

WASHINGTON COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Sheriff Fred Newman

MEDIA RELEASE

FOR RELEASE: December 29, 2010

For More Information: Sheriff Fred Newman Washington County, Virginia Sheriff's Office 20281 Rustic Lane Abingdon, VA 24210

A Lebanon, Virginia man and his girlfriend have been charged with approximately 100 felonies as a result of an investigation involving numerous agencies in the area. These charges include grand larcenies, larceny with the intent to sell or distribute and conspiracy to commit grand larceny.

Sheriff Fred Newman identified the individuals charged as James Edward Eskridge, age 31, and Jessica Lynn Lampkins, age29, both giving an address of 1125 Cross Road, Lebanon, Virginia. "These individuals were responsible for removing numerous catalytic converters from approximately 50 vehicles parked at new and used car lots, parking area, garages, work sites and selling them to salvage yards in this and surrounding counties. These businesses are located in the tri-state area. The first report of these incidents connected to the two individuals were reported in September 2010," said Sheriff Newman.

Information was received from Damascus Police Department, that the two individuals were responsible for cutting the catalytic converters from vehicles and a description of the vehicle that they were operating. The surrounding agencies were notified of this information and as a result, the Glade Springs Police Department observed the vehicle and made a traffic stop. A cutting tool was found in the vehicle which is believed to be used to cut the converters off of the exhaust line of new and used vehicles. "Without the mutual cooperation and quick response of all the agencies involved, several more vehicles would have

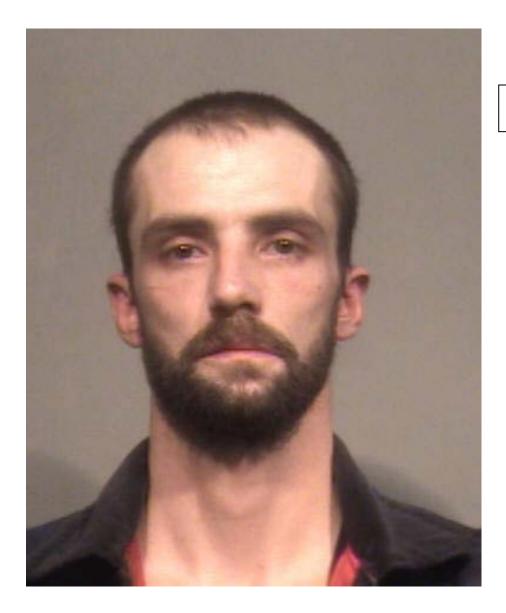
been damaged. To replace a catalytic converter on a vehicle will cost several hundred dollars, as well as, the lost of the use of the vehicle for a considerable time", said Sheriff Newman.

At this time, the following agencies have issued warrants for Eskridge and Lampkins. This includes Russell County Sheriff's Office, Smyth County Sheriff's Office, Abingdon Police Department, Marion Police Department, Lebanon Police Department, Johnson County Sheriff's Office, Mountain City, Tennessee, Kingsport Police Department, Kingsport, Tennessee and Boone Police Department, Boone, North Carolina.

An individual convicted of grand larceny can be punished by imprisonment in a state correctional facility for not less than one nor more than twenty years. Any person convicted of larceny with intent to sell is punishable by confinement in a state correctional facility for not less than two years nor more than twenty years.

Both are being held in the Southwest Virginia Regional Jail without bond. Preliminary hearing will be held in the Washington County General District Court.

Lieutenant D. B. Ashbrook and Detective M. E. Martin are the lead officers handling the investigations occurring in Washington County.



James Edward Eskridge



Jessica Lynn Lampkins