



MORGAN COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE



SHERIFF GREG BARTLETT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Month Long Investigation Solved

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Sheriff Greg Bartlett reports that a shopping trip to Wal-Mart by one of his off-duty investigators and his wife led to a break in a month-long investigation into a sophisticated check-forging scheme.

The Sheriff's C.I.D. received a report on August 8, 2009 indicating that the Northeast Morgan County Water Authority (NEMCWA), located on Highway 67 South in the Somerville community, had several checks cashed through their account that they had not disbursed. These checks were cashed at local businesses in Hartselle and Decatur. Investigators determined that these were computer generated checks that had false business names and address as the account holders, but contained the account number of the NEMCWA. These checks initially totaled over \$1,500. This turned out to be the tip of the iceberg.

Numerous reports from residents in the Somerville and Lacey's Spring area soon showed that a large number of these checks, all "home-grown", and containing account numbers from a large group of unsuspecting citizens, were being passed all over the Tennessee Valley. Investigators even found checks cashed in Tennessee and Georgia containing local citizens account numbers on fraudulently printed checks. The total of the amount of these fraudulent checks is around \$10,000.

Investigators also discovered that the perpetrators of these offenses were manufacturing false Alabama Driver Licenses and Identification Cards to assist them in passing these checks.

Yesterday, BRITNEY CAROL SLOAN, 23, of Somerville was charged with two counts of Possession of a Forged Instrument in the 2nd Degree in connection with this investigation. She had been transferred to the Morgan County Jail on a Probation Violation prior to being charged with these offenses. Other charges are expected to be filed.

A warrant was also obtained for DENISE ELLSWORTH YOUNG, 40, of Somerville. Her whereabouts were unknown, and the warrant was entered into the State and National Computer Systems until she could be located.

Last night, the lead investigator on this case accompanied his wife to Wal-Mart in Hartselle to pick up a few odds and ends. As they were checking out, it was noticed that one of their items did not have a UPC code. The investigators wife ran to get an item that could be scanned. While the investigator waited at the check-out, a lady got in line behind him and started a conversation with him. The investigator realized that this was his suspect, DENISE ELLSWORTH YOUNG, and that she had a check in her had identical to a forged check he had picked up that afternoon in Eva. The

investigator displayed his credentials to the suspect and asked to see the check in her hand. She said “No!”, jerked away and ran. The investigator gave chase, shouting for someone to stop that woman. An unidentified member of the U.S. Army, who was in uniform, bumped the woman into a wall, and the investigator got her down and held her on the ground. His wife, hearing the commotion, assisted in controlling the suspect until Hartselle P.D. and Sheriff’s Deputies could arrive. The suspect continued to struggle the whole time, and in fact had to be tasered by Hartselle Officers to bring her under control. The investigator recovered over a dozen forged checks in her possession, along with a forged Alabama Driver License, which had the suspect’s picture but a different name, and name matching that of several of the checks in her possession.

Sloan was charged with an additional count of Possession of a Forged Instrument 2nd Degree and resisting Arrest, along with the outstanding warrant. Further charges are expected to be filed today. Her bond will be set by a judge.

Investigators have at least one other suspect and several persons of interest remaining in this case. Other arrests are expected.

Sheriff Bartlett would also like the serviceman who assisted his investigator to contact the Sheriff’s Office so that he could be officially recognized for his service.

About Morgan County Sheriff's Office

The Morgan County, Alabama Sheriff's Office is headed up by Sheriff Greg Bartlett. Sheriff Bartlett is committed to keeping communities and neighborhoods safe in Morgan County.

For additional information or a sample copy, contact:

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