Sheriff Lane Carter reports his Office received a breaking and entering report on March 10, 2013 from Sadie Brewer from the Pinehurst area of Moore County.

Mrs. Brewer advised she had left her residence during the morning hours to attend church. When she returned home she found someone had entered her home and took her medication.

Sheriff's Investigators were able to determine the suspect and also found she had broken into another residence in the Pinehurst area. Mrs. Roberta Saunders reported her break-in to investigators on March 11, 2013 just prior to the arrest of the suspect. Her property had been taken from a storage building behind the residence and was recovered a short time later.

On March 11, 2013 Sheriff's Investigators arrested Melanie Denise Mendonca, 30, of 112 Passion Lane, Pinehurst, N.C. Mendonca was charged with two counts of felony breaking and entering, two counts of felony larceny after breaking and entering and two counts of felony possession of stolen goods. Mendonca was confined in the Moore County Detention Center under a $2,500.00 secured bond. Her first court appearance is scheduled for March 28, 2013 in Moore County District Court in Carthage NC

In addition to the charges from the Sheriffs Department According to a release from the Pinehurst Police Department Mrs Mendonca has been charged for break-ins there as well.

On March 11, 2013 Pinehurst Police MPO Mike Ebel initiated 3 investigations for breaking and entering and larceny from residences within the Village of Pinehurst. After researching the Moore County Detention Center Web Site for similar recent activity, MPO Ebel noticed a female suspect had been arrested and booked for similar crimes in Moore County. The female matched the initial description given by a witness on one of our reported break ins from earlier in March. The female suspect was identified as Melanie Mendonca, of 112 Passion Lane, Pinehurst. She had already been released from the detention center at the time she was identified as a possible suspect in our cases.

After further investigation efforts, MPO Ebel was able to link the suspect, Ms. Mendonca to a string of 5 break ins that had occurred in Pinehurst. He organized a search for the suspect and

responded to her last known address of 112 Passion Lane. As he was approaching the area of her residence, he observed a female matching her description leaving the immediate area on a vehicle. He alerted the responding units and Sergeant Paul Leroy located the suspect's vehicle and initiated a traffic stop in the parking lot of the Hickory Tavern. Sgt. Leroy located several items related to the Pinehurst break ins in plain view inside the vehicle. The suspect was taken into custody and interviewed by investigators from Pinehurst PD and Aberdeen PD for the suspected crimes. A subsequent search of the suspect's residence led to the recovery of several items belonging to the Pinehurst Break ins as well as from incidents that occurred in Aberdeen and Moore County.

The suspect Melanie Medonca was charged with breaking, entering and larceny of residences located in the following neighborhoods(specific addresses of victims withheld to protect their personal identity): 700 block of Monticello Drive, Bridle Path Circle, Holly Pines Drive, Beasley Drive, and the 200 block of McKenzie Rd.

On behalf of the Pinehurst Police Department, Chief Phipps would like to extend their thanks to the Aberdeen Police Department and the Moore County Sheriff's Department for their mutual aid cooperation and partnership in the successful conclusion of these cases. Chief Phipps would also like to thank the citizens of Pinehurst for their help in the initial suspect descriptions that ultimately led to the arrest of this suspect and the recovery of the stolen property in the cases. The community support and assistance in the efforts to keep our community safe and secure is appreciated! Thank you citizens of Pinehurst for helping us make our community a little bit safer today! The investigation into this matter is continuing.