

The Daily Edition

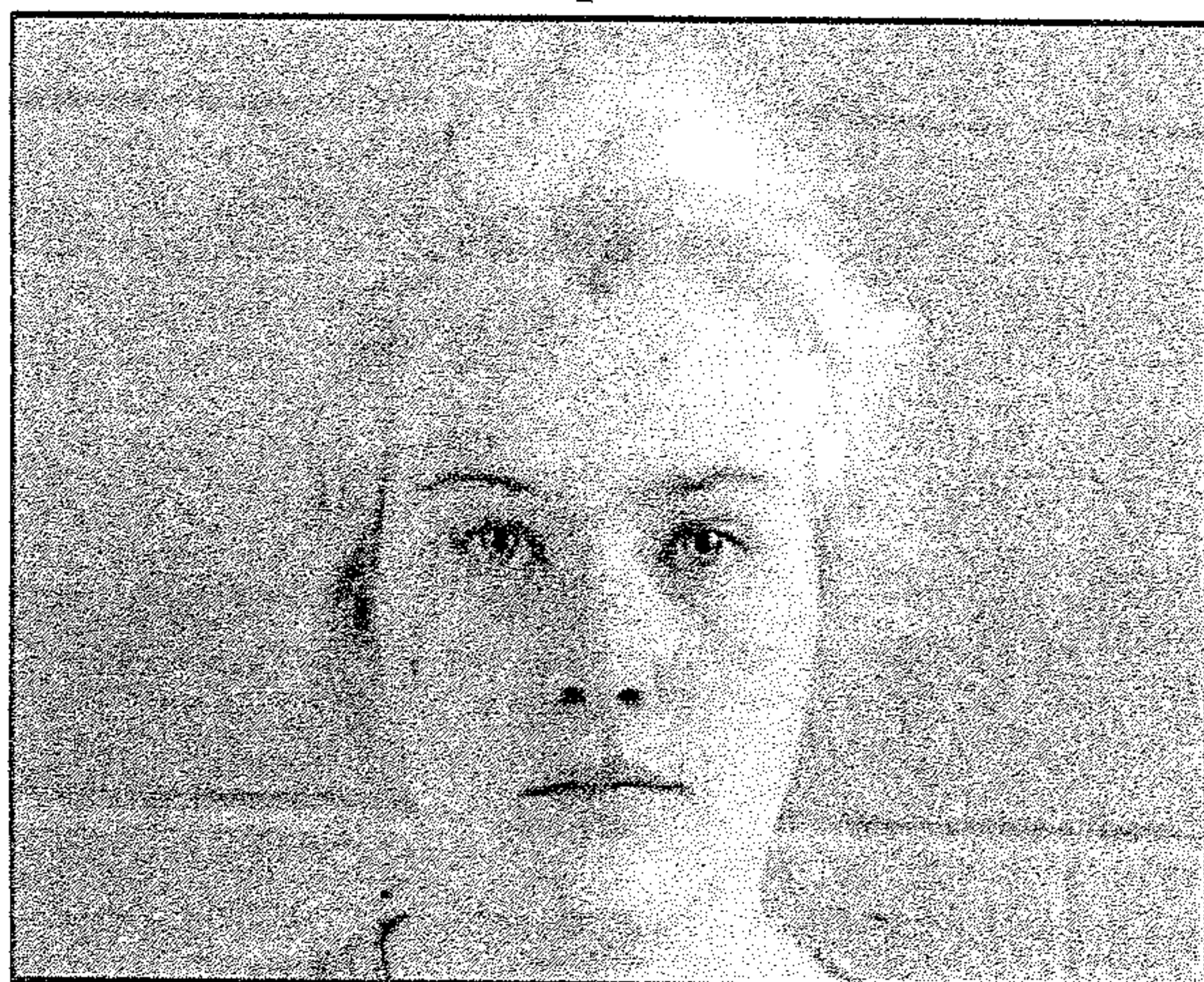
50¢

Serving Loudon, Monroe and Surrounding Counties

Wednesday, March 22, 2017

Needles, spoon found on passenger in LCPD traffic stop

Diedra Hammons, 24, Robinson Road Loudon, was charged with Criminal Impersonation, and Possession of Drug Para. Officer Keith Sennett LCPD, made a traffic stop on a vehicle with expired registration, in which Deidra Hammons was the passenger. During the stop K-9 Dagger



(see paraphernalia pg. 2) Diedra Hammons

Reckless driver call ends with bust for marijuana



Alfredo Espinoza

see reckless pg. 7

Craigslist Robbers

California-Based Thieves Targeted Big-Money Items and Sellers

For the high-end jewelry sellers on the popular online classifieds site Craigslist, it must have seemed like their ship had come in: A prospective buyer in California offered not only their asking price but would fly them into town and have a limo waiting.

"The individual would think they were going to the jewelry

store to meet with the actual buyer," said Special Agent Darin Heideman, who works out of the Oakland Resident Agency of the FBI's San Francisco Division, "when in fact, a co-conspirator would take them to a predetermined location, assault them, and then basically rob them

see Craigslist pg. 3

Diabetic states he didn't drink after leaving Cotton Eyed Joe



Zachery Stroup

(see DUI pg. 4)

Join Dr. Rebecca Klenk for a discussion of *Bad Feminist: Essays* by Roxane Gay at the next Books Sandwiched In

Described as "provocative, gut wrenching and hilarious," *Bad Feminist* tackles some timely issues

Knox County Public Library invites the public to join Dr. Rebecca Klenk for a discussion of *Bad Feminist: Essays* by Roxane Gay at 12 p.m. on Wednesday, March 29 in the East Tennessee History Center auditorium. A light lunch will be available

see library pg. 7

Verse of the Day

Do not fret because of evil men or be envious of those who do wrong; for like the grass they will soon wither, like green plants they will soon die away. — Psalm 37:1-2

Obituaries

see inside **Wazzup**

Hope everyone is enjoying the time off this week. It's sure been great weather!

Weather

Today: Except for a few afternoon clouds,

mainly sunny. High 59F.

Tonight: A few clouds. Low 37F.

Thursday Partly cloudy. High 64F.

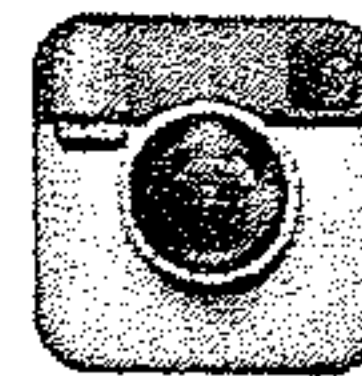
Thursday Night Considerable clouds ear-

ly. Some decrease in clouds late. Low 46F.

Horoscopes

Aries 3/21-4/19

There are plenty of things you wish you could express with your trademark frankness, but you are aware of (Continued on page 6)



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Paraphernalia

was deployed and gave positive hit . During the search a bag with needles, and spoon was located. A container with marijuana was located as well.

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The Daily Edition also serves Monroe, Knox, Anderson, Roane and Blount counties and serves 30,000 readers weekly. Send mail to PO Box 1240, Lenoir City TN 37771. 865-771-2249. email: dan1204us@yahoo.com

The Daily Edition is Loudon County's premier public interest and paid advertising paper. The Daily Edition is produced and published daily Monday through Friday and is circulated throughout Loudon County and parts of Monroe and Knox Counties. Display advertising rates \$5.00 per column inch and quantity discounts available. Call for information on upcoming promotions and events.

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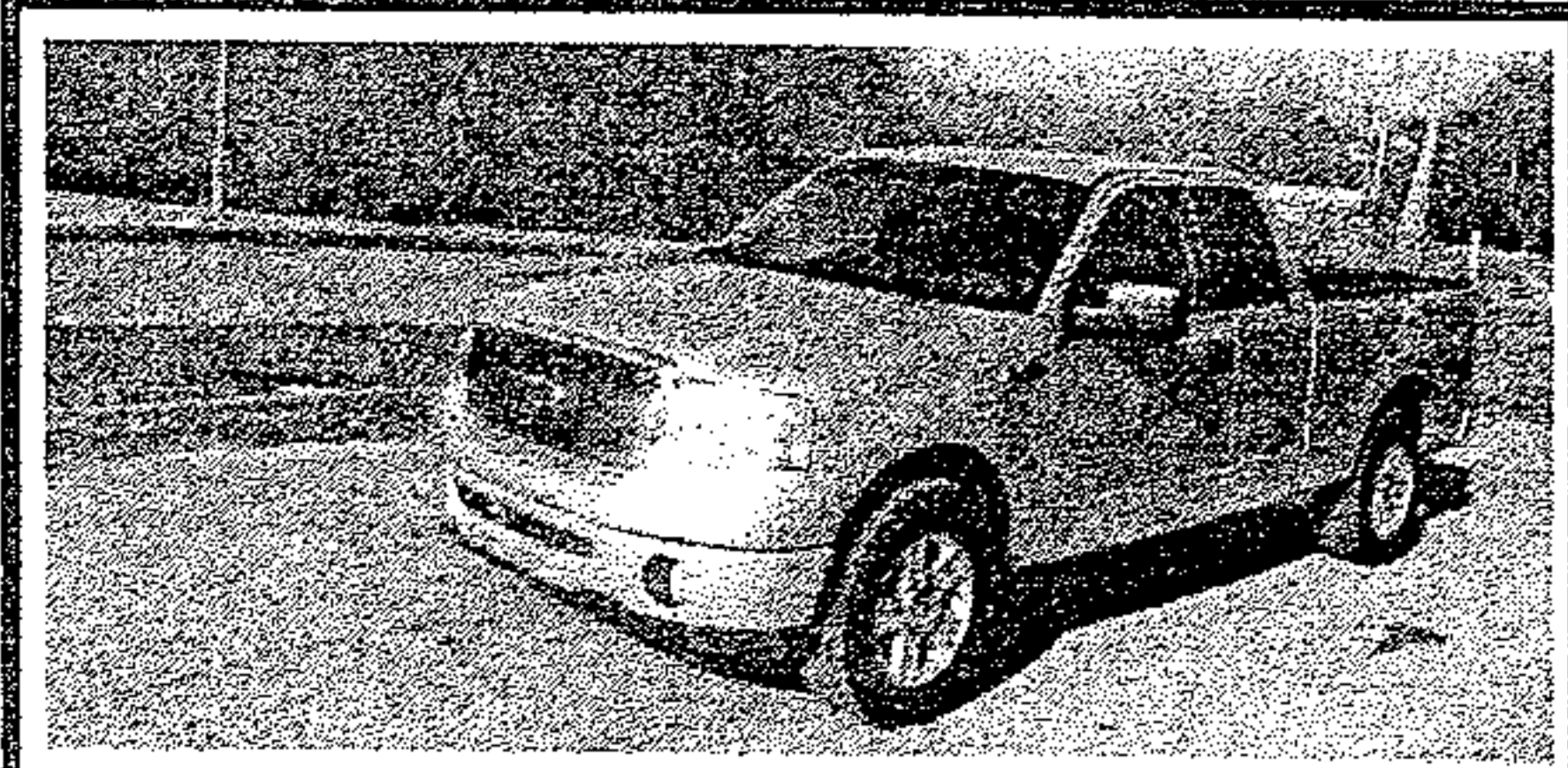
2005 Toyota Highlander 4x4, 99k, Leather, V6, Auto, PS, Sunroof, 3rd Row Seat,



2009 Jeep Liberty Chrome pkg, 52k, PW, PL, V6, Tow pkg, Luggage Rack



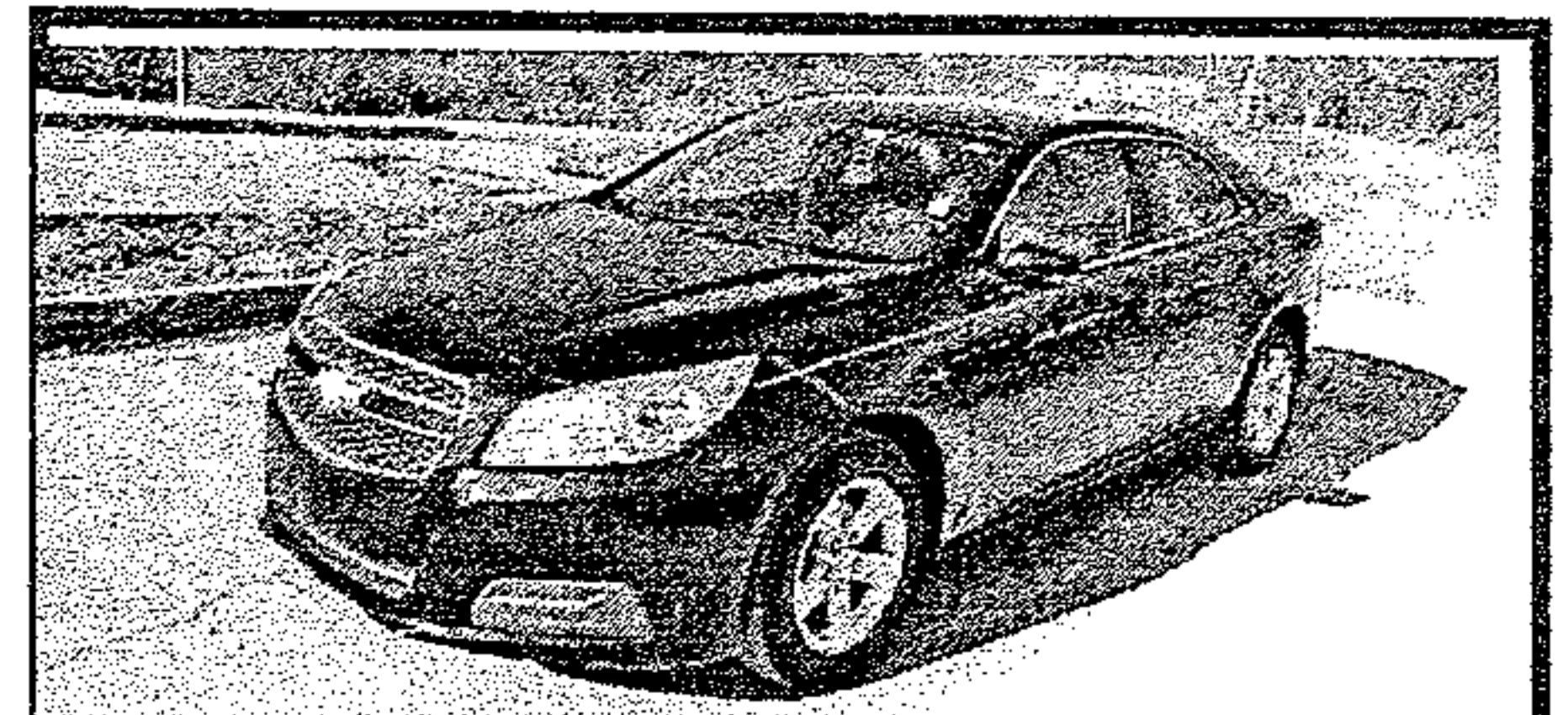
2013 Nissan Altima Remote Start, PW, PL, Auto, 2.5, Only 96k



2008 Ford F150 93k, EXT Cab, V8, Auto, Tow PKG, Bed Liner, Like New, PW, PL, A/C



2007 Chevy Tahoe NAV, Leather, PW, PL, PS, Tow pkg, Pwr 2nd Row, 3rd Row



2013 Chevy Malibu Alloy Wheels, Low Miles, Leather, Cruise, PW, PL, 37 MPG!

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Craigslist

of all their items.”

The crew of robbers, based in the San Francisco Bay Area, is estimated to have stolen more than \$500,000 in jewelry from victims who traveled from more than six states between November 2012 and December 2013. Five men were charged in 2014 in connection with

the violent robberies during which, among other items, a \$90,000 Cartier watch, a \$14,000 Rolex watch, and a \$19,000 engagement ring were stolen. The last member of the crew to be sentenced, Michael Anthony Martin, 42, of Tracy, California, was handed a term last December of 30 years in prison.

see CL ctd. pg. 4



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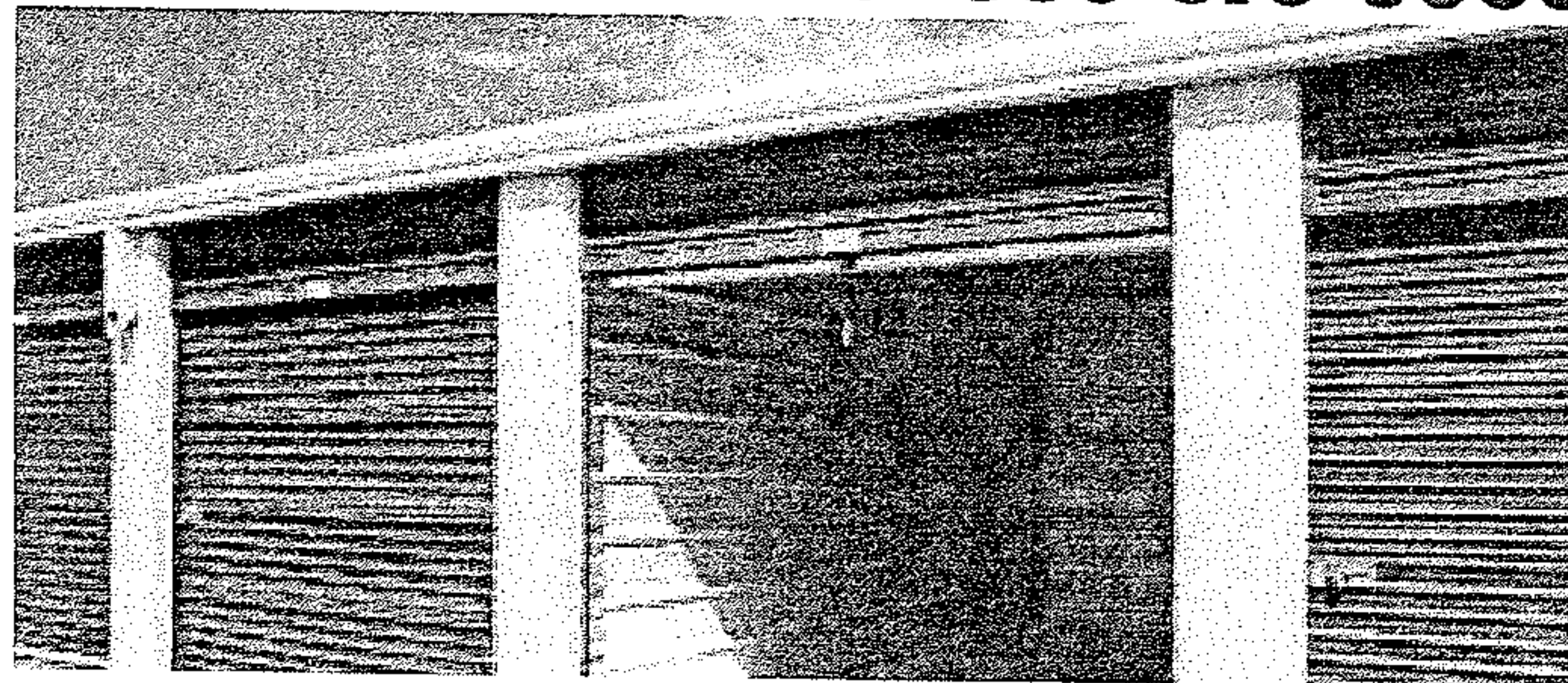
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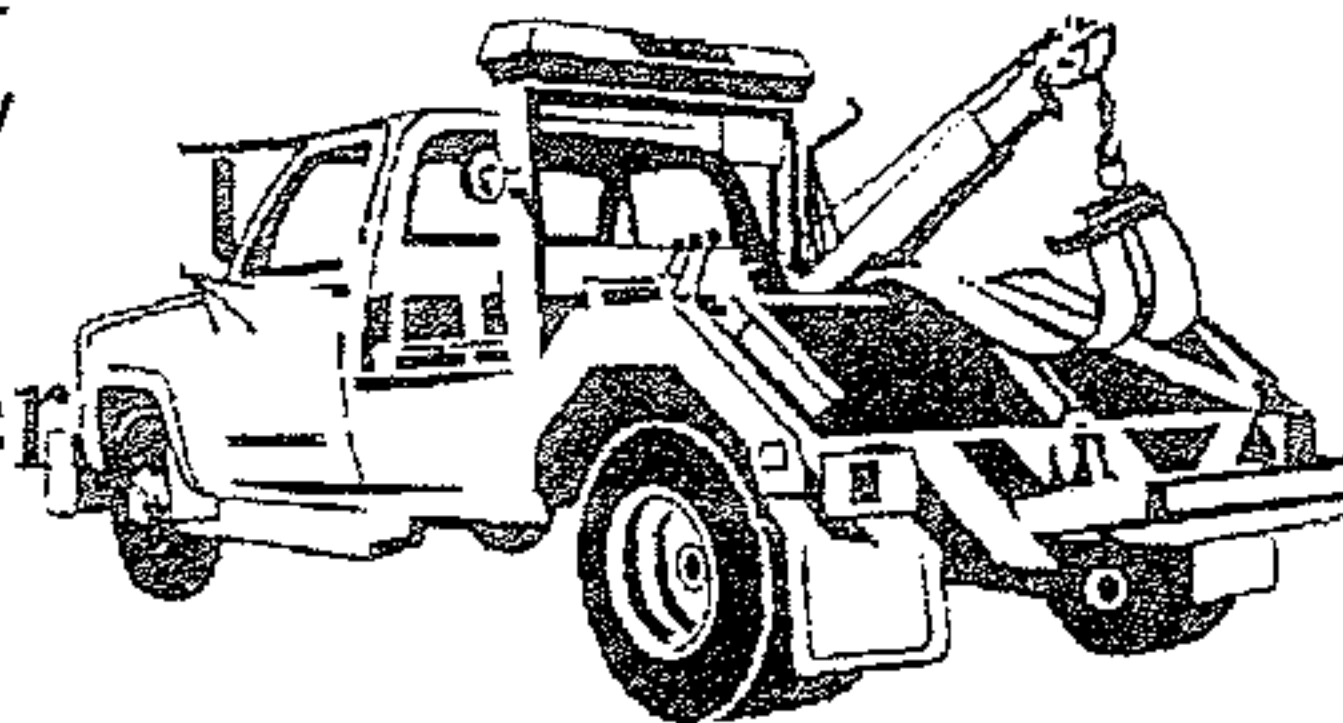
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DUI

Zachery Stroup, 22, Dixon Road Lenoir City, was charged with DUI. Deputy Kevin Dailey LCSO, initiated a traffic stop at Martel and Foster Road on a black vehicle after observing it driving in the opposite lane of travel.

After traffic stop Deputy came in contact with the driver Zachery Stroup, who had an odor of alcoholic beverage coming from the vehicle. Deputy ask Stroup to exit the vehicle, Stroup was unsteady on his feet, with an alcoholic beverage still about his person.

Stoup stated he had not drunk anything after coming from Cotton Eye Joe's. Stroup began to state he was a diabetic and may need EMS. Ems was contacted while waiting on EMS

Deputy conducted field sobriety test. EMS checked Stroup BSL on scene it registered 226 which is high EMS also stated alcohol can have an effect

of raising blood sugar in a diabetic. Stroup was taken to the hospital where he was treated and released. Stroup did give blood while at the hospital. Stroup was placed under arrest.

CL ctd. from pg. 3

The case illustrates how the FBI and police work together on cases that may at first appear to be local or isolated, but on closer investigation can span multiple jurisdictions. In this case, a Bay

Area detective's efforts to solve a "snatch-and-grab" robbery at a Fremont, California coffee shop ultimately led him to more than 20 similar robberies of victims from as far away as Wisconsin and Florida. Fremont Police Department Det. Michael Gebhardt's legwork also uncovered the scheme's mastermind: a prison inmate who personally called Craigslist targets—purporting to be a successful record producer—and assigned his co-conspirators to carry out the plans.

"It's definitely a tale of something that started small and just mushroomed into this massive investigation," said Gebhardt.

It all started in 2012 with the brazen robbery of a Bay Area man who

was selling his watch. The seller and the purported buyer, both local, arranged to meet in Fremont in a public place—a coffee shop. "As they are talking, the potential buyer just grabs the Rolex and takes off running," Gebhardt said.

"It's definitely a tale of something that started small and just mushroomed into this massive investigation."

Det. Michael Gebhardt, Fremont (California) Police Department

Video surveillance and

see CL ctd. pg. 5

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meth ctd. from pg. 3

the so-called buyer's cell phone number turned up an identity that police were able to link to two more robberies in Bay Area cities. In each case, the victims were selling Rolex watches and the prospective buyers grabbed the goods and ran. "The M.O. [modus operandi] is the same," Gebhardt recalled thinking. "He's targeting people on Craigslist for Rolexes."

Two months later, the detective received word that police in Oakland were investigating five similar robberies, including one they witnessed firsthand during a separate investigation. Oakland police officers arrested three men, who it turned out were associates of the watch thief Gebhardt was investigating for the 2012 coffee shop heist. With some digging, Gebhardt learned his subject was taking directions from his father, an inmate at the California Men's

Colony state prison. The father was using a number of relatives, including his son and a cousin in Texas, to lure prospective Craigslist sellers with flights and limos and then have co-conspirators rob them once they were captive.

The ring depicted in this image on a mobile is believed to have been stolen by robbers who used Craigslist to find victims.

This ring, shown in an image on a mobile phone belonging to a member of the robbery crew, is believed to be one of the stolen items in the Craigslist robberies.

For the sellers, it might have seemed a safe bet when prospective buyers offered plane tickets and limos. "That's exactly what they want," said FBI Special Agent Paul Healy, who also worked the case out of Oakland. "They're being told everything's being taken care of."

Heideman said it was a relatively small invest-

ment for the robbers. "You have to think—what does a plane ticket cost? Probably \$400 to \$500. A limo is going to cost a couple hundred bucks," he said. "If you're traveling with a \$30,000 diamond, that's just a drop in the bucket to what they are going to steal. They were able to build these personas and build trust where there should not have been trust."

Gebhardt learned of a Wisconsin woman who flew to St. Louis to sell the \$19,000 diamond ring she had listed on Craigslist but ended up getting robbed instead. When Gebhardt saw a picture of the suspect, he recognized it was the same guy he'd been trying to run down—the son of the prison inmate. Still other cases—from Florida, Oregon, and Colorado—started to point back to the same prime suspects and associates.

"So we needed one big agency to basically be able to charge this

thing," Gebhardt said. The detective called the FBI, and agents from the Oakland Resident Agency helped set up a sting. They posted an ad on Craigslist hoping to attract the attention of the robbery crew's leader in prison. And it worked.

"He calls me from prison and we set up a deal to sell my Rolex to him," Gebhardt said. "I would be flying in from Texas to the Oakland airport. He would have a driver pick me up."

As that plan was coming to fruition, the FBI discovered that another Craigslist seller from Los Angeles was to arrive—with his Rolex—in Oakland on the same day.

"Obviously we couldn't let him get robbed, but we also didn't want to tip him off because we didn't want him to call the guy that was going to rob him," said Heideman. So the investigators posed as Craigslist buyers, contacted the seller in L.A.,

and outbid the robbery crew. They met him in a bank parking lot in Oakland. "We basically pulled him aside and said, 'Here's what you were about to walk into,'" Gebhardt said. "He was obviously relieved."

"They were able to build these personas and build trust where there should not have been trust." -Special Agent Darin Heideman, FBI Oakland Resident Agency

Meanwhile, on the same day of the sting in Oakland—December 16, 2013—two other simultaneous operations took down the robbery crew's mastermind in prison and arrested his son, who was in hiding in Alabama.

The arrests led to federal indictments in 2014 against five defendants who have since received sentences ranging from 41 months to 30 years. The father, who cooperated with investigators, was given an addition

CL conc. pg. 7



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Reckless

Alfredo Espinoza, 23, Valley Vista Loudon, was charged with Simple Possession, and Poss. of Drug Para. Officer Jonathan Yates LPD, while on routine patrol, received a call of a reckless driver on Hwy 11 approaching the fountain. The complainant advised the vehicle

was a silver Chevy all over the road. Officer fell in behind both vehicles and observed the silver vehicle lose control around High Street while traveling at a high rate of speed. Officer followed the vehicle and was able to catch up with it at Valley Vista where the driver lives. Officer watch Espinoza as he fell out of the vehicle

as Officer approached him. Espinoza was nervous and attempted to hide something. Officer detected an odor of marijuana emitting from the vehicle, and was given consent to search. Officer located approx. 22 grams of a green leafy substance believed to be marijuana and a set of scales used for weighing drugs. Espinoza was placed under arrest.

offers tips on personal safety when meeting someone for the first time. The site states, "With billions of human interactions, the incidence of violent crime related to craigslist is extremely low."

Among the personal safety tips:

Insist on a public meeting place like a cafe, bank, or shopping center.

Do not meet in a secluded place or invite strangers into your home.

Be especially careful buying/selling high-value items.

Tell a friend or family member where you're going.

Take your cell phone along if you have one.

Consider having a friend accompany you.

Trust your instincts.

Meanwhile, some jurisdictions have moved to create "Safe Lots" for exchanging items from online classifieds. Det. Gebhardt says his department suggests on social media that if people are going to meet, they

should meet in their local police department's parking lot.

Library

for the first 30 attendees.

This program is the third in the Books Sandwiched In series' focus on diversity, in partnership with UT's College of Arts and Sciences. Books Sandwiched In is sponsored by the Friends of Knox County Public Library.

"Provocative, gut wrenching and hilarious, Roxane Gay's Bad Feminist is a strikingly insightful collection of essays on life and popular culture for our times, Klenk said. "Engaging everything from The Hunger Games to rape culture to competitive scrabble to her favorite color (pink) to trigger warnings with verve and razor sharp wit, Gay blends intimate personal narrative and astute cul-

tural analysis into a powerful statement on the relevance of feminism."

Public Notice

The Lenoir City Beer Board will meet, March 23, 2017 at 6:30 p.m. in the Lenoir City Hall Council Chambers located at 530 Hwy 321 N., to consider issuing an Off-Premises beer license application for the following business:
Aldi, Inc (Tennessee)
725 Highway 321 North
Lenoir City, TN 37771

CL conc. from pg. 5

seven years in prison for his role.

Looking back, the robbery crew was so prolific and violent they had no choice but to expand beyond their local area, agents said. Even limo drivers stopped working with them. "They would literally wear out a jurisdiction," said Healy. "So they would go 40 miles away—or 400 miles away—to another town to do it."

Tips for Staying Safe
The Craigslist website

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