

The Daily Edition

50¢

Serving Loudon, Monroe and Surrounding Counties

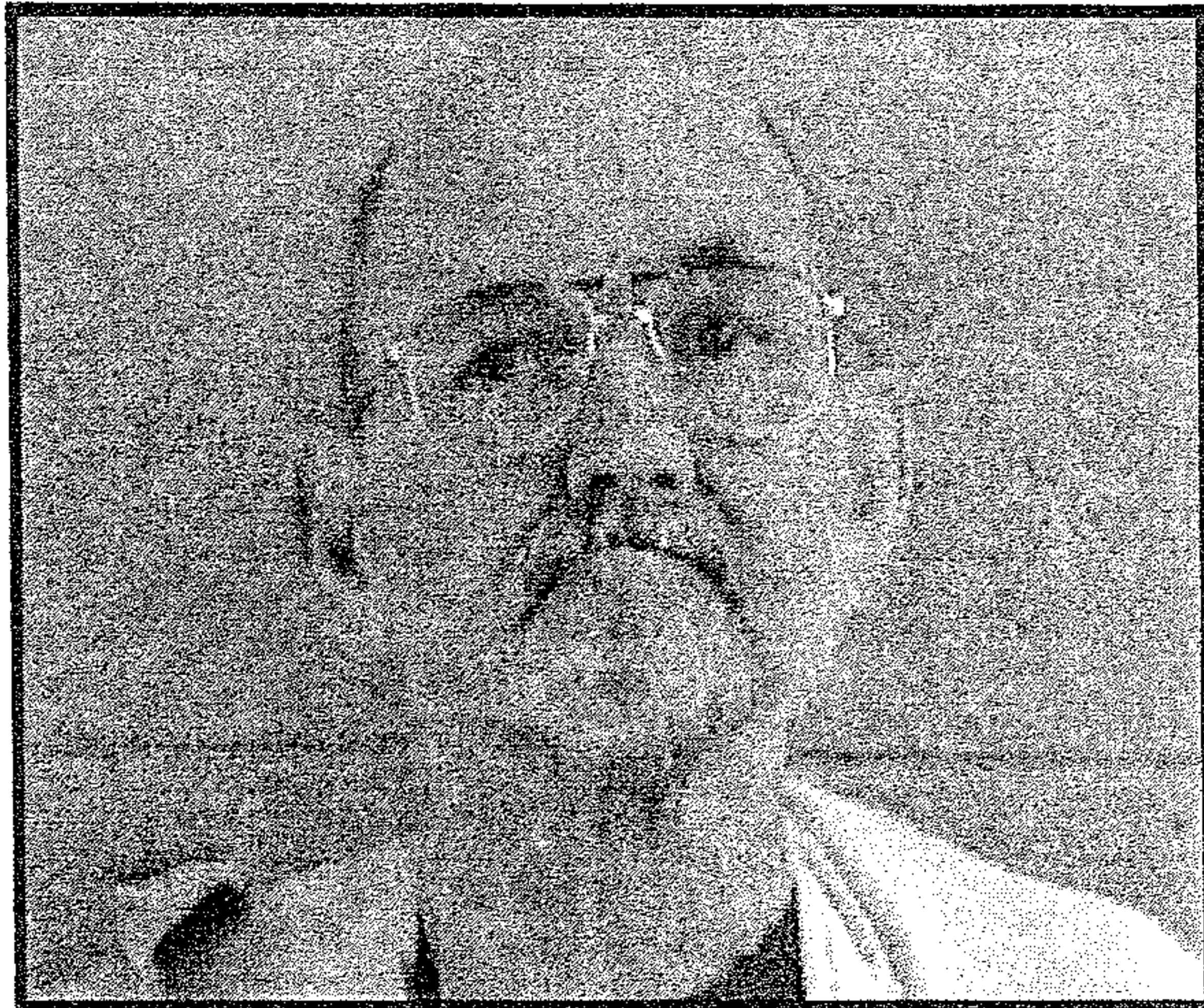
Monday, November 2, 2015

Burglary and theft of property reported

Deputy Chris Bowen LCSO, responded to Steekee Road to a burglary and theft from a barn. Upon arrival Deputy came in contact with the victim who stated he left to go out of town and returned to the barn and discovered someone had made entry to the barn and taken items. The items taken 10 Makita circular saw, 1

(see offense pg. 3)

Trespasser charged in philly is sex offender



Billy Walker

(see charged pg. 2)

Financial Fraud

Inside the Investigation of a Las Vegas Construction Boss

When a federal judge sentenced former Las Vegas construction boss Leon Benzer to nearly 16 years in prison in August, it marked a final chapter in a \$58 million fraud scheme that took investigators nearly a decade to unravel.

Over a period of many years, Benzer brazenly sought to gain control of numerous condominium homeowners associations

(HOAs) in the Las Vegas area to secure lucrative construction and other contracts for himself and additional conspirators. To date, 44 individuals, including numerous state officials, have been convicted of crimes in connection with the fraud—which has been described as one of the largest public corruption cases in Nevada history.

“This case repre-

(see FBI pg. 5)

Delivery van maker sets up shop in Loudon, bringing up to 500 jobs

Governor Bill Haslam along with local officials joined executives and customers of delivery van maker Morgan Olson LLC Thursday to celebrate the opening of a new manufacturing facility in Loudon.

The opening of the facility in Loudon -- expected to create 400 jobs initially and 500 or more over the next

few years -- is evidence Tennessee is able to attract the most-advanced manufacturing companies, Haslam said.

Morgan Olson could go a lot of places, he said. Having the right workforce, especially an educated one, will continue to make the difference in recruiting such companies to the state, he said.

Haslam praised the company for having the desire to invest in the facility.

Company executives agreed that Loudon was the ideal location for several reasons, including the geographic proximity to key suppliers and highway infrastructure.

The new facility will feature the most-efficient manufacturing

(see jobs pg. 7)

Guns and money stolen in aggravated burglary

Deputy Jeremy Garland LCSO, was dispatched to Dailey Ave in reference to a burglary. Upon arrival Deputy made contact with the victim, who stated to Deputy that his family went to Knoxville around 18:30 and returned around 00:45 to find their home had been broken into. Victim stated the only thing

missing was an aluminum safe that was in his room. Victim advised Deputy that the safe contained 3 firearms, a tablet, camera, a bag filled with coins, and \$3400 in cash. Victim does own a large pit bull, which was inside the home at the time of the invasion. Victim stated who ever broke in had to be familiar with the dog or it

(see burglary pg. 4)

Verse of the Day

Woe to those who go to great depths to hide their plans from the LORD, who do their work in darkness and think, “Who sees us? Who will know?” — Isaiah 29:15

Obituaries

see inside **Wazzup**

A Big Shout Out To Master Donuts, it's hard to just eat only one so ya better go ahead and make it a dozen, thanks!

Weather

Today: A steady rain in the morning. Showers continuing in the afternoon. High 69F.
Tonight: A few clouds. Low around 55F.
Tuesday Sunshine and clouds mixed. High 74F.

Tuesday Night Partly cloudy skies. Low near 55F.

Horoscopes

Scorpio 10/23-11/21

You may be obsessing about issues of integrity today, yet the current cir-

(Continued on page 6)



charged

Billy Walker, 63, Homeless, was charged with Criminal Trespass. Deputy Ronnie Reagan LCSO, was dispatched to Nelson Street Philadelphia to an unwanted person at this residence.

The complainant told dispatch that the white male identified as Billy Walker is

a sex offender and was not wanted there and has been told that.

Cpl. Branam had also warned Billy not to be back on the property. Billy stated that he was homeless and was living under a bridge in Knoxville. Billy was taken into custody.

Deputy Ronnie Reagan LCSO, made the arrest.

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2010 Ford Escape Limited Leather, Alloy Wheels, Heat, A/C, Luggage Rack, 79K,



2007 Dodge Ram 1500 Quad Cab, Thunder Road PKG, 20 in. Wheels, Low Miles, Hemi



2008 Ford Explorer 84k, 3rd Row Seating, Luggage Rack, Tow Pkg, PW, PL



2011 Ford Ranger Low Miles, Tow Pkg, New Tires, A/C, Heat, Bed Liner.



2011 Dodge Grand Caravan DVD, Stow & Go, Loaded, Remote Doors, Rear A/C

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offense

1/2 hp router, 3x24 portable belt sander, router and table, 16 in circular saw, 12 in radial arm mitre saw, schumaker battery charger, skil circular saw, extension cords, older aluminum craftman power tools, and there was an attempt to take a large planter, that was pulled to the door but was to heavy to load and left. The suspect made an attempt to re-secure the door by placing a shorter bolt through the hasp than was originally there.

Obituaries

Dorris Louise Lewis - age 85 of Loudon, TN passed away Thursday, October 29, 2015 at Parkwest Medical Center. Louise was a member of Calvary Baptist Church. She was preceded in death by her husband of 62 years, Elmer E. Lewis; parents, Taylor and Evelyn Riley; sister, Lois Jenkins, and an infant sister. Louise is survived by her daughter and son-in-law, Dorris and Robin Dale; sons and daughters-in-law, Steven and LeAnn Lewis, and Tony and Teresa Lewis all of Loudon; 10 grandchildren; 8 great grandchildren; brother, David Riley; sisters, Sandra Riley, Glenda Toney and Brenda Burton along with several nieces and nephews. The family will receive friends from 1 to 3 p.m. Sunday, November 1st at Click Funeral

Home Chapel in Lenoir City. Funeral services will follow at 3 p.m. with Dr. Dick DeMerchant officiating. Family and friends will gather for graveside services at 11 a.m. Monday morning in the Hillcrest Cemetery in Dandridge. Click Funeral Home, 109 Walnut Street, Lenoir City is in charge of arrangements.

Ruby Pearl Strange - age 82 of Lenoir City passed away Thursday morning, October 29, 2015 at her home. Ruby was a loving and devoted mother, grandmother and great-grandmother. She was a cook at Little Creek Sanitarium. Preceded in death by her husband, David Mack Strange; sons, Michael Strange and Loney Dean Strange; parents, James and Thelma Young; step-daughter, Betty Joe Strange; step-son, Bud Strange; grandsons, Scotty Wayne Strange and Marcus Wayne Strange; sister,

Lois Henry, brother, Jack Young; step-children, Maxine "Sis" Winston and son-in-law, Ralph Lawson. She is survived by her children and spouses, Ruben and Sue Strange, David and Shirley Strange, Gary Strange, Faye Brown, Ellen and Leroy Rice, Ricky and Pam Strange, Ann and Dean Rice, Phillip and Linda Strange, Roy Strange, Tony Strange, James Strange, Stacy and Stephanie Strange, and Caroline Strange; step-children, Anna Mae Lawson, George "Shug"

Strange, Jearl and Jim Arwood; many precious grandchildren, great-grandchildren and great-great grandchildren; several nieces and nephews. The family will receive friends from 5 to 7 p.m. Monday at Click Funeral Home in Lenoir City. Funeral services will follow at 7 p.m. with Rev. Don Acton officiating. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the funeral home to help with funeral expenses.

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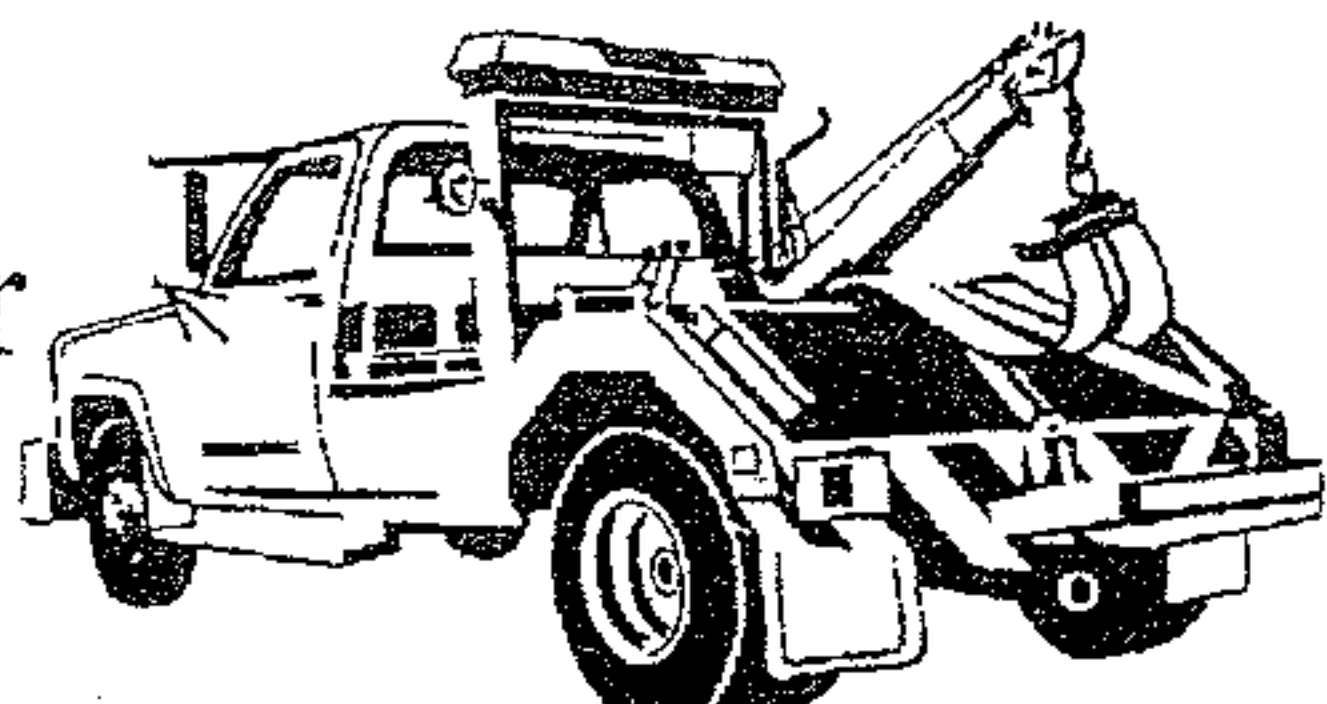


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*note: the "Rotation List" is a list of wrecker services that provide service for wrecks, DUI's, breakdowns, etc. and are on an on-call basis for service. This list is approved by the Sheriff.

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burglary would have attacked. Victim showed the Deputy where someone had cut a small hole into the front door to gain entry. A knife was found in the room that was consistent with the cut on the door with a name engraved on it. Victim did name 3 suspects. Items taken: black AR-15, black revolver, black Moss shotgun, Samsung Tablet, Polaroid Camera, Coach Wallet, with 140.00 dollars, black nike bag containing 200.00 in

change, 3400.00 cash, and the aluminum safe.

Loudon County Sheriff's Office Toys for Tots 2015

Thanks to the generosity year after year of the Loudon County residents, churches, businesses and industries, the Loudon County Sheriff's Office is once again able to offer the Toys for Tots program. We are beginning our 31st year of providing toys to the needy children of Loudon County, and thanks to generous contributions of time, money and gifts, we are able to make Christmas a more joyful time for more and more children.

In 2014, approximately 500 children were helped by the Loudon County Sheriff's Department Toys for Tots program through their partners. Even with the difficult economic times we are experiencing, we hope that the people of Loudon County will be there once again to help.

Names will be available beginning in mid-October through business and churches. If you are considering helping a child this Christmas, please be assured that applicants are thoroughly checked to make sure they require this assistance. Names are also compared with

the school systems to make sure no one is receiving duplicate assistance.

If your business or church would be willing to take names please call Debbie Hines, Toys for Tots Coordinator at 986-4823.

Police beat

Angelia Copeland, 37, McArthur Road Maryville, was charged with Public Intoxication. Deputy Bobby Ham-

ilton was dispatched to the Loudon Justice Center for a possible intoxicated person. Deputy Bobby Hamilton LCSO, arrested Angelia for PI.

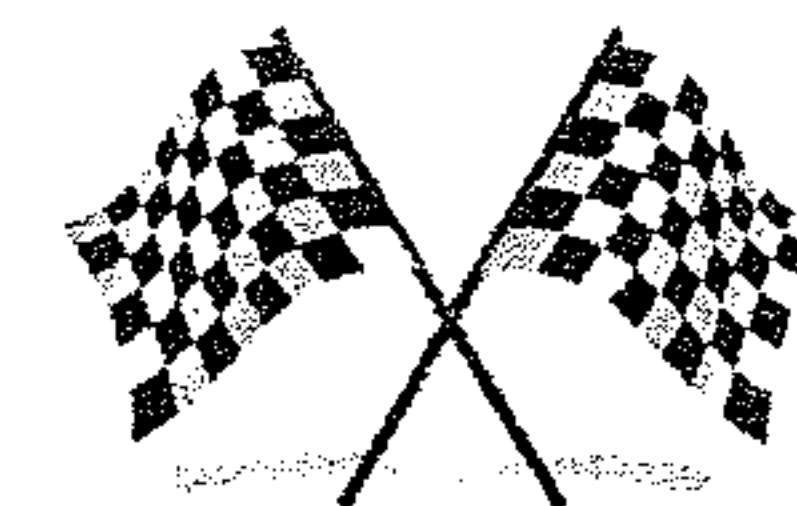
Lesa McCulloch, 52, Monroe Street Madisonville, was charged with Failure to Appear. Deputy Brandon Dishner LCSO, served a FTA Warrant on Lesa at the Loudon Jail.

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FBI

sented an incredibly complicated financial fraud with a significant public corruption component," said Special Agent Michael Elliott, who spent nearly eight years working on the investigation from the FBI's Las Vegas Division. "It involved so many people over so long a period of time, it was like an intricate spider web of crime that kept expanding."

The scheme was

nothing if not grandiose. In attempting to control dozens of Nevada HOAs between approximately 2002 and 2009, Benzer, an attorney, and other conspirators recruited straw buyers to purchase condominiums and then secure positions on HOA boards of directors. Benzer rigged HOA board elections and paid board members to take actions favorable to his interests—including

hiring his co-conspirator's law firm to handle construction-related litigation and awarding profitable construction contracts to Benzer's company, Silver Lining Construction.

Benzer manipulated and bribed HOA boards in a variety of ways—he often claimed he had local judges and law enforcement in his pocket; in other cases, he fooled unwitting homeowners

into thinking his actions were legitimate and they were simply making wise investment choices.

In September 2008, investigators executed a search warrant—one of nine that would take place during the investigation—and found that Benzer was in the process of targeting well over 20 different HOAs for illegal takeovers. "There were boxes and boxes of folders with infor-

mation about different HOAs," Elliott said. "He was deliberately attempting to identify board members along with other information to target what he believed were HOAs vulnerable to takeover through bribery, extortion, or whatever illegal means could be used."

One of the HOAs had more than 700 units, with each owner paying community fees, Elliott said. "In some cases, HOA boards had operating budgets larger than some small Nevada cities. There was lots of money at stake," he added.

The FBI, along with investigators from the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department and Internal Revenue Service - Criminal Investigations, used a variety of investigative techniques—including confidential sources, multiple undercover operatives, and forensic accountants—and conducted hundreds of interviews to piece together the extent of the crimes committed by Benzer and his co-conspirators.

In January 2015, Benzer pled guilty to multiple counts of conspiracy to commit mail and wire fraud and tax evasion. In addition to his 188-month jail term, he was ordered to pay more than \$13 million in restitution.

"This was a very sophisticated scam that evolved over time and generated millions of dollars for Benzer," Elliott said, adding that when Benzer was riding high, the charismatic fraudster employed "an army of lawyers, had bodyguards, and had an entourage that included three armored SUVs."

(see FBI ctd. pg. 8)

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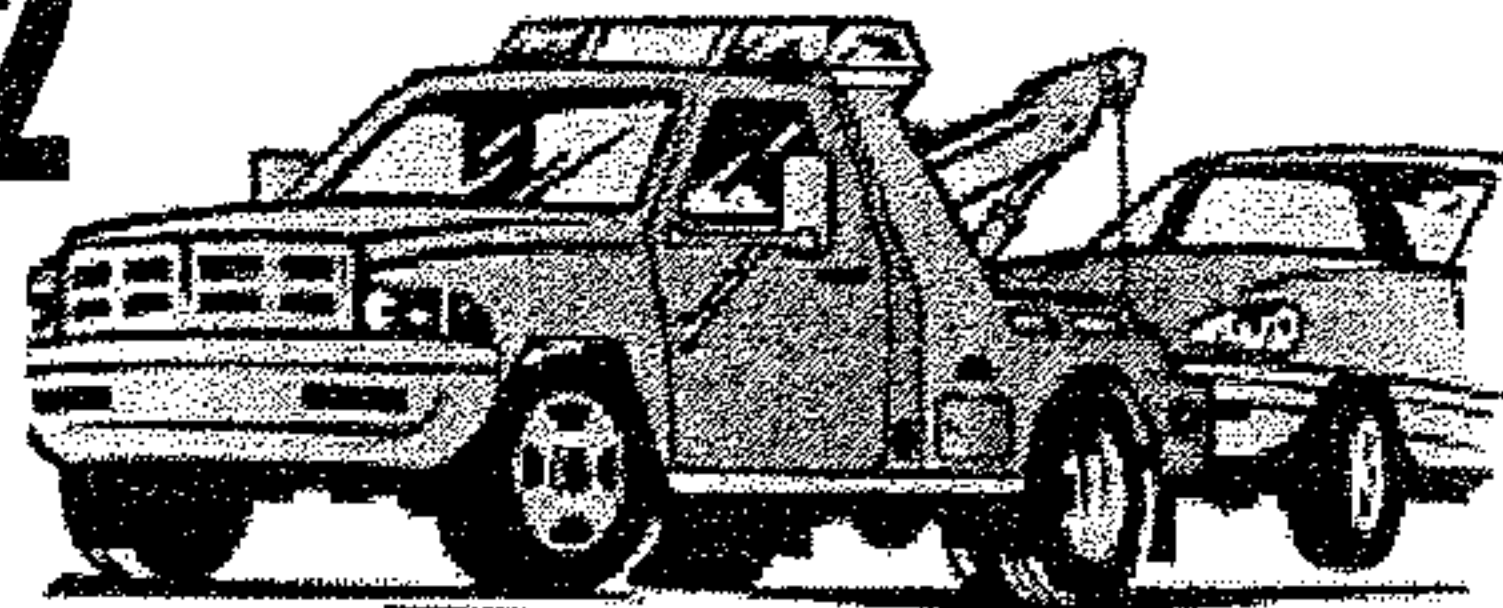
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jobs

technologies available. The facility has more than 300,000 square feet of production space and the company plans to make every square foot functional, efficient and safe.

The plant was the former manufacturing site for John Deere and most recently, Astec Industries, which left the building empty in April.

Pat Phillips, ex-

ecutive director of the Loudon County Economic Development Agency, said it was important to get the building back into use.

Phillips said the addition of such a high-profile company to the area could help recruiting more businesses to the Innovation Valley.

James Robertson, a broker with NAI in Knoxville, closed the sale of the building for a reported \$10 million a few weeks ago. He

said the deal was partly a result of a mass-marketing effort to equipment manufacturers.

Steve Hart director of human resources for Morgan Olson, said the company's growth is being fueled by the need for lightweight, efficient delivery vehicles for companies such as UPS and FedEx.

The goal is to have the plant operational with about 150 employees at work by mid-January. By the end of 2016 200-300 employees will be hired. The company is looking for assemblers with experience riveting, painters, welders and machinists, he said.

County Mayor Bud-

dy Bradshaw said the recruitment of Morgan Olson is probably one of the most-important economic opportunities in the county's history. He pledged to continue to provide support in the future.

"We want you here and we want to keep you here," he told Morgan Olson executives at the event.

The county commission and the city council of Loudon voted earlier this week to provide a 10-year payment-in-lieu-of-taxes (PILOT) incentive

package to Morgan Olson.

Haslam confirmed that the state also provided incentives but could not provide specifics because details were still being worked out.

Morgan Olson LLC will be holding a job fair Nov. 5 at the new facility at 9600 Corporate Park Drive in Loudon's Matlock Bend Industrial Park, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Key salaried positions are currently posted on the Morgan Olson website.

Public Notice

The County Corrections Partnership Committee will hold an open meeting at the Justice Center training room November 4, 2015 at 12 PM to discuss plans to move forward

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FBI ctd. from pg. 5

He had no problem spending money to maintain his lavish lifestyle."

But like many high-

flying scam artists, it was only a matter of time before Benzer was brought to justice. "Now he is in jail and penniless," Elliott said. "He has nothing."

Public Notice

The Loudon County Board of Education will hold an Executive Session to Discuss Pending Lawsuits and Claims on November 5, 2015 at 5:30 pm at the County Office Building.

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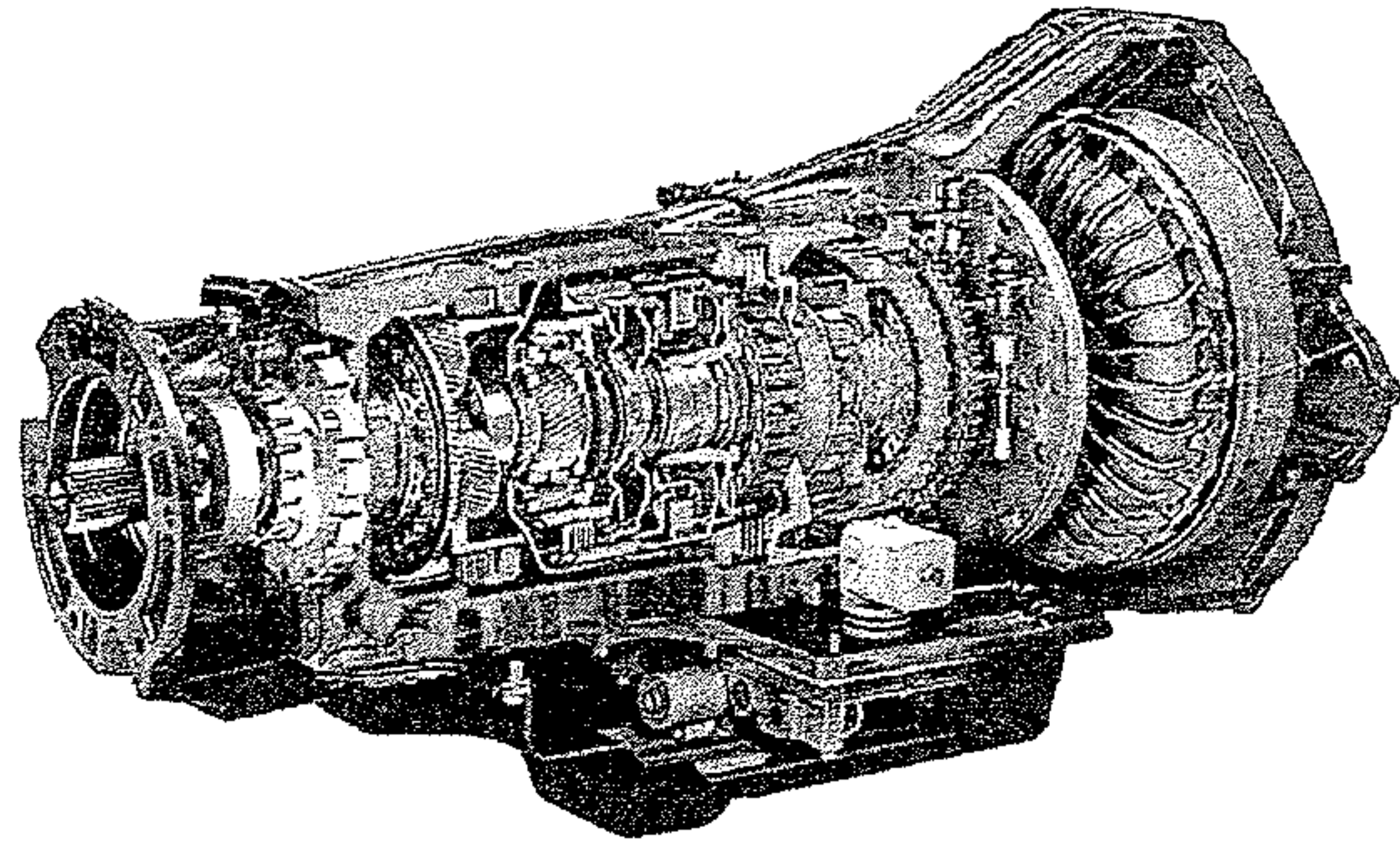
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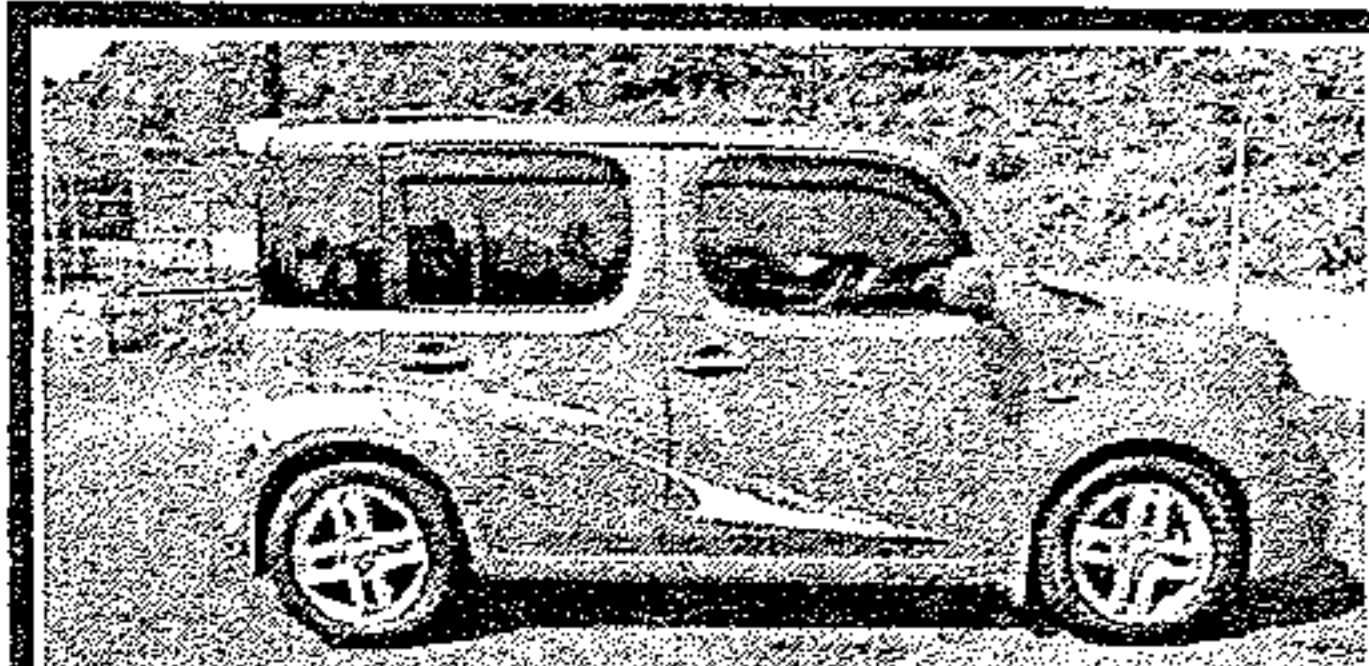
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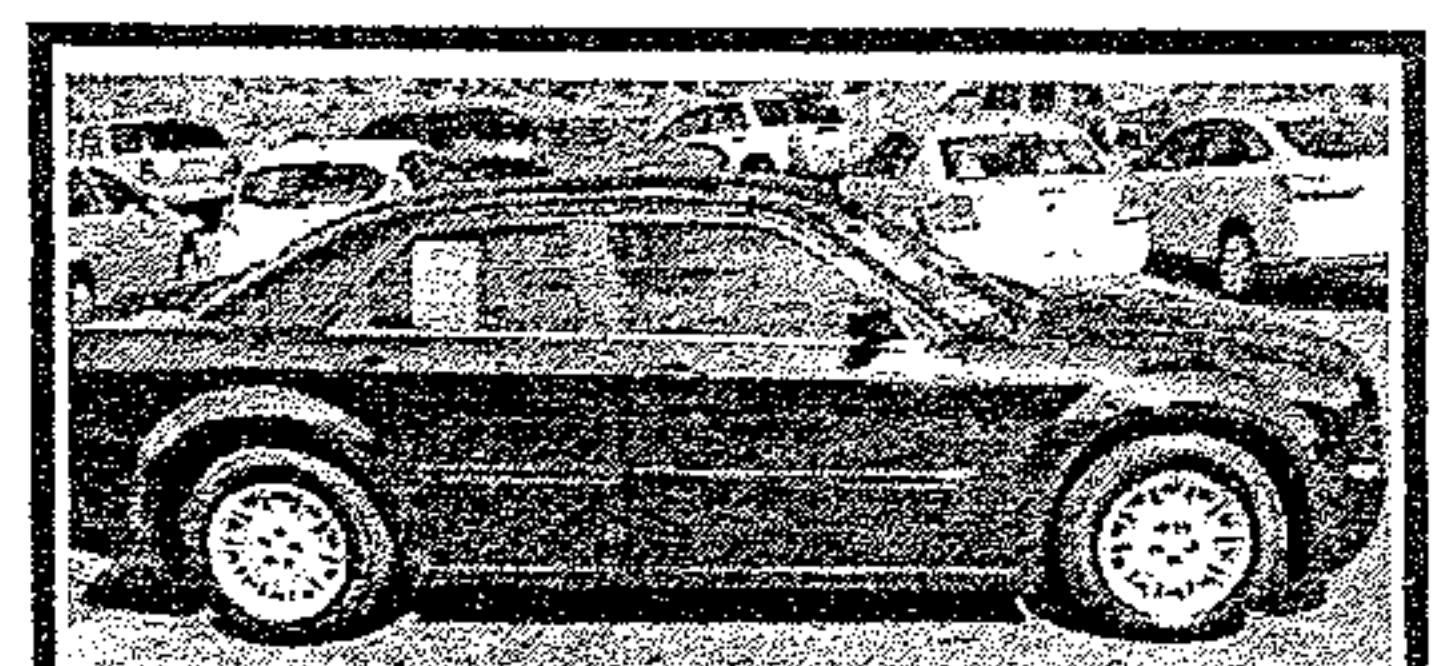
2009 Chevy Work Truck, Nice, lots of storage



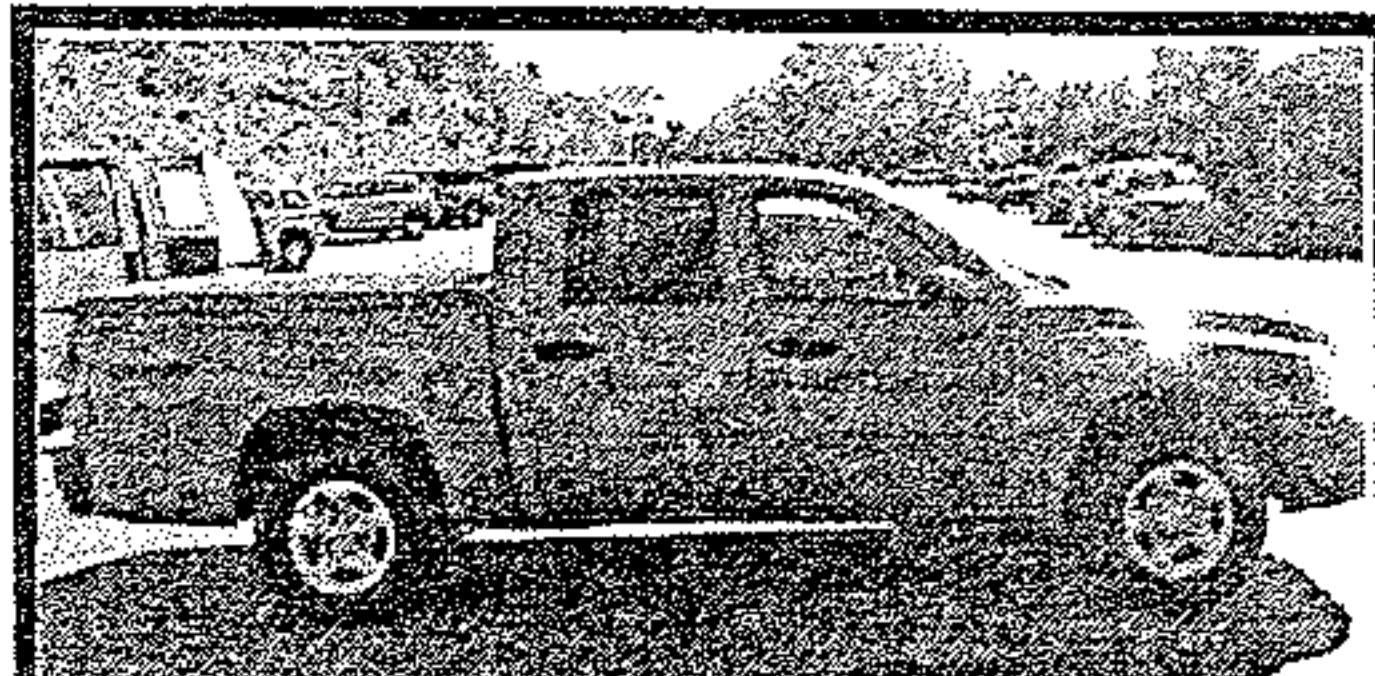
2009 Nissan Cube, 66k miles, Great Gas Saver,



2006 Rendevous, leather, 3rd row seat



2006 Chrysler 300, Loaded, Nice Ride



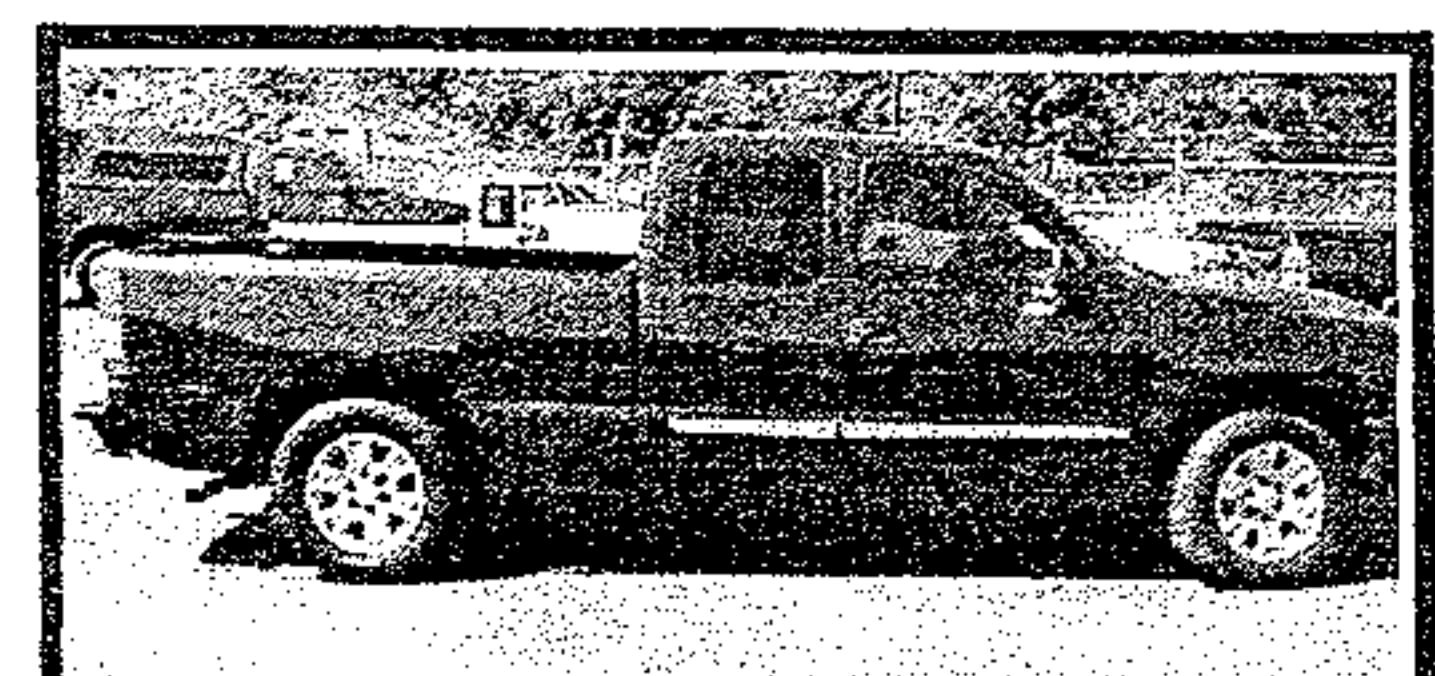
2005 Dodge Dakota, 4dr, 4x4, Extra Clean, lots of room



2011 Chevrolet Cruze, 55k miles, LOADED!!!



2007 Suzuki Grand Vitara, V6, 66k miles, Nice!



2006 GMC 1500 Ex. Cab, Clean ride

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