

MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

March 31, 2009

Harmony Grove Church Fire

Sheriff Jimmy Harris states as follows:

At 11:18 a.m., the Sheriff's Office was contacted regarding a call to 911 that had come from a concerned citizen. The citizen had met a Honda vehicle driving erratically, as it pulled from the Harmony Grove Church parking lot on County Road 239 in Valley Head. The church was on fire. The citizen called DeKalb 911, who contacted the Sheriff's Office. DCSO put the call out to Valley Head, Hammondville, Mentone Police Departments and the Sheriff's Office.

Hammondville, Mentone, and Valley Head Police Departments, including Officers Jeremy Bell and Cecil Cox, responded quickly and pulled over the Honda. Seth Patrick Wilburn, 18, of Fort Payne, and a 17-year-old female juvenile, the occupants of the vehicle, were detained and later taken into custody when Deputies and Investigators arrived on the scene.

Commander Wade Hill is on the scene at the time of this writing, and Deputy State Fire Marshal Ray Crumby has been contacted. Sheriff's Investigator Mary Waters is working the case as well. Charges against the suspects are pending at this time, and are likely to be Burglary, Theft, and Arson.

This is yet another example of how information from the public can make a difference. A concerned citizen contacted authorities, enabling law enforcement to respond quickly to the situation before it became more dangerous.

