

Daily Edition

Serving Loudon, Monroe and Surrounding Counties

Friday, March 20, 2020

New Data Show Significant Changes in Drug Overdose Deaths

Overall decline in opioid-involved drug overdose deaths – but more deaths from synthetic opioids other than methadone

Overall overdose death rates decreased by 4.1% from 2017 to 2018 in the United States. New CDC data show death rates involving heroin decreased by 4%, and prescription opioid-involved overdose death rates decreased by 13.5%.

“Decreases in overdose

deaths involving prescription opioids and heroin reflect the effectiveness of public health efforts to protect Americans and their families,” said CDC Director Robert R. Redfield, M.D. “While we continue work to improve those outcomes, we are also

addressing the increase in overdose deaths involving synthetic opioids. We must bring this epidemic to an end.” While progress has been made to combat overdose deaths, death rates involving synthetic opioids (excluding methadone) increased by 10% from 2017 to

see Deaths pg. 2

Comptroller’s Office Launches COT Cyber Aware Program

Effort is designed to educate local governments about cybersecurity

The Tennessee Comptroller’s Office has created a new initiative to educate and inform local government employees about cybersecurity.

A close up of a signDescription automatically generat-

In recent months,

several Tennessee cities and counties have fallen victim to phishing and ransomware attacks. Cybercriminals have exploited weaknesses with the goal of stealing money, changing or destroying government data, or gaining access to sensitive in-

see COT pg. 4

Missouri Public Corruption Ring Disrupted

County Executive Enacted Pay-to-Play Culture in Local Government

A county executive in Missouri who brazenly and illegally steered government funds to his political donors has been convicted and sentenced as a result of an FBI investigation.

St. Louis County Executive Steven Stenger, who served in the role from 2015 to 2018, repeatedly directed his staff to illegally rig county contracts to benefit his

political donors.

In the fall of 2014, while still campaigning to be county executive, Stenger met St. Louis businessman John Rallo, who made a \$5,000 donation to Stenger’s campaign. Rallo explicitly told Stenger he was “tired of giving money to politicians and not getting anything in return,” according to court documents.

Stenger assured Rallo that he would steer county business to him in exchange for the donation—a violation of federal law.

“When Rallo donated with the clear understanding that he would receive county funds in return, that’s where it crossed the line into public corruption,” said Special Agent Andrew Ryder, one of the agents who worked the

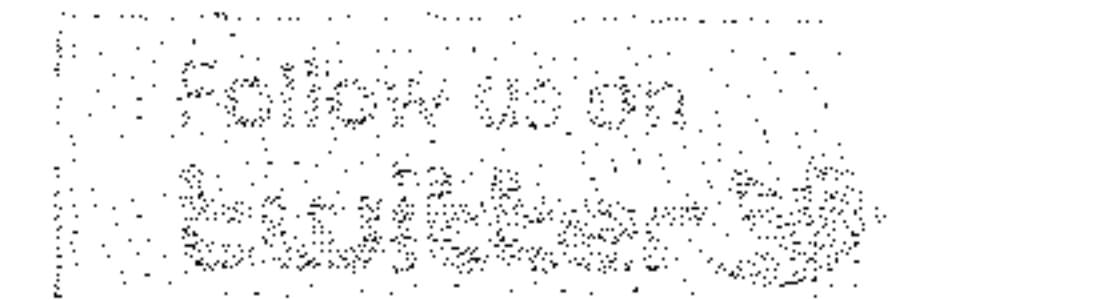
see Ring pg. 5

DUI follows traffic stop



Joshua Binkley

See DUI P.5



Verse of the Day

Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord, and that he may send the Christ, who

has been appointed for you — even Jesus.

—Acts 3:19-20

Wazzup

Be sure to support ALL Local Businesses they are the ones who support your kids and grandkids all year and now they

need your support!

Weather

Today: Chance of rain. High of 69F.

Tonight: Rain. Low of 63F

Saturday: Rain possible. High of 63F.

Saturday night: Rain.

Low of 52F.

Sunday: Rain. High of 61F.

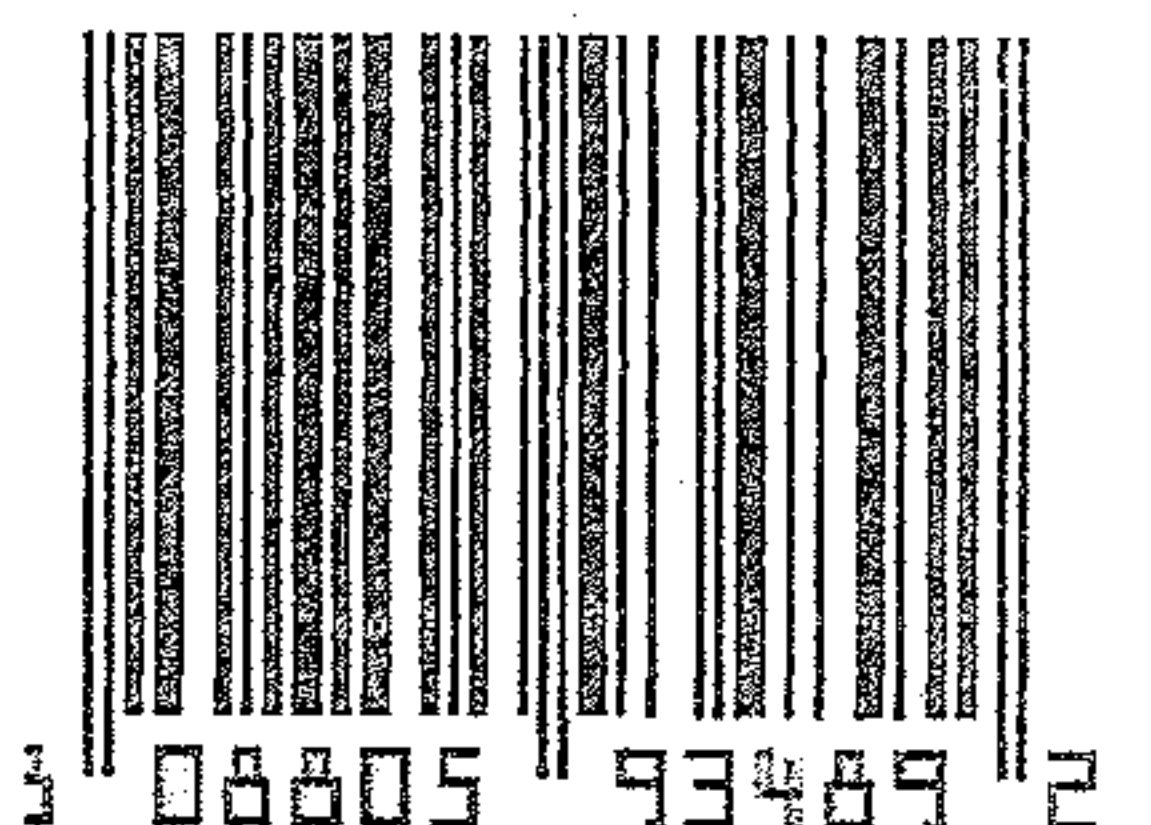
Sunday night: Rain. Low of 45F.

Horoscopes

Pisces 2/19-3/20

There’s a wonderful vibe

(Continued on page 6)



Deaths

2018. The findings come from an in-depth Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) analysis of the latest available drug overdose death data. The report published online today in CDC's Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR) analyzes changes in age-adjusted overdose death rates from 2017 to 2018 by demographic characteristics,

county urbanization levels, U.S. Census region, and state. More than 750,000 Americans died from drug overdoses from 1999 to 2018. "To sustain decreases and continue to prevent and respond to drug overdoses, specifically those involving synthetic opioids, it is critical to have a coordinated response," said Debra Houry, M.D., M.P.H., director of CDC's National Center for Injury Prevention and Con-

trol. "Medical personnel, emergency departments, public health and public safety officials, substance abuse treatment providers, community-based organizations, and members of the

community all play a role in addressing this complex and fast-moving epidemic." Synthetic opioid overdose deaths increased in 2018. Opioids were involved in

Deaths ctd. pg. 3

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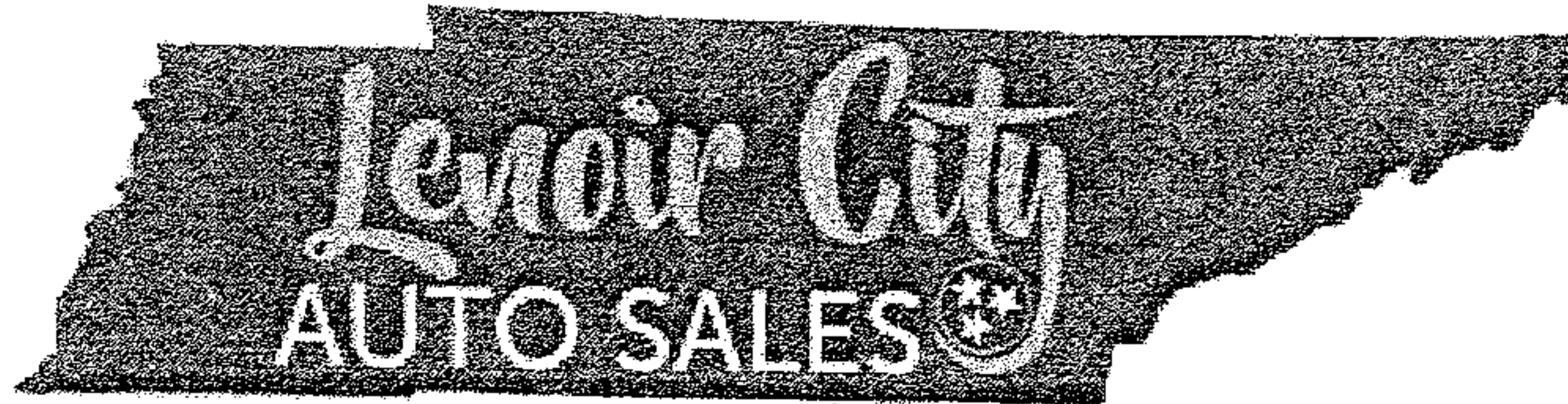


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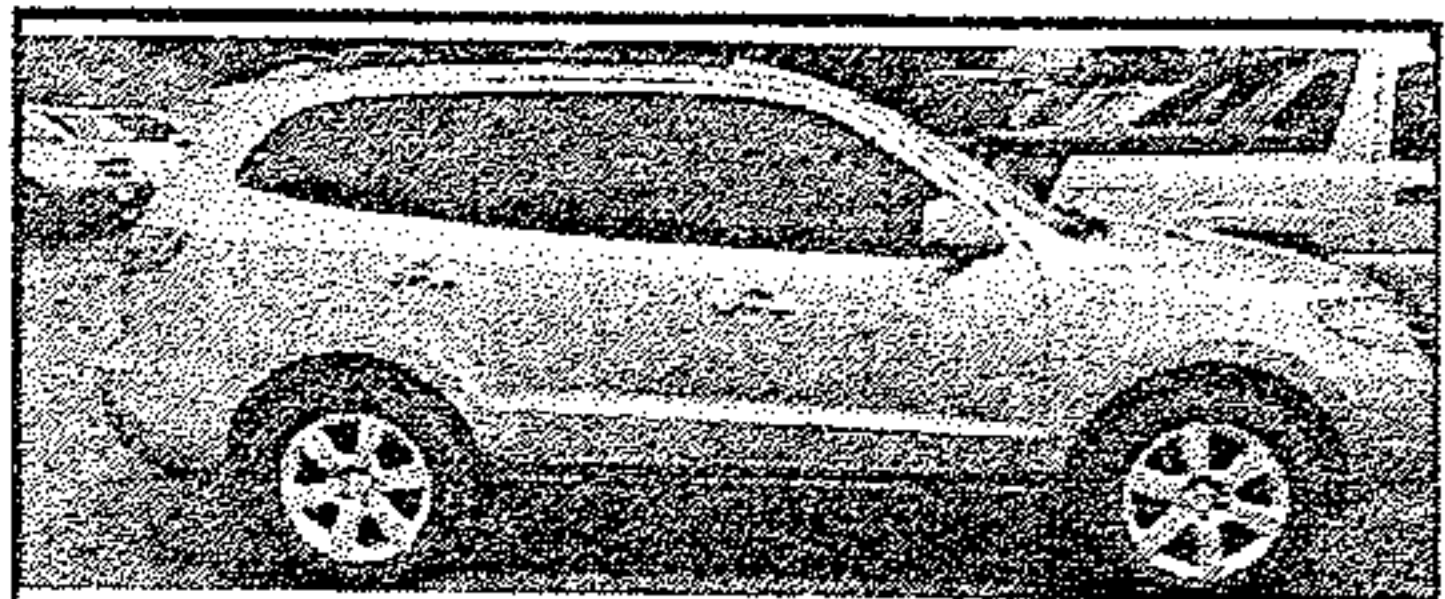
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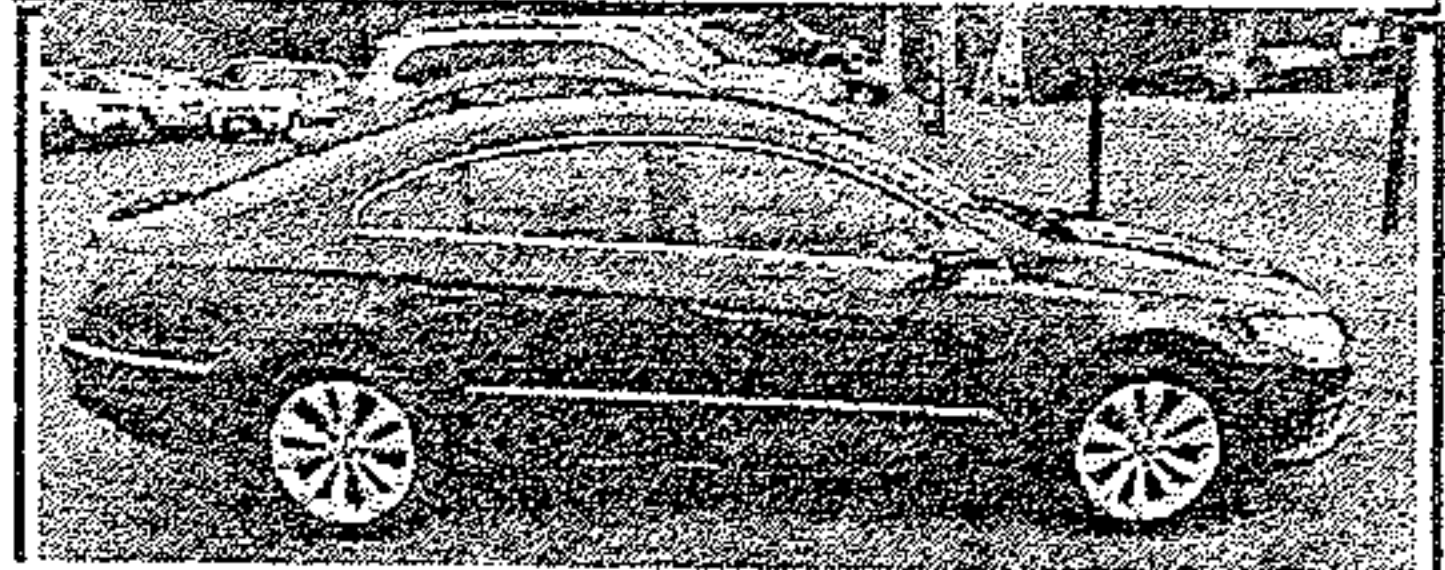
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Deaths ctd. from pg. 2

more than 46,000 drug overdose deaths in 2018. Of the 39 jurisdictions included in the analyses, 11 states and the District of Columbia saw decreased rates of death involving opioids overall.

Synthetic opioids were involved in 31,335 overdose deaths — nearly half of all drug overdose deaths in 2018. Illicitly manufactured fentanyl (IMF) likely drove the increase in deaths involving synthetic opioids (excluding methadone) from 2017 to 2018.

Synthetic opioid overdose-involved death rates increased from 2017 to 2018 among males and females, people age 25 years and older, non-Hispanic whites, non-Hispanic blacks, Hispanics, and non-Hispanic Asian/Pacific Islanders.

Death rates from synthetic opioids also increased in large central metro, large fringe metro, medium metro, and small metro counties. The latest available data show synthetic opioid-involved overdose death rates increased in 10 states. The four states with the highest increases were Arizona, California, Washington, and Missouri. The rates increased in the Northeast, South, and West but remained stable in the Midwest.

“Opioid overdoses decreased from 2017 to 2018 but still remain high. Efforts must be strengthened to maintain and accelerate decreases in deaths involving prescription opioids and heroin and to prevent continued increases in overdose deaths involving synthetic opioids,” said Nana Wilson, Ph.D., epidemiologist at CDC and lead author of this MMWR study.

The drug overdose crisis has evolved from 2017 to 2018

Preliminary successes in addressing the

drug overdose crisis occurred during 2018. From 2017 to 2018, decreases occurred in all drug overdose deaths and in deaths involving all opioids, prescription opioids, and heroin. Efforts to improve opioid prescribing practices have increased and may have contributed to decreases in prescription opioid-involved overdose deaths.

Today’s findings suggest that factors that may be contributing to the decrease in heroin-involved deaths include reductions in the number of people initiating heroin use; shifts from a heroin-based market to a fentanyl-based market; increased treatment provision for people using heroin; and expansion of naloxone access.

Prescription opioid-involved overdose death rates decreased by 13.5% from 2017 to 2018. Rates decreased:

Among males and females

Among people age 15–64 years

Among non-Hispanic whites, Hispanics, and non-Hispanic American Indian/Alaska Natives

Across all urbanization levels

In 17 states, prescription opioid-involved overdose death rates declined

In the Midwest, South, and West, but remained stable in the Northeast

Heroin-involved overdose death rates decreased by 4.1% from 2017 to 2018. Reductions occurred among males and females, persons aged 15–34 years, and non-Hispanic whites, and in large central metro and large fringe metro areas. Among the findings:

Rates remained stable in the Northeast and South, decreased in the Midwest, and increased in the West.

Rates decreased in seven states and Washington, D.C., and increased in three states.

Opioid-involved overdose death rates decreased among females, persons aged 15-34 years, 45-54 years, and non-Hispanic whites, and in small metro and nonmetropolitan areas. Findings note:


Rates increased among persons aged ≥65 years, non-Hispanic blacks, and Hispanics.

Rates increased in the Northeast and the West and decreased in the Midwest and the South.

Rates decreased in 11 states and Washington, D.C., and increased in three

Deaths ctd. pg. 4

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Deaths ctd. from pg. 3

states.
 CDC is putting data to action
 CDC continues to work closely with other federal agencies to support the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Five-point Strategy to prevent and respond to drug overdoses, specifically those involving opioids. The Strategy provides better treatment, better data, better research, increased access to naloxone, and better pain management. Within HHS, CDC conducts surveillance and research; builds state, local, and tribal capacity for prevention; supports providers, health systems, and payers; partners with public safety; and empowers Americans to make safe choices.
 CDC is working with states, territories, and cities and counties across the country to continue surveillance and prevention efforts. These efforts are to help inform and to sustain decreases and prevent continued increases through Overdose Data to Action, a 3-year cooperative agreement through which CDC funds health departments in 47 states, Washington, DC, two territories, and 16 cities and counties for surveillance and prevention efforts.
 This report also reinforces the continued need for response strategies, including expanding the distribution of naloxone for overdose reversal, increasing the provision of medication-assisted treatment, enhancing public health and public safety partnerships, and enhancing linkage to treatment and harm reduction services. A comprehensive, multisectoral surveillance, prevention, and response approach remains critical for sustaining and expanding preliminary successes in reducing opioid-involved overdose deaths.
 U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
 CDC works 24/7 protecting America's health, safety and security. Whether disease start at home or abroad, are curable or preventable, chronic or acute, or from human

activity or deliberate attack, CDC responds to America's most pressing health threats. CDC is headquartered in Atlanta and has experts located throughout the United States and the world.

COT formation.

The Comptroller's Office and its Division of Local Government Audit recognize that many local governments lack the funding or expertise necessary to provide cybersecurity training to employees. That is why we have launched COT Cyber Aware.

The COT Cyber Aware website includes many resources to help local government officials protect their computer systems and educate their staff about potential threats. The Comptroller's Office is also able to provide in-person training for Tennessee's local governments.

"All of Tennessee's government entities must prioritize cybersecurity," said Comptroller Justin P. Wilson. "As part of our mission to make government work better, we are glad to offer new tools and resources that can help protect governments from cyber threats and attacks. We hope this effort will create awareness and vigilance around this important subject."

To learn more about COT Cyber Aware, go to: tncot.cc/cyberaware
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IN THE PROBATE COURT FOR LOUDON COUNTY, TENNESSEE

Regarding the Estate of: LUCILLE ANDERSON LYNCH, deceased DKT#6061

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
 (As required by Chapter No 180, Public Acts of Tennessee 1809
 As Amended by Public Chapter 806 on 05/09/2012)

Notice is hereby given that on the 9th DAY OF MARCH 2020 Letters of Testamentary in respect of the estate of LUCILLE ANDERSON LYNCH who died on the 9th day of February 2020 be issued to the undersigned by the Loudon County Probate Court of Loudon County, Tennessee. All persons, resident and nonresident, having claims, matured or unmatured against the estate are required to file the same with the Clerk of the abovenamed court on or before the earlier of the dates prescribed in (1) or (2) otherwise their claim will be forever barred:

- (1) (A) Four (4) months from the date of the first publication (or posting, as the case may be) of this notice if the creditor received an actual copy of this notice to creditors at least sixty (60) days before the date that is four (4) months from the date of the first publication (or posting); or (B) Sixty (60) days from the date the creditor received an actual copy of the notice to creditors if the creditor received the copy of the notice less than sixty (60) days prior to the date that is four (4) months from the date of first publication (or posting) as described in (1) (A); or
- (2) Twelve (12) months from the decedent's date of death.

THIS THE 9th DAY OF MARCH 2020

Steve Harrelson, Clerk

BY: Robyn Shannon, Deputy Clerk
 Penny Glasgow, Chief Deputy Clerk

By Personal Representative(s)
 CAROLYN ROBERTS

Notice to Creditors:
 All Claims must be submitted on a claim form, notarized with invoices/statements; in triplicate, with a fee of \$11.00 to Loudon County Probate Court, 12680 Highway 11 West Ste. 3, Lenoir City, TN 37671
 Run date: 3-11-20 & 3-20-20

Ring

case out of the FBI's St. Louis Field Office.

After Stenger was elected, Rallo continued to donate to him, believing he would receive a county insurance contract in return. Rallo also recruited other donors, who in total gave Stenger's campaign about \$50,000.

When staff thwarted Stenger's initial efforts to steer county insurance contracts to Rallo, Stenger and Rallo focused on getting Rallo a contract for marketing services. Although Rallo had no experience in marketing, Rallo told Stenger he could get a famous television personality he knew to do promotional work. Stenger told his staff Rallo was a donor to his campaign, and he expected Rallo's company to get the \$100,000 contract.

When the county put the marketing job out for bid, it received proposals from companies with actual experience. The St. Louis Port Authority, which controlled the funds, issued the contract to Rallo at the county executive's direction. Stenger's staff even tacked an additional \$30,000 onto Rallo's contract—money that was illegally funneled to another of Stenger's supporters.

"Citizens should be able to expect honesty from their public officials, and we hope this case will send a message to future officials who might consider engaging in these illegal activities."

Andrew Ryder, special agent, FBI St. Louis

"It was a sham contract. No actual work was done for the county," Ryder said.

Stenger later facilitated a land deal for Rallo and worked to get a \$149,000 county contract for another donor—all in exchange for donations.

After these deals began to get local media attention, several cooperators came forward to the FBI to provide in-

see Ring conc. pg. 7

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DUI

Joshua Binkley, 23, Carter Drive Loudon, was charged with Driving Under the Influence.

According to the report, Officer Trey Clemmer LPD, observed a vehicle driving down Maremont Parkway heading toward Hwy 72. Officer followed the vehicle and observed it crossing the center line several times and could not maintain the posted speed. Officer traffic stop said vehicle and approached the vehicle and could smell a strong odor of an alcoholic beverage on the driver breath while informing the driver why he stopped him. The driver was identified as Joshua Binkley,

Officer ask Binkley if he had anything to drink, he stated a few beers a couple hours prior to driving.

Officer had Brinkley perform sobriety test. Brinkley performed poorly and was placed under arrest and transported to the Loudon County Jail.

Help Wanted

AAA septic is looking to hire a full time and part time employee. Septic or plumbing experience is preferred; however, CDLs are required. Please contact Robby at 865-388-6939 with any questions or how to apply.

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Ring conc. from pg. 5

formation on the illegal activity. After search warrants and interviews with cooperators exposed the crimes, Stenger and Rallo agreed to plead guilty to bribery and mail fraud charges. Stenger resigned from office.

“We had a lot of co-

operation in this case from St. Louis County employees who were concerned about what was going on. The culture in the government was so toxic that people were willing to talk to us about it,” said Special Agent Lindsay Wegge, who also worked on the case.

In August 2019, Stenger was sentenced to 46 months in prison. In March 2020, Rallo was sentenced to 17 months in prison.

For the investigative team, the case sends a message that public corruption—one of the FBI’s top investigative priorities—will not be tolerated.

“Citizens should be able to expect honesty from their public officials, and we hope this case will send a message to future officials who might consider engaging in these illegal activities,” Ryder said.

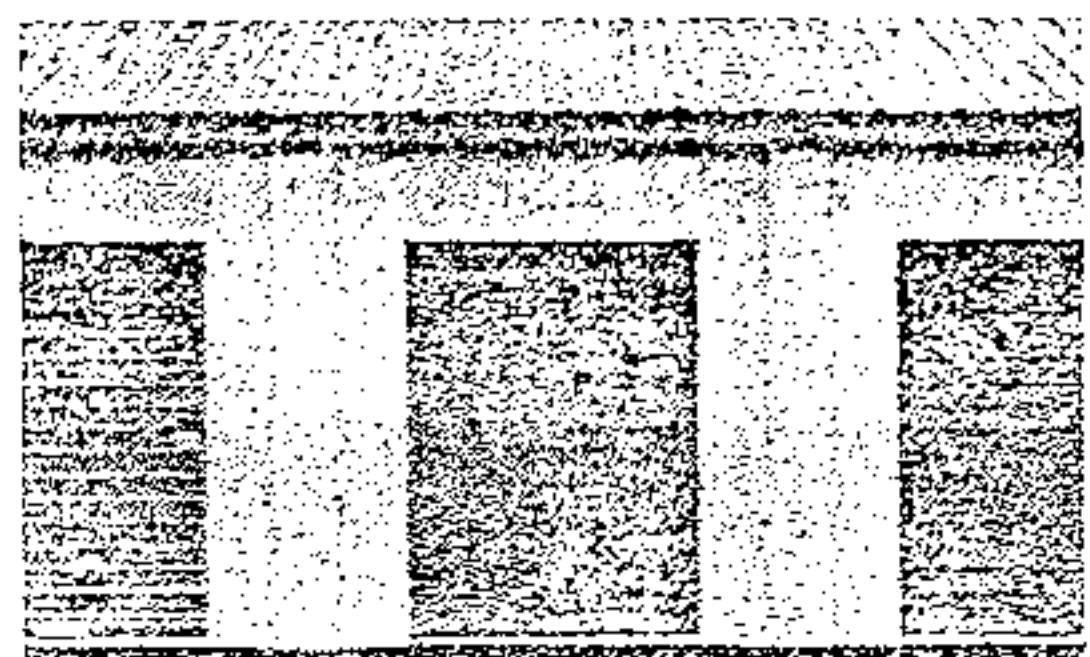
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