

COLUMBIA COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

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Press Release

SHERIFF DAVID W. HARRISON JR.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: March 20, 2012

Sheriff's Office arrests three in Welfare Fraud Investigation

Hudson, NY – Columbia County Sheriff David Harrison, Jr. reports that the Welfare Fraud Task Force has arrested three individuals Wednesday, March 20th at approximately 8:30am for their involvement in welfare fraud.

Investigator John Rivero, who is assigned to the Welfare Fraud Task Force from the Sheriff's Office and Deputy Sheriff Travis VanAlstyne arrested 42 year old Lynda M. Lane of Main Street Catskill, NY and charged her with 3 counts of Filing a False Written Statement, a class A-Misdemeanor, 1 count of Filing a False Instrument 1st degree and 2 counts each of Welfare Fraud 4th degree and Grand Larceny 4th Degree both class E-Felonies. Also arrested were, 35 year old Michael E. Smith and 29 year old Jenny C. Smith both of Maple Avenue Germantown, NY were each charged with 1 count each of Welfare Fraud 3rd degree and Grand Larceny 3rd degree both class D-Felonies. Both Michael and Jenny Smith took or obtained public assistance benefits totaling in excess of \$3,000.00 that neither were entitled to by failing to report they were receiving unemployment benefits.

Lane filed false documentation stating a child was living within her residence when in fact the child was living elsewhere. She collected public assistance benefits in excess of \$3,700.00.

All three defendants were arraigned in the Hudson City Court by Judge Connor and were ror'd. Lane will return to City Court April 24th @ 8:30am, Michael and Jenny Smith will return to court March 27th @ 8:30am.

The Welfare Fraud Task Force is comprised of members of the Sheriff's Office, District Attorney's Office and the Department of Social Services.