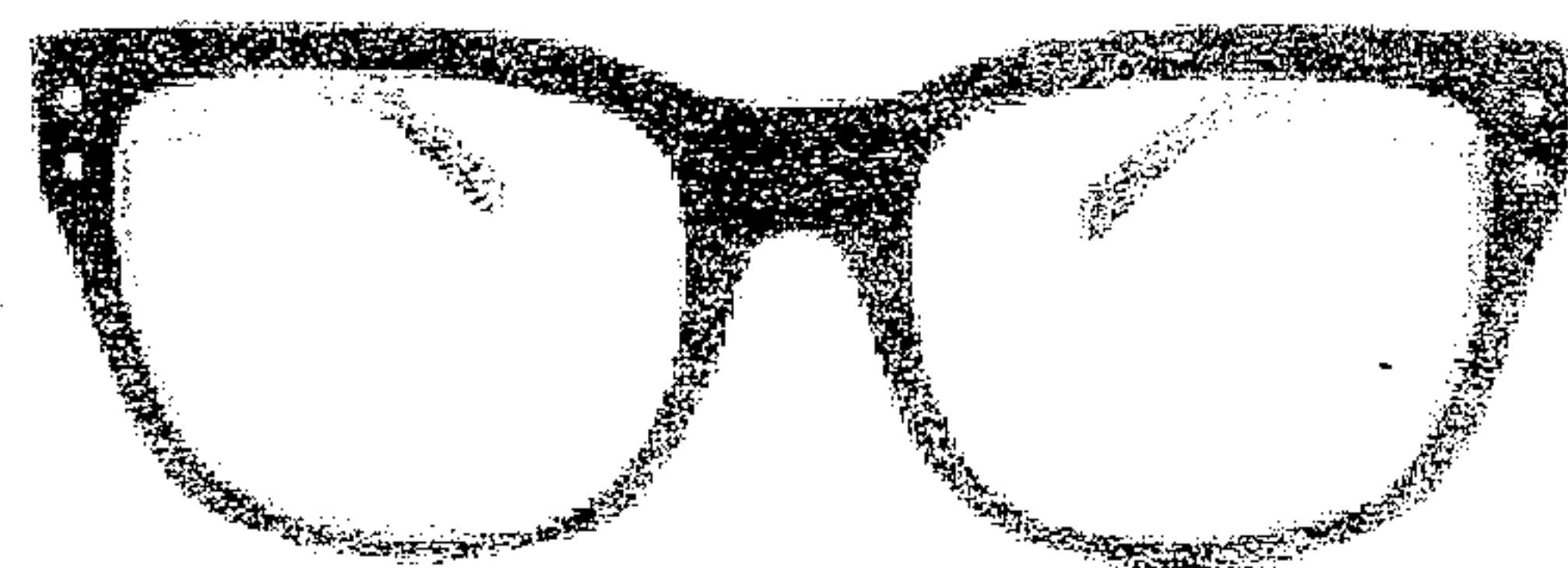
everyone that the government will not tolerate officials who violate the public trust. Fighting pub-

lic corruption is a priority for the FBI," he added, "and it is something we take very seriously."

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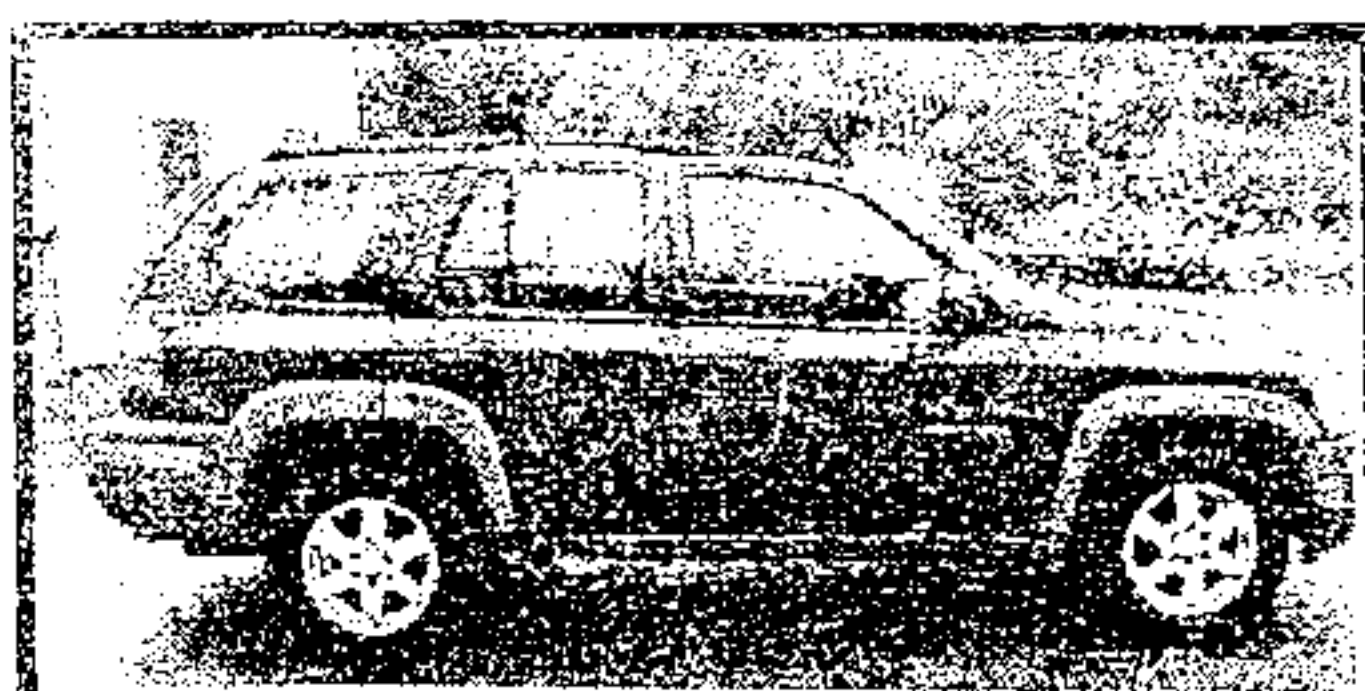
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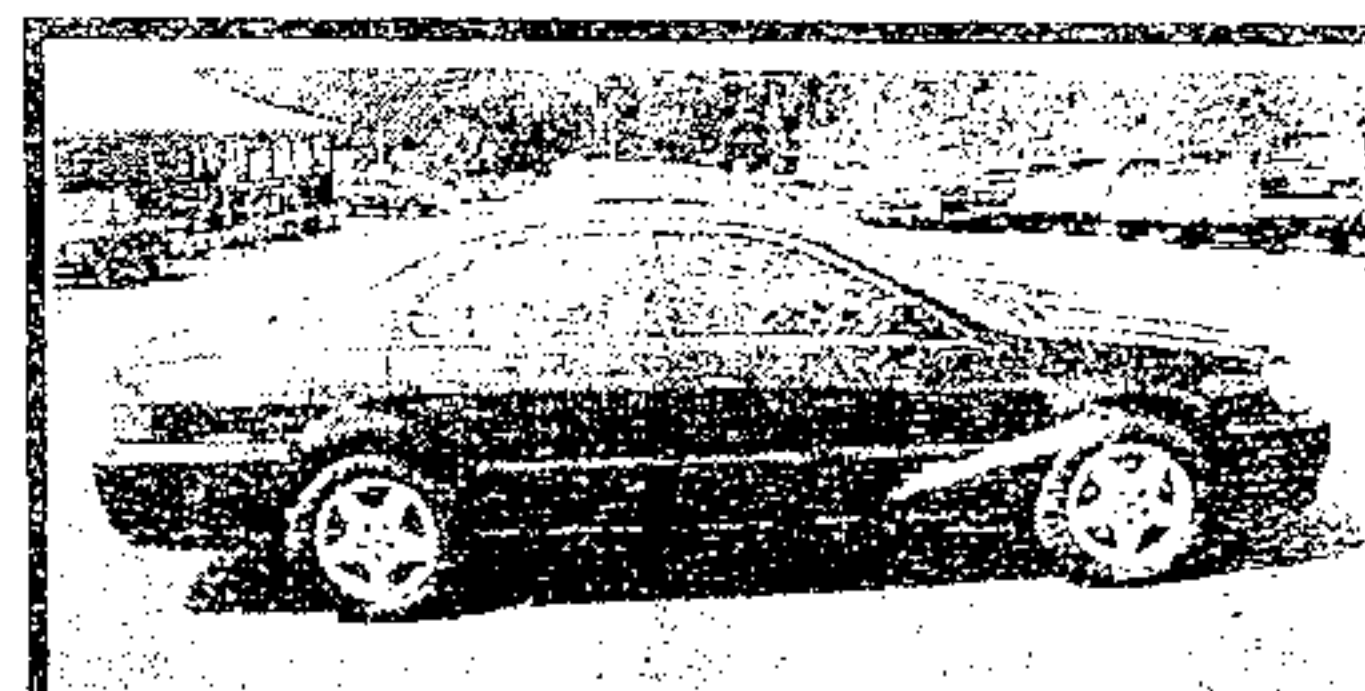
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2005 Isuzu Ascender, 79k miles



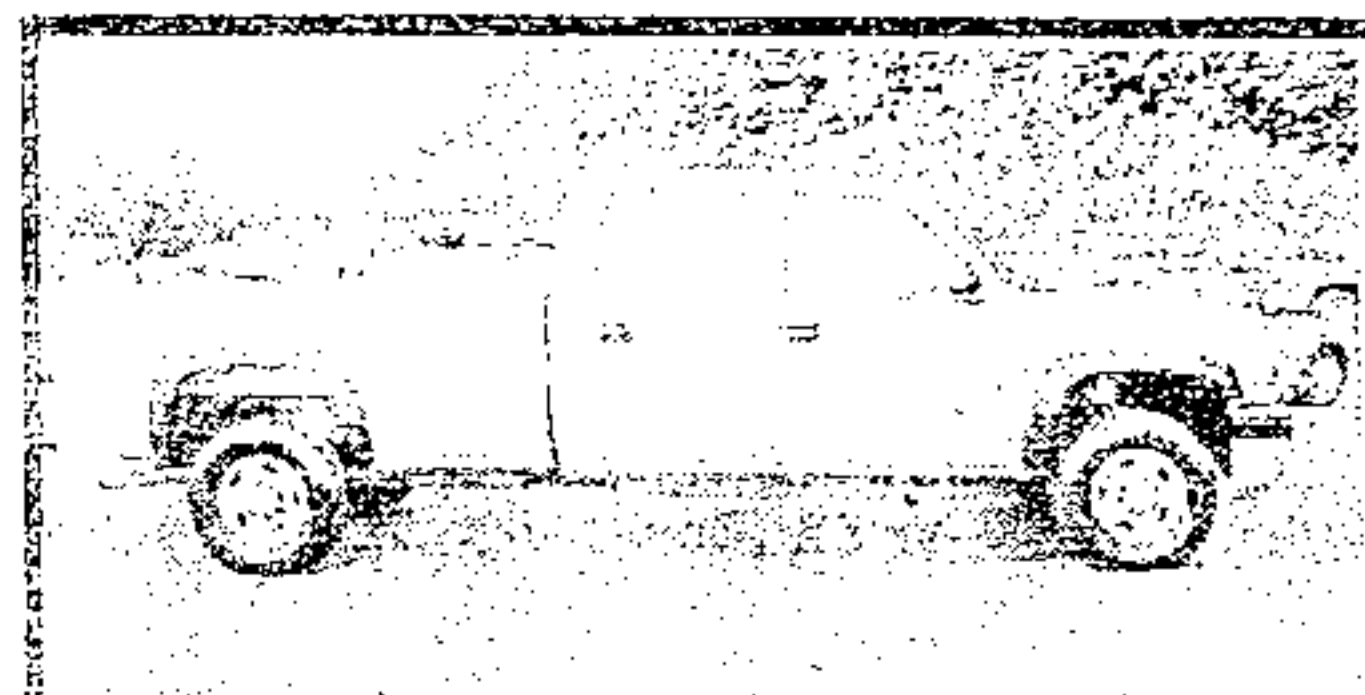
2003 Toyota Camry, 4door, 127k miles



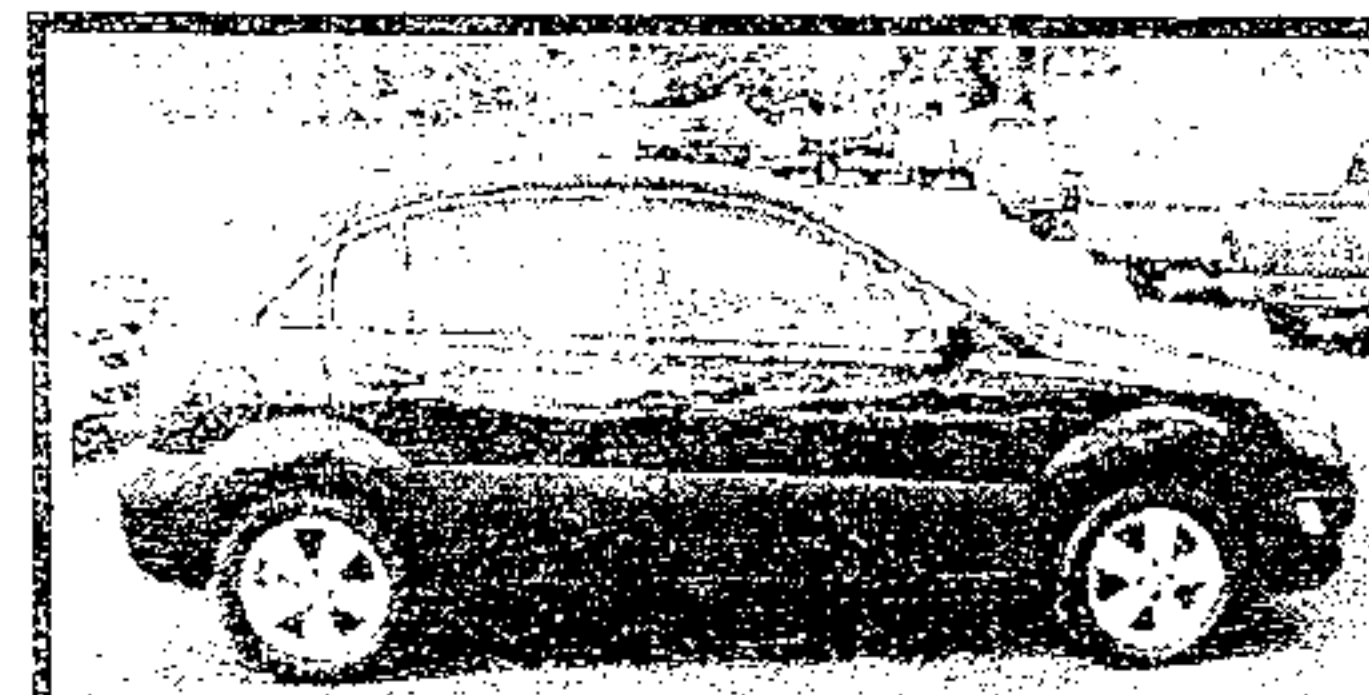
2002 Acura TL, 4 door sedan, 93k miles



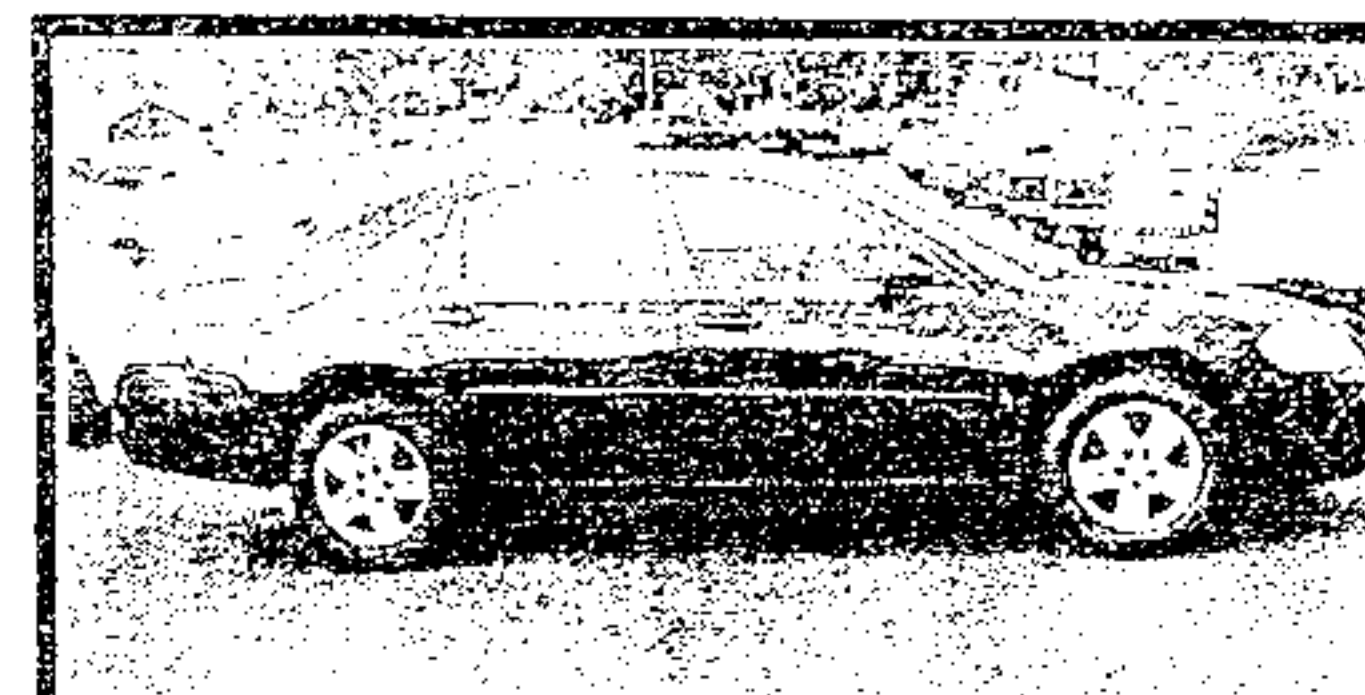
2007 Chevrolet Equinox, 118k miles



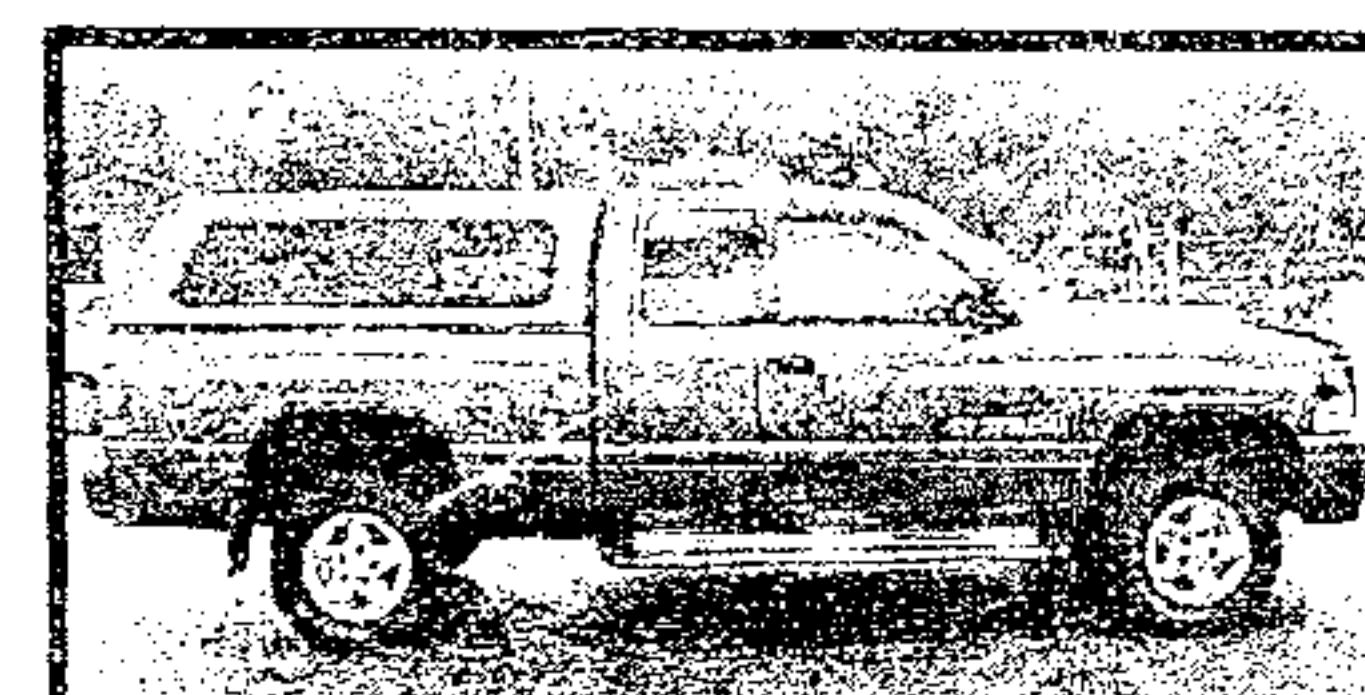
2002 Chevy Silverado 2500 4x4 with 64k miles



2008 Kia Rio, hatchback, 56k miles



2006 Chevrolet Impala 91k miles



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