

2 Miss. escapees captured in Ala.

■ Corrections officer accused of assisting in escape also arrested

By Lorinda Bullock

Two convicted murderers and a Mississippi corrections officer accused of assisting in their escape from a Meridian prison were arrested in Alabama, Lauderdale County Sheriff Billy Sollie said Tuesday.

Investigators think Tomeka Lashae Brown helped Gregory Malone and Christopher Roy rent a room at the Econo Lodge Hotel at 1930 McFarland Blvd. in Northport, Ala., Sollie said.

The inmates were discovered missing from the East Mississippi Correctional Facility early Monday morning.

Brown, 25, of DeKalb is charged with two counts of accessory before the fact. All three are being held without bond at the Tuscaloosa County Jail. Malone, 26, and Roy, 24, will face charges of felony escape, Mississippi officials said.

Sollie would not give any other details on Brown's alleged role in the inmates' escape from the prison, which houses inmates with mental health problems.

Malone and Roy are scheduled to go before a judge today in Tuscaloosa County, where they will be asked to sign a waiver agreeing to return to Mississippi.

"We'll begin the process of getting a governor's warrant if they refuse to sign," Sollie said.

Malone and Roy were captured together at the hotel just before midnight Monday, Anderson said.

Deputy U.S. marshals from Birmingham and Tuscaloosa police officers were led to an Econo Lodge on Skyland Boulevard, and then eventually came to the Northport location, said C. Martin Keady, U.S. marshal for the Northern District of Alabama.

After evacuating occupants of nearby rooms, the marshals and police officers made contact with Malone and Roy, who peacefully surrendered.

Brown was apprehended at the same location but at a different time, Sollie said.

Malone and Roy, both facing life sentences, were discovered missing from the prison about 12:50 a.m. Monday.

Mississippi Department of Corrections Commissioner Chris Epps said Tuesday some employees — including interim Warden Darryl Anderson — may be fired upon completion of an investigation.

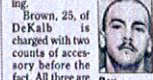
He added he had reason to think there had been some "fraternization with one of the inmates." He was unaware of Brown's involvement, he said.

Epps said he had "grave" concerns. See ESCAPEES, 8B

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LOCAL/STATE — 2-3
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METRO EDITOR: GRACE SIMMONS FISHER, (601) 961-7260 WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2005 THE CLARION-LEDGER ■ CLARION-LEDGER.COM

Court orders plan for penal farm

Mayor, others support building new Hinds County facility

By Dennis G. Coles

The Hinds County Board of Supervisors on Tuesday approved a plan to build a new penal farm in the county's northwestern corner.

The plan calls for a 120-acre facility to be built on land owned by the state. The facility would house about 1,000 inmates and would be the largest in the state.

The plan also calls for a new jail to be built on the same site. The jail would have 200 beds and would be used to house inmates awaiting trial.

of the city for most years, could better be used to build a facility. He said the city could get money from the federal government to build a jail or penal farm.

penal farm provide work crews for public and nonprofit activities and training for the county. They also operate farming activities, including a vegetable garden.

Retrial begins in deaths of 6 kids

By Dennis G. Coles

Agnes Williams of Ethelsville is scheduled to go on trial today for the second time within a year for the deaths of six of her children.

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'We're all in a state of shock'

of a living with an accident.

"She was a church-going, wonderful person," said her mother-in-law, Robin Stripling.

A member of Concord Baptist Church, Melinda Stripling is survived by husband, Steven Taylor, 44, of Chesterfield, Va. Taylor was treated for more than a decade, found out about 1 1/2 years ago. About the week Stripling was diagnosed with cancer, she was working and well respected at the office, where she was on an entry-level position.

"We're all in a state of shock and grieving," Stripling said. "We had a clear mind, a kind, caring and generous woman."

Stripling was pronounced dead at the scene. She was on her way to work at the University of Mississippi Medical Center, where she was a supervisor in the coding and billing department.

Family members gathered at their home on Water Oak Road between Morton and Philadelphia, and they were devastated by the loss.

Funeral services for Melinda Stripling of Morton will be 5:30 p.m. today at On & Lee Funeral Home on U.S. 90 in Brandon. The funeral will be 1:30 p.m. Thursday at On & Lee Funeral Home.

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Crash kills Morton woman

By Dennis G. Coles

A Morton woman was killed Tuesday morning in a two-vehicle accident that left one person dead Tuesday morning at Oakdale United Methodist Church on Mississippi 43 north of Philadelphia, Melinda Stripling, 47, of Morton was killed when her Toyota Corolla collided with a Chevrolet truck driven by Steven Taylor, 44, of Chesterfield, Va. Taylor was treated for more than a decade, found out about 1 1/2 years ago. About the week Stripling was diagnosed with cancer, she was working and well respected at the office, where she was on an entry-level position.

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Free legal assistance to help city ease backlogs

By Laura Hogg

The underserved and understaffed city attorney's office may finally see some relief through legal aid.

The Jackson City Council approved a program Tuesday that allows law firms to help clear the city's 300-plus case backlog. The program will be a pilot program.

Some of these firms have made a lot of money off the city's backlog over the years," said Councilman Willie B. McLendon.

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