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ONE SECTION

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Failed attempt to smuggle contraband ends in arrest

By Matthew Breazeale
A relative of a Holmes-Humphreys Regional Correctional Facility inmate was arrested after sneaking onto prison grounds in an attempt to smuggle contraband.

Holmes County Sheriff Willie March told the *Herald* on Monday, July 15, that Shaquille Mabry and one unnamed juvenile, have been charged with possession of contraband, which can carry a maximum of five years in prison.

March described a failed attempt by Mabry to smuggle in a large amount of tobacco, alcohol in water bottles, phones, phone chargers, headphones and other items. "In the back of the jail (grounds) there's a shop," said March. "The inmates go out to work at times. Mabry's plan was to sneak in small amounts of contraband at a time."

Facility guards are tasked



SHAQUILLE MABRY

with checking inmates when they return from working outside.

"The guards are suppose to search them," said March, "Mabry and the juvenile, we believe, cut the outside fence and hid inside the shop. One of the inmates involved is a relative of Mabry."

HHRCF Warden Barry Rule elaborated on the incident.

"Our control tower operator saw them walking around the back," said Rule, "it was two individuals."

The pair was noticed at 12:49 a.m. on Thursday,

July 11, by the control tower operator who notified her supervisor, who in turn contacting the sheriff's department. Rule said the two individuals were wearing street clothes with no attempt to conceal their identity. Rule said even though Mabry is related to the inmate that was regularly scheduled to work at the facility shop, it is still under investigation whether that inmate was involved.

"Anytime an inmate is outside, he is to be searched and once searched, the control tower is notified which officer checked them so someone is held accountable in case of an incident," explained Rule. "Mabry was a brother of an inmate that works at the shop. How entry was gained is still under investigation."

As for motive, March explained, "there's money to be made (in prison), people want to drink and smoke."



Tobacco, alcohol, cell phones, phone chargers and ear phones were confiscated by officials at the Holmes-Humphreys Regional Correctional Facility on July 11 after an attempted "midnight run" to smuggle contraband into the jail. Shaquille Mabry was arrested and charged in the incident. One unnamed juvenile was also involved. (Photo by Holmes County Sheriff's Department)

Upgrades to Durant's electrical system slated, funds received from Department of Commerce

By Matthew Breazeale
A collaborative investment totaling \$516,990 from both the United States Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration and the city of Durant is slated to upgrade and improve the electrical system of Holmes County's largest populated town.

The sum of \$413,592 was award to Durant from the department of commerce with Durant contributing \$103,398 towards the improvements.

A grant letter received by Durant Mayor Henry Robinson says the funds are geared toward "economically distressed communities that encourage private sector collaborations and creation



Many trees were razed during the April 31, 2017 storms that led to the death of one Durant man, Carlton Hurt. The city's electrical substation was severely damaged as well. Pictured above are downed trees and power lines on Washington Street. (Photo by Matthew Breazeale)

New school year sees new staff changes at HCCSD

Staff Report
Staff changes and new hires were announced at the June 13 Holmes County Consolidated School District Board meeting for the 2019-2020 academic year. Principals, assistant principals and support staff were named by Superintendent Dr. James Henderson and are listed below.

New Hires
Dr. Kerry Gray, principal for Holmes County Central High School; Geneen Russell, dean of instruction at HCCHS; Henry Doyle, assistant principal at William Dean Jr. Elementary School; Dr. Debra Powell, principal at Williams-Sullivan Middle (Continued on page 6.)

Hearing set for proposed Lexington tax increase

By Matthew Breazeale
The city of Lexington will hold a public hearing on Tuesday, July 23 at 5 p.m., at city hall, on a proposed two percent tax on the sale of prepared food and beverages sold within "corporate limits," according to a notice published in this week's edition of the paper.

"Theses proceeds will be used for the purpose of providing funds to promote tourism, parks, recreation and infrastructure improvements," according to the notice.

Lexington Mayor Robin McCrory said she wasn't able to speak about the matter on Monday, July 15.

"I can't give any comment right now until after the hearing on Tuesday," said McCrory. She encouraged the public to attend the hearing.

cally distressed communities that encourage private sector collaborations and creation of higher-skill, higher wage jobs."

"We were able to get this grant with the help of Congressman Bennie Thompson's office and Hunter Engineering," said Robinson. "It's tied to job development, this is going to give us about 50 more jobs at Hunter here in Durant. Also Rio Winters with North Central Planning and Development in Winona, he helped us to apply for this also."

Robinson said the application process for the funds had been ongoing since August of 2018.

"We had to keep having meetings, I know we met with Hunter...for the city to meet Hunter's and the city's electrical needs."

Durant's electrical systems suffered extensive damages from the April 2017 tornado that left wide spread destruction, including the town's electrical substations. Robinson cited that as one of the main reasons the grant was sought after.








In the grant letter the scope of project is outlined.

"This project will improve the electrical system to provide adequate and reliable (Continued on page 6.)

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