

Variety of incidents keep sheriff's deputies on run

By Bob Stockton

The month of January closed out with a variety of incidents for the McCormick County Sheriff's Office.

On Friday, Jan. 31 deputies conducted a traffic stop on a vehicle for speeding on highway 28 south near Woodlawn Road. Deputies approached the vehicle and identified the driver.

During conversation with the driver, deputies detected the odor of marijuana coming from the vehicle, inquired if there was anything illegal in the vehicle and were told there was not. The driver indicated she had been around someone who had used marijuana earlier.

Deputies had the driver step out of the vehicle, obtained consent to search and they discovered a small baggy, which contained a clear crystal-like substance. Deputies advised the subject she was going to be arrested.

The subject informed deputies she had additional contraband on her person. Deputies had her produce the contraband which was a large baggy containing a clear crystal-like substance believed to be methamphetamine from under her shirt.

Deputies detained the subject, continued to search of the vehicle, and located an additional marijuana cigarette in an ash tray of the vehicle. Deputies also located and seized \$539 in cash from the vehicle.

The subject was arrested and transported to the detention center for booking and processing. The total weight of the meth was 27.5 grams, and she was charged with trafficking meth.

That same day, deputies were dispatched to a residence on highway 823 in the Mt. Carmel area in reference to stolen utilities. They arrived on the scene and met with an employee of McCormick Public Works who reported the water company had turned off the water and placed a lock on the water meter of the residence.

She returned to check the meter and discovered the lock had been broken off and the water had been turned on. Deputies attempted to locate the homeowner with negative results.

Deputies observed the complainant turn the water off and re-lock the meter. A warrant for stealing public utilities was obtained for the homeowner, and the case remains open pending arrest.

On Feb. 1, deputies went next door to the Subway sandwich shop in the Town of McCormick for a report of a vehicle in a ditch, blocking the driveway. They approached

the pick-up, had the driver turn off the vehicle and step out of the vehicle while asking if he needed EMS assistance.

During the conversation, deputies noticed the driver was slurring his speech and stumbling, almost falling as he was speaking with deputies. They asked the driver if he had consumed any alcoholic beverages, and he admitted to drinking "two beers and a drink earlier."

Deputies asked the driver if he would submit to Standard Field Sobriety Tests to make sure he was safe and able to drive. The driver agreed to the tests and "failed miserably." The driver was arrested for DUI and transported to the detention center for booking and processing.

Deputies tried to initiate a traffic stop at the intersection of Main and Church streets in the Town of McCormick, but the vehicle turned onto Deason Street and then onto highway 28 heading north. The vehicle did stop, and deputies approached and identified the driver.

They noticed the odor of marijuana coming from the vehicle and asked the driver if there was anything illegal in the vehicle. The driver stated "No," and deputies asked the driver about the odor of marijuana.

The driver produced a baggy of marijuana from inside of the vehicle and informed deputies that there was a handgun in the glove box. The driver and a passenger were removed from the vehicle.

Inside the glove box, deputies located a Ruger handgun and ran the handgun's serial number through dispatch. Dispatch returned the handgun was listed as "stolen" in the national database, and the driver was arrested for possession of stolen property.

He was transported to the detention center for booking and processing, and the handgun was seized and inventoried as evidence.

Deputies were dispatched to a suspicious vehicle call on a dirt road near Forestry land in the south end of the county. Deputies were informed the vehicle was registered to a missing person from Anderson.

They arrived on the scene and found the vehicle to be unoccupied. The vehicle was secured, and criminal investigators were called to the scene. Deputies conducted a grid search of the area using K-9 and thermal imaging equipment with negative results.

The vehicle was towed to a secured location for crime scene processing. At first light the following day, deputies again conducted a grid search of the area using a bloodhound team during daylight hours but again with negative results.

The Anderson County Sheriff's Office Forensic Team arrived to process the vehicle and had the vehicle towed to Anderson. The Anderson case remains open and under investigation at this time.

Our last incident this week includes a good old fashioned foot chase. Deputies initiated a traffic stop for a stop sign violation, but as they activated their blue lights on Talbert Road the car began swerving while maintaining a speed of 50 miles per hour in a 35 mph speed zone. The car turned left on to Fifth Avenue and continued to accelerate.

Deputies observed the driver of the vehicle open the driver's door while the vehicle was still moving and jump out. They notified dispatch that the suspect was running, stopped and exited their patrol vehicle and advised dispatch that they were in a foot pursuit.

As deputies were pursuing of the suspect, the suspect's vehicle ran off the road, through the front yard of a residence on Fifth Avenue and crashed into a flower garden. The garden had several small outlining bricks and a "big cement bird bath in the center."

When the vehicle crashed into the garden, the suspect

turned around to look, fell, got up and resumed running around the corner of residence. Deputies observed the suspect throw something into nearby bushes. The suspect made it to a field and started running towards the wood line.

As deputies were closing the distance between themselves and the suspect, the suspect turned his head to see where they were and fell again. They apprehended him, placed him in handcuffs and walked him back to the roadway where their patrol vehicle was located.

The suspect stated that he did not have his license with him, but deputies ran his descriptor information through dispatch, confirmed his identity and detained him. Deputies retraced their footsteps and located a Taurus 9mm handgun in the bushes and ran the handgun serial number through dispatch. Dispatch reported the gun was "clear."

Deputies conducted a search of the suspect's vehicle and located a clear plastic baggy containing 12 multicolored pills, which the suspect identified as ecstasy. He was arrested and taken to the detention center for booking and processing.

Deputies met with the resident whose flower garden had been damaged, and he informed deputies he did want to press charges against the suspect for the damages to the garden. The homeowner stated the garden area cost him \$1000.

Deputies completed victims notification forms for the resident/victim, and the suspect's vehicle was impounded by a local tow company. The suspect is being charged with multiple traffic and narcotic offenses, malicious injury to property and multiple weapons offenses. A vehicular accident report was completed for the car vs. garden collision.

Grant writers needed for McCormick County Historical Commission

As a Commissioner to the McCormick County Historical Commission (MCHC), I've been asked many times, just what does the Dorn Mill Complex do?

Well, a typical answer might read, we maintain and preserve the buildings and property located at the 1898 Dorn Mill Complex that helped local McCormick County farmers bring their crops to market. This complex also served as the main business/economic center for the area for many decades. We are also responsible for preserving all of McCormick's history and as well as bringing history to the community.

It is a simple enough answer but the underlying question is why and what does it do for today's residents?

Actually, it does a lot for today's residents. It gives a perspective as to how McCormick County survived the "Great Depression" when so many others did not. It also shows the ingenuity of engineering a Grist Mill with no water available as so many located in the New England area had. It also gives one a sense of common pride in McCormick in that we are rich in history and where our roots come from.

Now for today's (2022) activities we conduct, in cooperation with other local groups/businesses, a series of Smithsonian sponsored events, educational and informational seminars. During certain times of the year, we hold seasonal displays, McCormick community events, resident and children's interactive programs and semi-private tours (when requested). The Dorn Mill Complex is also home to the McCormick Farmers' Market each summer.

In addition, the Cotton Gin has been upgraded with new interior lighting, tables and chairs, some plumbing upgrades and electricity has been upgraded in the Weigh Station. This has been done in order to make both buildings available for renting out for anyone celebrating weddings, birthdays, baby showers, class reunions, family get together and both day and night time business meetings. We have also trimmed the trees that have over grown the complex.

It is the Commission's hope and prayer to start the much needed renovations to the exterior of the 1898 Grist Mill. This includes replacing all windows, repair roof and exhibit equipment previously not able to show. There are Federal, state and other grants available to do this major work on historic landmarks such as the 1898 Grist Mill. However, in order to apply for grants the MCHC is in need of an experienced "Grant Writer" or grant writing team of volunteers. As such we are looking for a volunteer or volunteers who have this skill set and would be willing to help out. We do not expect the commitment each month to be but a few hours or more. There might be more hours involved initially and during the grant deadline season.

Any person or persons interested in "Grant Writing" or needing further information on tours or rental opportunities please contact the MCHC via email: mccormickschistory@gmail.com

**- Yours in Service to our rich history,
Tonia Moore, President
McCormick County Historical Commission**

Wreaths Across America coming to McCormick

To find out all about this program to honor veterans, come to visit the Mobile Education Exhibit on Saturday, Feb. 26 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Food Lion parking lot. It is free.

Sheriff's incidents escalate dramatically in past 3 years

By Bob Stockton

The McCormick County Sheriff's Office has released statistics for last year, and the growth in responses to incidents is dramatic.

Sheriff personnel responded to 12,723 calls for service, more than double the total for just two years ago, 6,200 in 2019.

The growth in incidents during the last three years ramps up from 6,200 in 2019 to 9,343 in 2020, to last year's 12,723 in 2021.

There were 151 arrests in 2021, 125 drug charges, 108 charges for larceny or theft last year, and there were two murders, both solved.

McCormick County Sheriff's Office 2021 Highlights

Arrests	151
Drug Charges	125
Murders	2
(both solved)	
Rapes/Sex Assault	11
Kidnapping	4
Domestic	10
Stalking	1
Larceny/Theft	108
Trespassing	19
Weapon Viol	27
GLA	14
Arson	6
Assaults	74
DUI/Liquor	7
Resisting	12
Burglary	42
Fraud/Scam	26

Birthdays/Wedding Anniversaries

February 11 - Martha Guinyard, Steve Scruggs, Art Wesa.

February 12 - Stan Cameron, Julie Long Rucker, Brinkley Langley, Rochelle Harrison, Pat Collins, Randy Clegg, Ryne Murray, Zykeethia Freeman, Stacy Brinkley, Larry Slater, Tasha Daniel Cooper.

February 13 - Wesley Lindley, Luvenia Dorn, Margaret Dorn, Lisa Jennings, Joey Reid, Clarrisa Parks, Billie Bertzfield, Cordell Key, Kelvin Freeman, Tracy Branham, Don and Kathy Webb, Tra Quill Morgan, Elias L. Gilchrist.

February 14 - Terry Gable, Jeanette Gilchrist, Ira Jones, Shatika B. Robertson, Jimmy Smith, Ernest A. Willis, Benny and Rhonda Garrett, Michelle Smith, Lloyd and Daisy Gibert, Dennis Barkston, Virginia King.

February 15 - Kendrit Brown, Scott Sanders, Aaron Watson, Bob Schroeder, Beth Meyer, Bob and Betty Schade, Rick Pearce, Irene Bowen, Rose Cade, Scarlett Davis.

February 16 - Virginia S. Mursier, Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Cartledge, Deanna A. Fuller, James and Sadie Fuller, Curtis Dansby, Beth Gable, Mildred Tolbert, Renata Schemmer, Elizabeth Sanders Green, Dan Jones, Kellee Miller.

February 17 - Chris Brown, Daniel E. Garrison, Cornelius Harrison, Carolyn Singletary, Denise Terry, Laura and Greg Chappell, Genesis Dansby.



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Saturday, Feb. 12

Love is in the Air ...

Pre-Valentine's Day
Steak or Salmon Dinner
Reservations Required
Three Seatings
3 - 5 p.m. • 5 - 7 p.m. • 7 - 9 p.m.

Dinner Includes 10 oz. - 12 oz.
Steak, or 6 oz. - 8 oz. Salmon, Salad,
Vegetable Medley, Baked Potato,
Strawberry Cheesecake or Red Velvet
Cupcake, a Complimentary Glass of
Wine and a Valentine's Day Keepsake

\$40 Single • \$75 Couple

Must RSVP by Friday, Feb. 11 at Noon



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