

MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

July 17, 2009

Sheriff Jimmy Harris reports that an investigation into missing medication in the detention center has resulted in the arrest of a former corrections officer on charges of 3 counts Theft of Property 2nd and 13 counts Theft of Property 3rd. Chief Jail Administrator Tony Durham made investigators aware of a problem in the jail concerning inmate medications being missing. Chief Durham and his staff pursued several avenues in an attempt to isolate and correct the problem. Surveillance technologies were utilized to make a positive determination on the suspect. As soon as sufficient evidence was developed to make an arrest, investigators brought the suspect in for questioning. Charges have been filed and the suspect, Jennifer Rhodes Johnson, 31, of Fort Payne, was arrested yesterday afternoon without incident. She was released several hours later on \$61,500 bond.

Control measures within the jail were successful in alerting the staff to this problem. It is unfortunate that a staff member was the perpetrator. Sheriff Harris said, "We are deeply saddened by this act and feel hurt that it was one of our own people. We hope this incident will serve as a deterrent to any future acts of this nature because we will not tolerate this behavior. People in all walks of life have problems, and while we will make every attempt to get people the help they need, we will not allow this type of activity. We ask for and expect a higher standard of conduct because we must set an example for the people we work for. While this is an embarrassment to our office, it should also be noted that we will not hide or cover up such activity. We are working hard to gain and keep the public trust so we hope that people will see that we are serious about our zero tolerance policy on drugs."

