

Sheriff Nicholson releases 2008 statistics

Gilmer County Sheriff Stacy Nicholson has released the 2008 statistics for the Gilmer County Sheriff's Office.

For the year 2008, sheriff's deputies answered calls to 48,787 incidents.

The Gilmer County 911 Center dispatched 71,875 incidents, which includes the sheriff's office, Ellijay Police Department, East Ellijay Police Department, Ellijay Fire Department, Gilmer County Fire Department and Gilmer County

Emergency Management Services calls for service.

Nicholson noted that during the year 2004, Gilmer sheriff's deputies answered 28,278 incidents, a difference of 20,509 incidents in four years.

The Sheriff's Criminal Investigations Division opened 968 felony cases and made 266 felony arrests. The detectives cleared 515 cases in addition to the cases that were cleared by arrest. The detectives opened almost 100 more

felony cases in 2008 than in 2007, and they made more than double the amount of arrests than in the previous year.

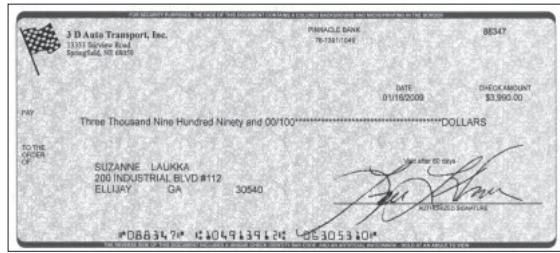
The Gilmer County Detention Center processed 1,550 people into/out of the jail. The average daily inmate population ran 115 inmates. The highest inmate count was 139.

The Sheriff's Court Services Division devoted 8,663 man hours to court security, constituting a 68 percent increase from last year. In

the first full year of operation, deputies scanned just over 143,860 visitors entering the new facility. They conducted 1,684 total inmate transports (including in county, out of county and out of state). Deputies

from this division served 2,953 civil processes and 315 warrants. A total of 1,097 warrant attempts were made. An additional 168 man hours were spent operating security equipment during "after hours"

meetings. "The above activities of the Gilmer County Sheriff's Office were certainly not the only ones the Sheriff's Office were involved in," said Nicholson. "However, these were the highlights."



This is a copy of the check Suzanne Laukka received from a company in Nebraska that also is a target of an apparent check fraud scheme.

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Fraud from 1A

Ballew was told the account was closed.

The *Times-Courier* also tried to reach someone at the phone number, which is in Canada, not Nebraska.

When asked to be transferred, the line went to a busy signal. A redial resulted in a voice message from Angela Thomas, the agent to contact in the letter.

A phone call to 3D Transport in Nebraska also resulted in a voice mail.

Laukka checked the Internet for rip off reports. "I found one (report) but she just called it a fraud and didn't go into details," she noted.

The *Times-Courier* also checked the Internet and came up with two postings of similar situations in Marion, Ky. And Columbia, S.C.

Ripoffreports.com also had five other reports but of a different scam. The five, including "Becky" in Ball Ground, were contacted by 3D Research Corp., another supposed division of 3D Transport.

The check amounts varied slightly but had the same bank information, including routing number as the one Laukka received. Those people were targeted as mystery shopper winners.

The *Times-Courier* contacted the sheriff's department in Springfield, a sub-

urb of Omaha, and was told that there had been several other fraud reports linked to the 3D Transport location.

Det. Letha Feeny said 3D Transport is a family-owned company and had been besieged with more than 50 similar checks to the closed account.

"It's a real mess for them," she said.

Laukka admits that she plays games on the Internet and occasionally responds to offers but does not recall entering any Publisher's Clearing House or Reader's Digest contests.

The letter came to her business address with a Canadian stamp. "I never use my home address on the Internet," she said.

Laukka also contacted local police authorities. "They didn't seem too interested," she said.

"I'm a little disappointed. Everyone can use a little extra money these days. But I'm glad I didn't deposit it. I might have written checks against it and then I'd have to make them good and replace the money," she noted.

For now, Laukka has the check and letter on her desk. It makes a good conversation piece with customers who come into the Pet Store on Industrial Blvd. looking for kitty litter or a hamster.

Limb from 3A

unique lunacy of a language in which your house can burn up as it burns down, in which you fill in a form by filling it out and in which an alarm clock goes off by going on.

English was invented by people, not computers, and it reflects the creativity of the human race (which, of course, isn't a race at all).

That is why, when the stars are out, they are visible, but when the lights are out, they are invisible. And why, when I wind up my watch, I start it, but when I wind up this essay, I end it.

(Editor's note: I will not even go into the grammar and the Associated Press Stylebook requirements! AS)

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