

Daily Edition

Serving Loudon, Monroe and Surrounding Counties

Friday, April 15, 2016

Aggravated child abuse and neglect charges placed; father still being sought Meth lab discovered too!

Erin Ernest, 29, Hines Valley Road Lenoir City, was charged with Aggravated Child Abuse and Neglect, and Man/Sell/Del/Resale SCH. II. Sgt. Detective Jason Smith LCSO, was notified that a Dept. of Children Services referral had been made in reference to a sexual battery. The juvenile victim was being interviewed at the Child Advocacy Center. Victim splits time between

(see abuse pg. 2)



Erin Ernest

Wanted in Texas and got pills keestered



Otto Flachbart

(see wanted pg. 5)

Woman charged with stealing Gain pods and more



Paula Brackett

(see theft pg. 3)

Bristol Tennessee Essential Services CEO Fails to Disclose Conflict of Interest with Private Company

A special investigation by the Tennessee Comptroller's Office raises questions about several financial transactions between Bristol Tennessee Essential Services (BTES) and a private vendor, Carina Technology, Inc. The investigation centered around decisions made by BTES chief executive officer Dr. Michael Browder, who co-owned the patent for a water heater load management switch that Carina was developing

(see Bristol pg. 7)

A Web of Intimidation Landmark Cyberstalking Case Results in Life Sentences for Three Family Members

After surviving a rocky divorce and custody dispute in 2007, all Christine Belford wanted was to settle back into a peaceful life with her three young daughters in her Delaware home.

Instead, her ex-husband, David T. Matusiewicz, and several members of his family stalked, harassed, and intimidated Belford for years leading up to her mur-

(see FBI pg. 4)

Verse of the Day

This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.
— 1 John 4:10

Obituaries

see inside
Wazzup

A Big Shout out to Old Froggie from Annie and the Crew!!!

Weather

Today: Cloudy in the morn-

ing, then off and on rain showers during the afternoon hours. High 74F. Tonight: Showers in the evening with some clearing overnight. Low 49F. Friday Partly cloudy skies. High near 70F. Friday Night A few clouds from time to time. Low

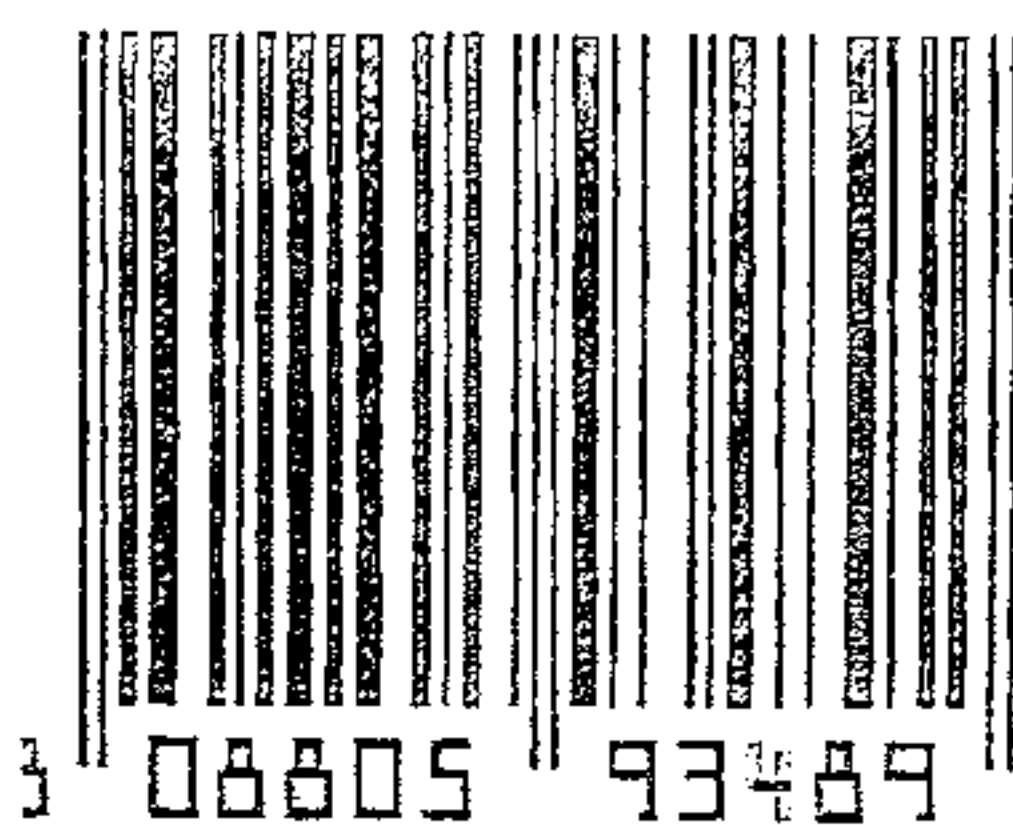
46F.

Horoscopes

Aries 3/21-4/19

Honoring your need for privacy is healthy today, even if you are accustomed to engaging in activities with your friends

(Continued on page 6)



abuse her mother and fathers residence. During the interview victim disclosed that her father had touched her on her buttock after watching her undress. Victim stated he ask her to try on some underwear she was not allowed to wear. Victim stated that she went to change clothes and noticed her father was watching

her. Victim stated her father touched her hips and buttock, then told victim he was going to masturbate in the shower. Victim also stated sometime in March she was showering and her father came into the bathroom. Victim stated the shower curtain is plastic and clear with blue squares and can be seen through. Victim stated that she locked the door

but it can still be opened. A search warrant written for the residence where these incidents were to have occurred on Hines Valley Road. During the search, a shower

(see abuse ctd. pg. 7)

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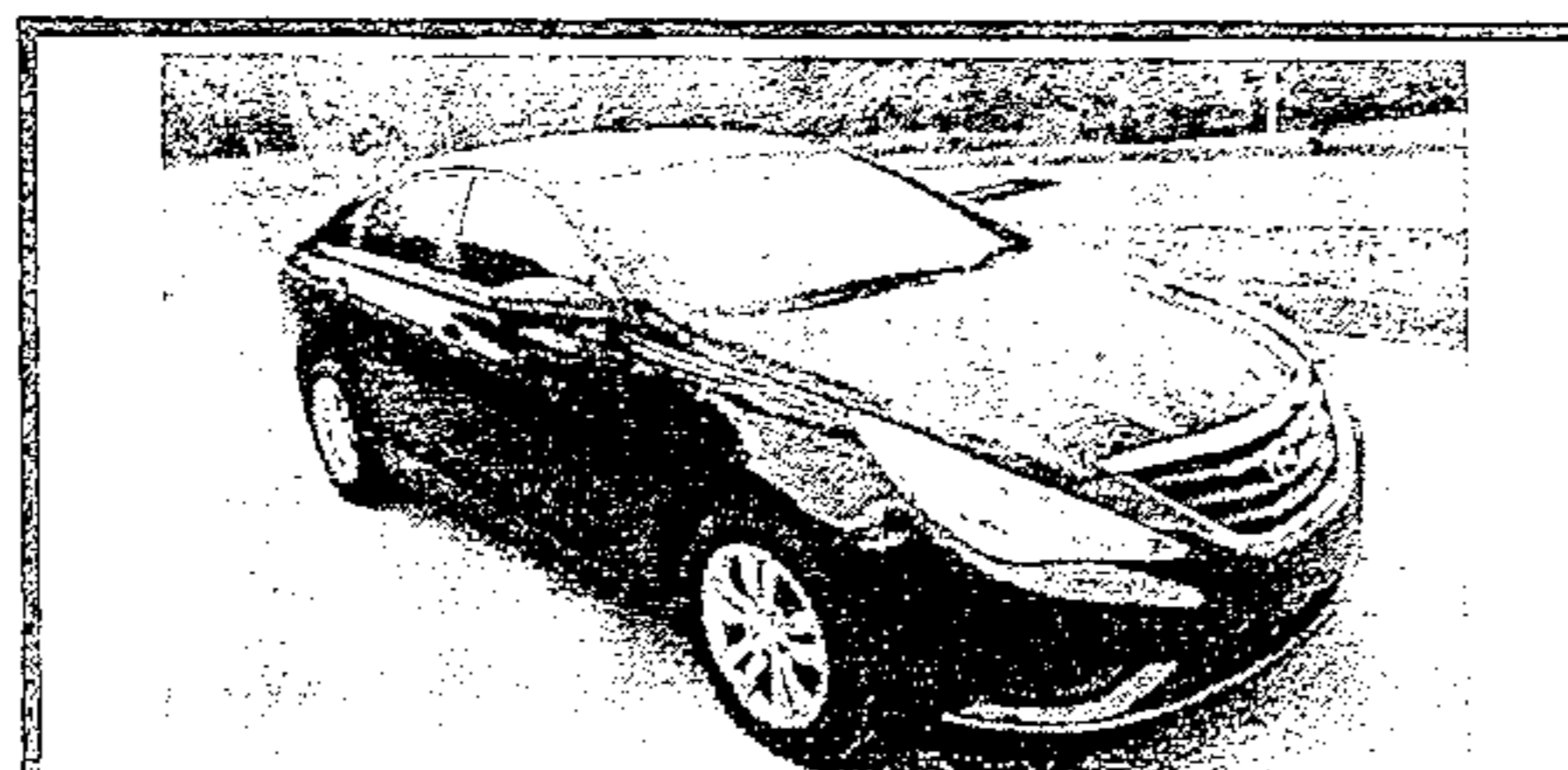
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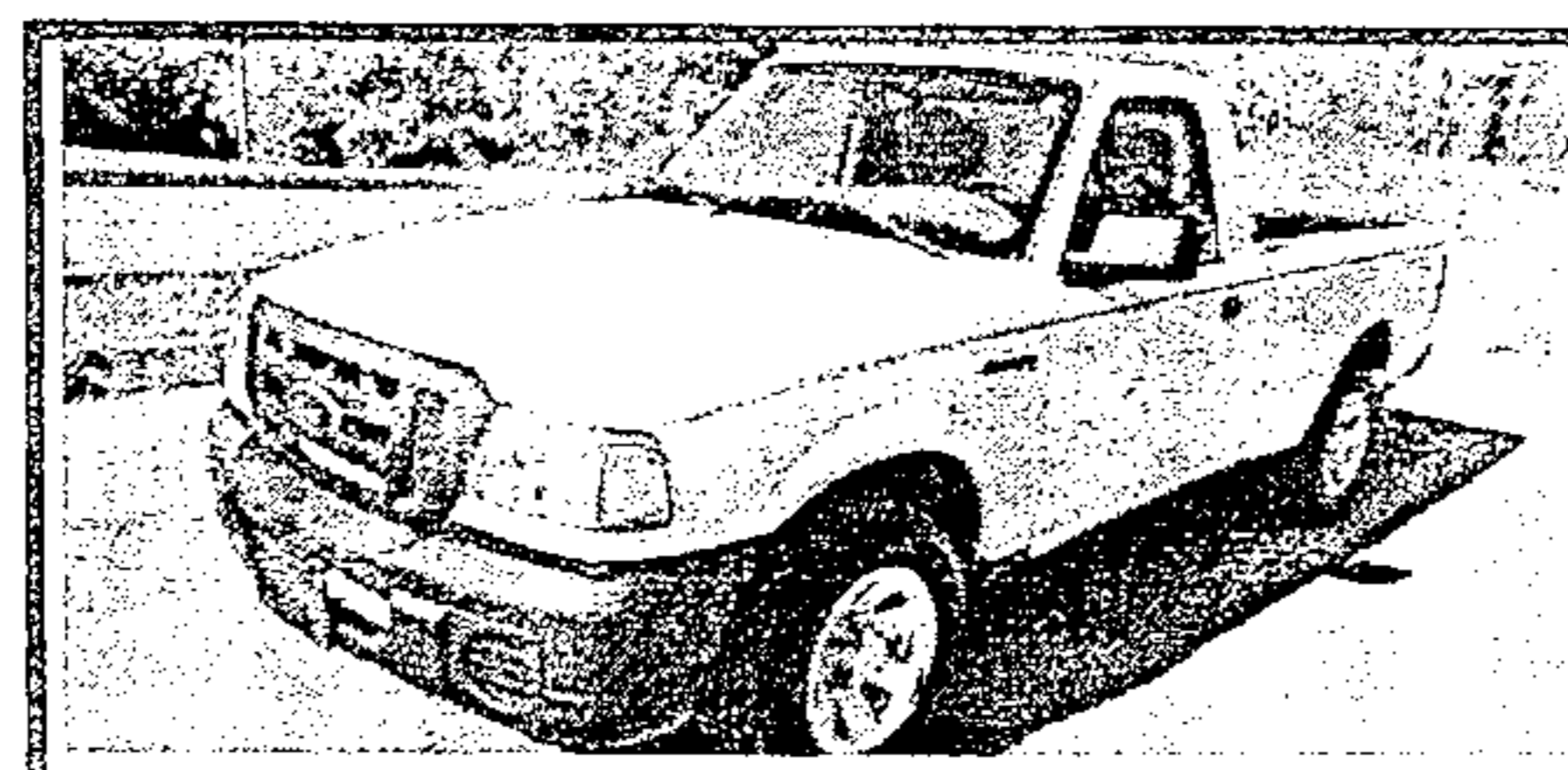
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theft

Paula Brackett, 42, Happy Hollow Road Harriman, was charged with Theft of Property. Officer Jamie Whitt LCPD, was dispatched to the Walmart where Loss Pre-

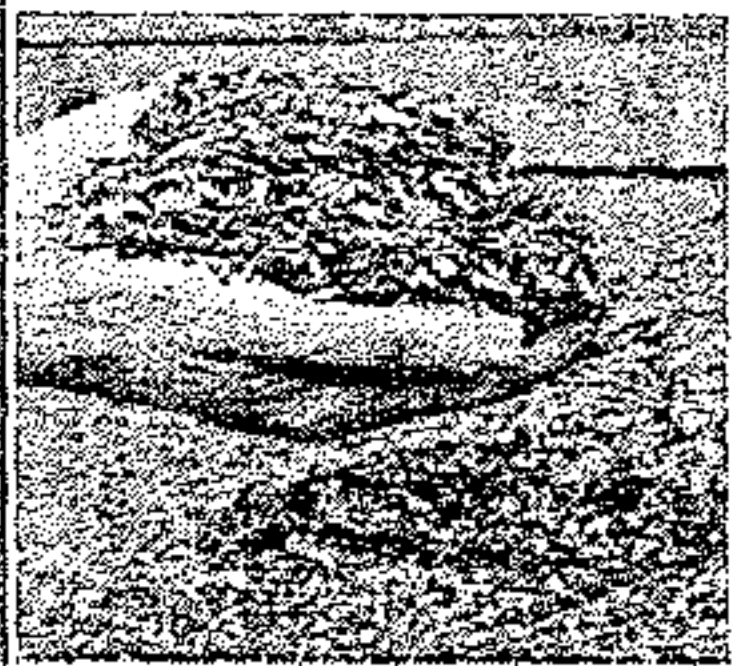
vention had observed Paula Brackett concealing several items under her jacket and gain pods in her purse. Total of items were 120.54. Paula exited the store without paying for items. Officer Jamie Whitt LCPD, made the arrest.

Reunion

2016 Browder School Reunion will be on Sat, April 23rd from 10:00 - 3:00 at the Highland Park Ruritan Club on Hwy 321.

Bring a covered dish and drink. If anyone needs more information please call Joyce Wiggins 986-8688 or Mary Bluford 986-3848

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FBI
 der at a federal court-
 house in Wilmington
 on February 11, 2013.
 The ensuing investiga-
 tion, conducted by the
 FBI and the Delaware
 State Police, resulted
 in the first-ever con-
 victions on charges of
 cyberstalking resulting
 in death, a violation
 contained in the fed-
 eral Violence Against
 Women Act.

During their inves-
 tigation, agents and
 detectives learned
 that David Matusie-
 wicz hatched the plot
 to stalk and harass
 his ex-wife while in
 prison for kidnapping
 Belford's children in

2007, when the couple
 was going through di-
 vorce proceedings.
 The Delaware optom-
 etrist enlisted the help
 of his mother, father,
 and sister, who waged
 an elaborate, years-
 long, online campaign
 against Christine Bel-
 ford, alleging she en-
 dangered the lives of
 the daughters she had
 with Matusiewicz.

"Through our inves-
 tigation, we discovered
 that the Matusiewicz
 family had a network
 of supporters helping
 them uncover informa-
 tion about Christine's
 life," said Special
 Agent Joseph Gordon,
 who investigated the
 case out of the Balti-

more Field Office's
 Wilmington Resident
 Agency. "They were
 convinced by the fam-
 ily's claims that she
 was a child abuser, but
 they didn't know the
 family's real intent."

The Matusiewicz
 family posted false al-
 legations on websites
 and YouTube and en-
 listed friends in their
 campaign. They even
 hired a private investi-
 gator to spy on Belford
 at her home. In ex-
 changes with her fami-
 ly, friends, and lawyer,
 Belford said she feared
 for her life.

In August 2011, the
 Family Court of the
 State of Delaware ter-
 minated Matusiewicz's
 parental rights and
 called his allegations
 of abuse "baseless."
 In 2012, Matusiewicz
 petitioned the court
 to reduce his monthly
 child support pay-
 ments. And in 2013,
 he received permission

to travel from Texas to
 Delaware for a hearing
 on the matter.

In February 2013,
 David Matusiewicz,
 along with his mother,
 Lenore Matusiewicz,
 and father, Thomas
 Matusiewicz, drove to
 Delaware in vehicles
 later found to contain
 weapons, ammunition,
 a bulletproof vest, re-
 straints, an electric
 shock device, gas cans,
 and a shovel.

On February 11,
 2013, David Matusie-
 wicz and his father
 entered the courthouse
 lobby shortly after
 8 a.m. After his son
 passed through secu-
 rity, Thomas Matusie-
 wicz shot and killed
 Belford and a friend,
 Laura Mulford, in the
 lobby. David's father
 then ended his own life
 after a shootout with
 police.

The three surviving
 family members—Da-

vid, Lenore, and sister
 Amy Gonzalez—were
 convicted last July on
 charges of conspiracy
 and interstate stalking
 resulting in death. In
 February, they were
 each sentenced to
 life in prison for their
 crimes.

"Even from their
 homes in Texas, the
 Matusiewiczzes had
 the ability to frighten
 Christine through elec-
 tronic and physical
 means," said Special
 Agent Gordon. "They
 were all responsible
 for her murder."

Kevin Perkins, spe-
 cial agent in charge
 of the Baltimore Field
 Office, called the con-
 spiracy and stalking
 prosecution ground-
 breaking. "People who
 actively take part in
 planning crimes, even
 though they don't pull
 the trigger, will be held
 accountable," he said.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Special-Called City Council Meeting

The Lenoir City Council will hold
 a Special-Called Meeting at City
 Hall on Monday, April 18, 2016 at
 8:30 A.M. The purpose of the meet-
 ing will be to select a City Judge for
 appointment until the election in
 August of this year.

The public is encouraged to at-
 tend.

Thank you.

Public Notice

The Loudon County Corrections
 Partnership Committee will meet
 April 20, 2016 at 12:00 at the Justice
 Center to discuss future plans.

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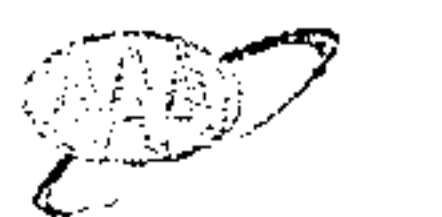
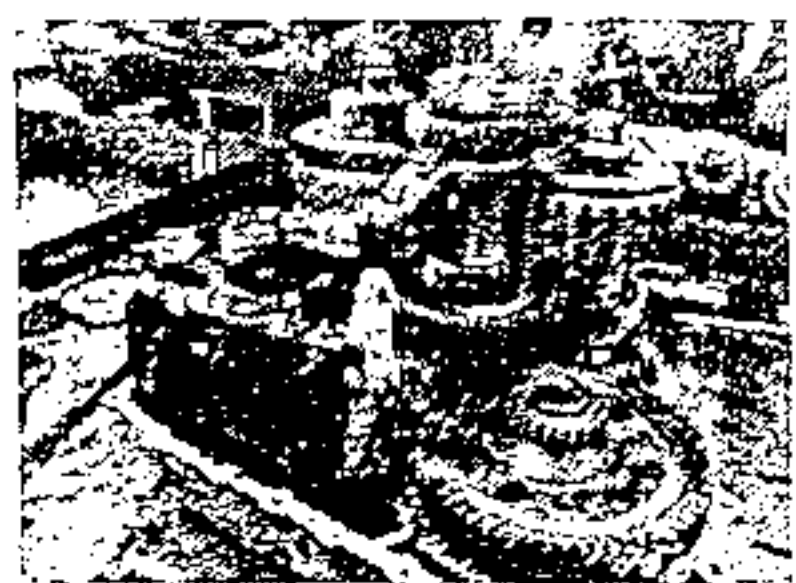
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wanted

Otto Flachbart, 38, Shaw Ferry Road Lenoir City, was charged with Failure to Appear, and Contraband in a Penal Institution. Deputy Kenneth Palmer LCSO, was dispatched to a possible wanted person on Shaw Ferry Road. Deputy did locate a warrant for Failure to

Appear, on Otto Flachbart. Deputy arrived on scene and made contact with Otto and placed him under arrest. Deputy was advised by dispatch that Otto was also wanted out of Texas with a full extradition. Upon arrival at the jail while being search by Deputy Chance Gray LCSO, Deputy did locate a baggie inside

Otto's anus, that had 7 green pills identified as Oxycodone, Otto was charged with contraband. Deputy Kenneth Palmer LCSO, made the arrest.

Whoops I dropped the meth!

Donnita Ward, 41, Ivy Ave Lenoir City, was charged with Simple Possession x2, and Poss. of Drug Para.

According to the

report, Deputy Cody Fritts LCSO, observed a black vehicle traveling on Hwy 70. The vehicle crossed the center line multiple times. Upon stopping the vehicle the driver was identified and the passenger a Donnita Ward. Deputy ask both parties to step out of the vehicle, and as Donnita stepped out a baggie of crystal meth fell out of her shorts on to the ground. Deputy also



Donnita Ward located a green in the front pocket of Donnita shorts, and stated that a syringe was between the passenger seat and the console. Donnita was placed under arrest. Deputy Cody Fritts LCSO, made the arrest.

DUI for Kingston man
Ronald Phillips, 34, Eblen Circle Kingston, was charged with DUI, Violation of Implied Consent, Simple Possession, and Poss. of Drug Para. Officer Bruce Padgett LCPD, observed a red vehicle traveling on Adesa Pkwy with no registration light. Deputy stopped the vehicle on Old Hwy 95@ Northview Drive. Upon making contact with the driver Ronald Phillip, Officer could smell a strong odor of an Alcoholic beverage coming from his person. Ronald did poorly on sobriety test. Ronald was placed under arrest. Officer located a black pipe with a burnt green leafy substnsnce and a white bottle with a green leafy substance believed to be marijuana. Officer Bruce Padgett LCPD, made the arrest.

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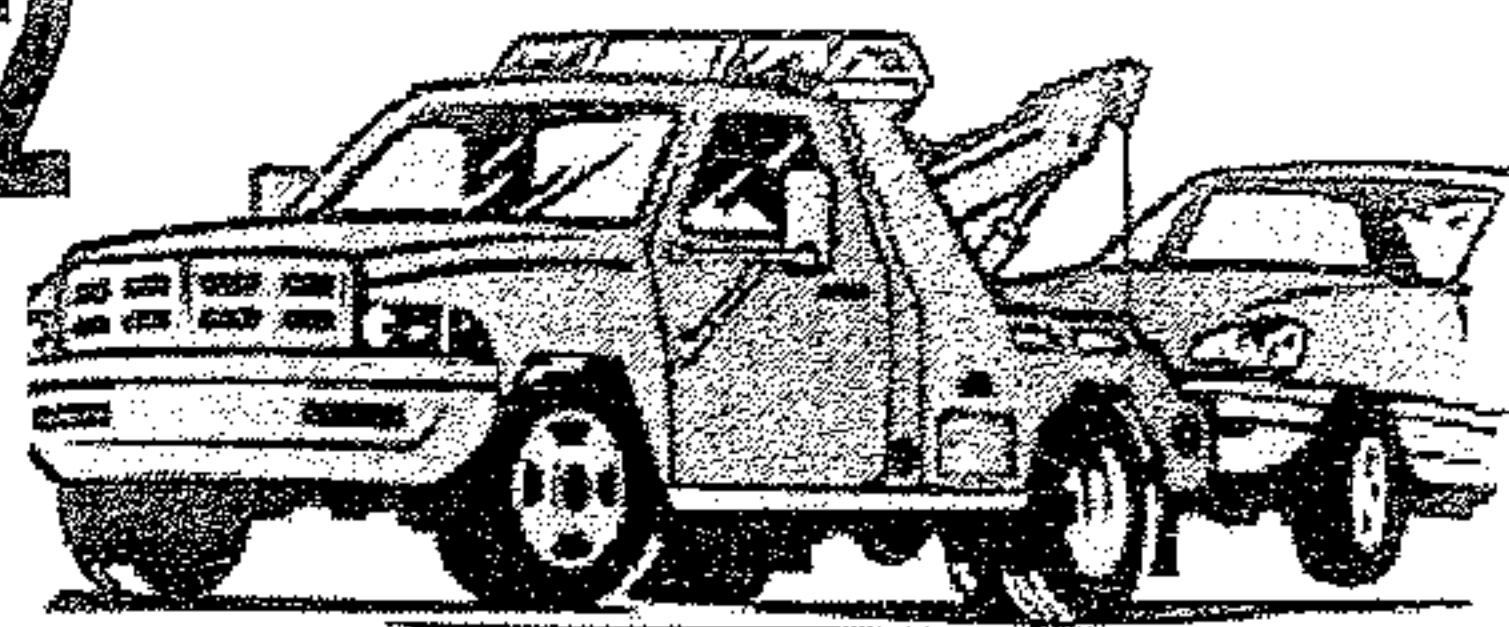
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abuse ctd. from pg. 2
 curtain was photographed and 5 pair of underwear, including the ones the victim described were located in the fathers bedroom. The bathroom door was also discovered not to latch properly allowing access even when locked. During the search for the underwear, items used for making methamphetamine were discovered in plain view as well in drawers and cabinets. Coffee filters, muriatic acid, light bulbs fashioned to smoke methamphetamine, foil, plastic bottles with residue in them were located in the bedroom

and bathroom of the father. The fathers girlfriend Erin Ernest arrived at the scene with her daughter and the victim. Erin stated that she stayed at the residence. Erin stated she had consumed methamphetamine earlier in the day and had taken a Xanax that had been prescribed to her. The father was advised via cell phone to come to the residence but never came to the scene. Warrants were issued for Erin. Deputy Olwin Norman LCSO, made the arrest.

Bristol

and producing.

Investigators determined that Dr. Browder failed to disclose his

conflict of interest to BTES board members when he directed at least \$6.8 million of public funds, including more than \$2.5 million of BTES ratepayer funds, toward the development and production of the switch.

The financial transactions in question included:

• Dr. Browder committed BTES ratepayer funds totaling \$6,491,000 for future purchases from Carina in order to help relieve Carina's financial difficulties.

• Without statutory authority, Dr. Browder made an unauthorized loan of BTES ratepayer funds totaling \$2.2 million to Carina. He then made a series of additional unauthor-

ized loans to Carina totaling over \$287,000, which he did not reveal to the BTES board or the BTES auditors.

• Dr. Browder failed to enforce discounted prices and other financial mandates set forth in the loan agreements with Carina, costing BTES ratepayers over \$1 million.

• Dr. Browder authorized Carina to use switch parts inventory, paid for with BTES ratepayer funds of almost \$500,000, to fill an order for an unrelated utility. BTES has not recovered and has not requested reimbursement for the cost of the parts from Carina.

Dr. Browder owed a duty of loyalty and care to BTES, which

required him to act in good faith and in the best interests of BTES. The transactions outlined in the investigative report do not appear to be in the best interests of BTES, or in the best interests of BTES ratepayers.

These matters have been discussed with the local district attorney general and U.S. Attorney's Office.

To view the special investigation online, go to: <http://www.comptroller.tn.gov/ia/>

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