

MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

November 6, 2009

Additional Check Forgery Arrests

Sheriff Jimmy Harris states as follows:

On the afternoon of November 2, Sheriff's Office authorities were informed by a bank official in Sylvania of two individuals who were suspected of attempting to pass forged payroll checks from a local business. While making efforts to confirm the checks' validity, bank officials determined that the account was being improperly attached.

No confrontation took place inside the bank, as the two individuals left quickly while the checks were being confirmed. Deputies and Sylvania Police Department Officers arrived shortly after the two individuals exited the bank, and they were detained a short distance away.

Investigation determined that the checks were counterfeit and had been brought into DeKalb County in an attempt to cash them. It was further determined that the two individuals, identified as Joseph Harrison Tanksley, 39, of Riverdale, GA, and Rodney Maurice Bowen, 41, of Atlanta, were brought here early Monday from Atlanta. The two men have reportedly been arrested for similar crimes in Georgia. The investigation, continued in conjunction with the U.S. Secret Service and Georgia authorities, resulted in both men being charged with Possession of a Forged Instrument 2nd Degree.

The value of the checks presented on Monday was \$8,090.48. To date, DeKalb County Investigators have recovered forged checks totaling in excess of \$33,000.00. Approximately \$17,000 worth of those checks have actually been cashed. Six individuals have been arrested and four additional suspects have been identified in this investigation.

Sylvania bank officials acted promptly in protecting their customer by contacting the account holder to confirm the checks' validity. We ask that all financial institutions continue to be diligent, and that customers be patient with any increased scrutiny in banking procedures. We hope that by being watchful in this manner, the banks in our area will continue to be able to protect their customers and themselves from this kind of fraudulent activity.



