



## ROANOKE COUNTY NEWS RELEASE

Roanoke County Public Information Office  
5204 Bernard Drive, SW • PO Box 29800  
Roanoke, Virginia 24018-0798

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### For Immediate Release

Contact: [Teresa Hamilton Hall](#)  
Roanoke County Public Information Director  
Office: 540-772-2010

### Roanoke County Police Search for Missing 12-Year Old Child

ROANOKE COUNTY, VA (December 6, 2010) – Virginia State Police issued an Amber Alert this afternoon for a missing white female child. The child is 12-year old Brittany Mae Smith. She is five feet tall and weighs 100 pounds. She has straight brown hair and brown eyes.

The Amber Alert was issued after Roanoke County Police were called to a home at 3341 Fort Lewis Circle in the western part of the County around 9:30 a.m. After police arrived they found the body of a deceased female inside the home. The woman has been identified as 41-year old Tina Smith. Her death is being investigated as a possible homicide. It was the woman's concerned coworkers who contacted police this morning.

While at the scene, police obtained information indicating that a female child was missing from the home. The missing child is Tina Smith's daughter. Police say, at this time, it appears 12-year old Brittany Smith was last seen several days ago.

The State Police Amber Alert website lists the child's abductor as Jeffrey Scott Easley. Police say Easley was a friend of Tina Smith. Easley is described as a white male with brown hair and hazel eyes. He's five 11 inches tall and weighs 265 pounds.

He may be traveling in a 2000 Red Chevrolet SUV with Virginia tag XPR-4366. Police say Tina Smith's vehicle is also missing. Her vehicle is a Silver 2005 Dodge four door sedan with Virginia tag XKF-2365.

If you have any information, please contact 9-1-1. You may also call Roanoke County Police at 540-777-8641 or Virginia State Police at 1-800-822-4453.

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### Authorities Continue the Search for a Missing 12-Year Old Child

ROANOKE COUNTY, VA (December 6, 2010) – Authorities are continuing the search for a missing Roanoke County girl who police believe was taken against her will and is in extreme danger. The child is 12-year old Brittany Mae Smith. She is five feet tall and weighs 100 pounds. She has brown hair and brown eyes.

The search for the 12-year old began this morning after Roanoke County Police were called to a home at 3341 Fort Lewis Circle around 9:30 a.m. for a well-being check. When County police entered the home they found the body of a deceased female inside. The woman has been identified as 41-year old Tina Smith. Co-workers contacted police after Tina Smith failed to show up for work on Sunday and again today. Smith's death is being treated as a possible homicide. Police can't confirm how Smith died until an autopsy is performed. An autopsy is expected tomorrow.

While at the scene, police obtained information indicating that a female child who lived at the home was missing. The missing child is Tina Smith's 12-year old daughter, Brittany, a seventh grade student at Glenvar Middle school. Police say Tina and Brittany Smith were last seen in the area Friday morning.

Brittany Smith's parents are divorced. The child's father, Ben Smith, is a police officer in South Boston, Virginia, and is cooperating with authorities.

Police believe Brittany Smith was abducted by 32-year old Jeffrey Scott Easley. Police say Easley and Tina Smith were friends and that Easley may have lived in the home until recently. Easley is described as a white male with brown hair and hazel eyes and he may have a goatee. He's five feet 11 inches tall and weighs 265 pounds. Police say Easley was last seen in the area Friday evening. Easley works for an area landscaping company.

Police have not isolated their search for Easley and 12-year old Brittany Smith to any particular area(s). They say Easley and the child could be anywhere and are tracking down all leads.

Earlier today police were looking for a 2000 Red Chevrolet SUV with Virginia tag XPR-4366. Police located that vehicle this afternoon. They are still searching for Tina Smith's vehicle. Her car described as a Silver 2005 Dodge four door sedan with Virginia tag XKF-2365.

Roanoke County police are being assisted by the Virginia State Police, F-B-I, City of Salem Police Department and U.S. Marshal's Service.

If you have any information, please contact 9-1-1. You may also call Roanoke County Police at 540-777-8641 or Virginia State Police at 1-800-822-4453.

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### **Search Efforts Remain Underway for Missing Roanoke County Middle School Student** *VA AMBER Alert Extended & "Find Brittany" E-mail Established*

ROANOKE COUNTY, VA (December 7, 2010) – Local, state and federal law enforcement are continuing their search for missing 12-year-old Brittany Mae Smith and 32-year-old Jeffrey Scott Easley of Roanoke County. To provide the public more access to provide information in this case, Roanoke County Police have established a direct email link for tips: [findbrittany@roanokecountyva.gov](mailto:findbrittany@roanokecountyva.gov). Police are also still receiving tips via phone at (540) 777-8641.

The search for the 12-year-old girl began Monday morning (Dec. 6) after Roanoke County Police were called to a home at 3341 Fort Lewis Circle around 9:30 a.m. When Roanoke County police entered the home they found the body of a deceased female inside. The woman has been identified as 41-year-old Tina Smith. Co-workers contacted police after Tina Smith failed to show up for work on Sunday and again Monday. Smith was employed at Richfield Retirement Community for approximately four years.

While at the scene, police obtained information indicating that a female child who lived at the home was missing. The missing child is Tina Smith's 12-year-old daughter, Brittany, a seventh grade student at Glenvar Middle school in Roanoke County. Police say Tina and Brittany Smith were last seen in the area Friday morning. Tina Smith's vehicle, a 2005 Silver Dodge Neon with Virginia tags XKF-2365, is also still missing.

"I want to thank the many people in Roanoke County and the region who have contacted us with tips and information concerning this ongoing investigation," said Chief Ray Lavinder, Roanoke County Police. "We are still actively searching for 12-year-old Brittany Mae Smith and 32-year-old Jeffrey Scott Easley. The public's information is very valuable and we ask that the public keep calling Roanoke County Police at 540-777-8641 or email us at [findbrittany@roanokecountyva.gov](mailto:findbrittany@roanokecountyva.gov)."

Easley was a friend of the family. Tina Smith and Easley apparently met online this summer and developed a friendship. Jeff moved in with Tina and Brittany Smith in October of 2010.

"We are extremely concerned for Brittany's safety and have asked Virginia State Police to extend the AMBER Alert for another 24 hours," said Chief Lavinder.

Easley is described as a white male with brown hair and hazel eyes and he may have a goatee. He's five feet 11 inches tall and weighs 265 pounds. Easley was last seen in the area Friday evening and works for a local landscaping company. He does have family in eastern North Carolina and Alabama.

The investigation into Tina Smith's death also remains ongoing. The Office of the Medical Examiner began conducting an autopsy and examination this morning.

The Roanoke County Police, City of Salem Police, U.S. Marshals Service, U.S. Secret Service, FBI and Virginia State Police are involved in the ongoing investigation.

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#### MISSING ROANOKE COUNTY GIRL SEEN AT SALEM WAL-MART *Missing Man's Mother Makes Tearful Plea to her Son; Search Goes Nationwide*

ROANOKE COUNTY, VA (December 7, 2010) – Roanoke County, state and federal law enforcement are currently pursuing more than 200 tips generated in the ongoing investigation into the disappearance of a 12-year-old Roanoke County girl, Brittany Mae Smith, and a 32-year-old Roanoke County man, Jeffrey Scott Easley. Roanoke County Police have notified law enforcement nationwide on this case with a “Be On the Lookout” bulletin featuring the descriptions of Brittany, Easley and the silver 2005 Dodge Neon.

During a press conference this afternoon at the Roanoke County Public Safety Center, Jeff Easley's mother, Mrs. Sallie Martin of Franklin County, Va., made a tearful plea for her son to release Brittany and turn himself in. She asked him to come home and said that she is worried for his well-being. (*Video of her statement available at <http://www.youtube.com/profile?user=RoanokeCounty>*)

In addition, Roanoke County Police Chief Ray Lavinder announced a new development in the case in which investigators have obtained surveillance video of Brittany Smith and Jeff Easley at the Wal-Mart on West Main Street in the City of Salem. The video captured them purchasing various items at the store on Friday evening (Dec. 3, 2010) between 8 p.m. and 8:30 p.m. Chief Lavinder asked anyone who may have seen them at the store to call Roanoke County Police at (540) 777-8641 or by email at [findbrittany@roanokecountyva.gov](mailto:findbrittany@roanokecountyva.gov).

In the surveillance video, Jeff Easley has a goatee and is wearing a white T-shirt and jeans. He has a tattoo on his right forearm. He also has a star tattoo on each of his calves.



Brittany Smith is seen wearing a short-sleeve orange top and jeans. Her hair is down on her shoulders and she is wearing several bracelets. One of the bracelets is a bright green rubber bracelet with yellow cursive writing. The bracelet is in memory of her brother who passed away last summer.

To purchase the items at the Wal-Mart in Salem, Easley used a credit card belonging to Brittany's mother, Tina Smith. As a result, Salem Police have



obtained two felony warrants for Easley for attempted credit card fraud and credit card larceny. Roanoke County Police have been searching for Brittany Smith and Jeff Easley since Monday morning (Dec. 6) when Brittany's mother, Tina Smith, was found murdered at their Roanoke County residence. Tina Smith's vehicle, a 2005 Silver Dodge Neon with Virginia tags XKF-2365, was also discovered missing. Easley's red SUV was located Monday afternoon (Dec. 6) in the City of Roanoke.

Easley had been living with Brittany and her mother since October. Easley and Tina Smith had met online this summer and developed a friendship.

Brittany Smith is a seventh grader at Glenvar Middle School in Roanoke County. The school has organized a candlelight vigil for 7:00 p.m. tonight at Highlander Stadium located behind Glenvar High School.

Easley is described as a white male with brown hair, hazel eyes and tattoos on his forearm and calves. He is five feet 11 inches tall and weighs 265 pounds. Easley was last seen in the area Friday evening and works for a local landscaping company. He does have family in eastern North Carolina and northeastern Alabama.

Anyone with information is encouraged to contact Roanoke County Police via email at [findbrittany@roanokecountyva.gov](mailto:findbrittany@roanokecountyva.gov) or phone at (540) 777-8641. Updates are also available via the Roanoke County Website at [www.roanokecountyva.gov](http://www.roanokecountyva.gov) and on the Roanoke County Facebook page.

Approximately 50 representatives from Roanoke County Police, City of Roanoke Police, City of Salem Police, U.S. Marshals Service, U.S. Secret Service, FBI and Virginia State Police are deployed to work this case.

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### ROANOKE COUNTY POLICE ISSUE ALERT ON TENT PURCHASED BY WANTED SUSPECT

ROANOKE COUNTY, VA (December 8, 2010) – Roanoke County Police Wednesday afternoon released new information in the ongoing search for 12-year-old Brittany Mae Smith and 32-year-old Jeffrey Scott Easley. While at the Wal-Mart Friday night (Dec. 3) in Salem, Easley purchased a blue Ozark Trail 13x10 dome camping tent and other miscellaneous camping gear. Law enforcement has been actively scouring campsites and facilities within the region. Anyone with information about the tent is encouraged to contact Roanoke County Police at (540) 777-8641 or by email at [findbrittany@roanokecountyva.gov](mailto:findbrittany@roanokecountyva.gov).



Roanoke County, state and federal investigators spent Wednesday pursuing the more than 330 tips that have come in to the tip line and email account established for the investigation. Despite the significant volume of information coming in from the public, there have still been no confirmed sightings of Easley or Brittany beyond Friday night.

Virginia State Police are also working with North Carolina, Alabama, West Virginia, Kentucky, Ohio and Florida to issue alerts in their states for the missing vehicle, Easley and Brittany. The interest in these states is based on the location of family and friends, as well as information coming in during the course of the investigation.

At Wednesday's afternoon press conference, Roanoke County Police Chief Ray Lavinder expressed his appreciation to the Smith and Easley families for their cooperation through this ordeal. "I know these past few days have been extremely painful and difficult for these families. Tina Smith's family is now in the process of having to plan her funeral service. I can't imagine that Brittany would want to miss the chance to say farewell to her mother. Jeff, if you care for Brittany then do the selfless and kind thing. Let her be with her family right now and help with planning this service. You can give Brittany this chance to say one, last good-bye to her mother."

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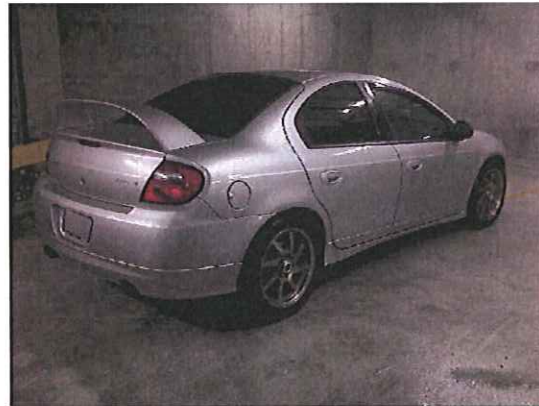
### ROANOKE COUNTY POLICE OBTAIN ABDUCTION WARRANT FOR EASLEY

#### *New Description of Silver Neon Released*

ROANOKE COUNTY, VA (December 8, 2010) – Roanoke County Police have obtained a felony arrest warrant for 32-year-old Jeffrey Scott Easley for abduction in the disappearance and search for 12-year-old Brittany Mae Smith of Roanoke County.

“Brittany is a 12-year-old child and she’s in the company of a 32-year-old man,” said Chief Ray Lavinder, Roanoke County Police. “As to what relationship Jeff Easley and Brittany may have between them is irrelevant. With a child, consent is irrelevant in the eyes of the law. She is a victim.”

As teams of Roanoke County, state and federal law enforcement, and representatives from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children pursue more than 250 tips on this case, new information has been developed concerning the description of the missing silver 2005 Dodge Neon (Virginia tag XKF-2365). The Neon has a spoiler or “fin” on the back of it. The car belonged to Brittany’s mother, Tina Smith, and has been missing since Friday, Dec. 3.



Chief Lavinder also warned anyone hiding or helping Easley that harboring a wanted person is a crime in Virginia. “I am confident that somebody out there knows where these two are. They need food. The temperatures have been in the teens at night. Helping or hiding Jeff Easley is a crime. If you care about these two, now is the time come forward.”

Anyone with information is encouraged to contact Roanoke County Police by email at [findbrittany@roanokecountyva.gov](mailto:findbrittany@roanokecountyva.gov) or by phone at (540) 777-8641.

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### **Roanoke County Police Issue Update on Search for Missing Child** *Nat'l Center for Missing & Exploited Children Provides Support; Number of Tips Nears 600*

ROANOKE COUNTY, VA (December 9, 2010) – Roanoke County Police Thursday afternoon provided the latest information in the ongoing search for 12-year-old Brittany Mae Smith and 32-year-old Jeffrey Scott Easley. The two were last seen nearly one week ago and police are growing more concerned for the young girl's safety.

Authorities have been searching for Brittany and Easley since Monday when Brittany's mother, 41-year-old Tina Smith, was found murdered in the family's west Roanoke County home. After finding the mother's body, police determined the 12-year-old was missing. Police have obtained a felony abduction warrant for Easley, a family friend.

During an afternoon press briefing at the Roanoke County Public Safety Center, members of Tina Smith's family pleaded for Brittany's safe return. Smith's sisters told reporters they want Brittany home in time for the holidays and are delaying plans for their sister's funeral until the young girl returns home. At the briefing, flyers (attached) with an up-to-date photo of Easley were distributed, indicating a dramatic weight loss from the original images previously released to the public. His original weight was estimated at 265 pounds; it is now estimated at 215 pounds. People should be aware that his appearance as well as that of Brittany Smith may be altered – hair cut or colored, facial hair removed, etc.

Since Monday, Roanoke County, state, and federal investigators have received nearly 600 tips through the tip line and email account established for the investigation. Despite the significant volume of information coming in from the public, there have still been no confirmed sightings of Easley or Brittany beyond Friday night when they were seen on surveillance video purchasing camping gear at the Salem Wal-Mart.

Approximately 50 representatives from Roanoke County Police, City of Roanoke Police, City of Salem Police, U.S. Marshals Service, U.S. Secret Service, FBI, and Virginia State Police are working on the search for Brittany and Easley. A representative from the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children is also part of the team working to find Brittany.

Anyone with information is encouraged to contact Roanoke County Police via email at [findbrittany@roanokecountyva.gov](mailto:findbrittany@roanokecountyva.gov) or phone at (540) 777-8641. Updates are also available via

the Roanoke County website at [www.roanokecountyva.gov](http://www.roanokecountyva.gov), at [www.findbrittany.com](http://www.findbrittany.com), and on the Roanoke County Facebook page.

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### **Roanoke County Police Release Walmart Surveillance Video** *Electronic Billboards about Abduction Appearing in Many Southeastern States*

ROANOKE COUNTY, VA (December 10, 2010) – Roanoke County Police Chief Ray Lavinder briefed the media at 3:30 p.m. on the search to find 12-year old Brittany Mae Smith. The Roanoke County Police have obtained a felony arrest warrant for 32-year-old Jeffrey Scott Easley in the abduction of the child. Here are the highlights of the briefing:

- The search remains a 24/7 operation involving Roanoke County Police, City of Roanoke Police, City of Salem Police, U.S. Marshals Service, U.S. Secret Service, FBI, Virginia State Police, and the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children.
- Since Monday, more than 675 tips have been received by phone (540-777-8641) and e-mail ([findbrittany@roanokecountyva.gov](mailto:findbrittany@roanokecountyva.gov)). Most tips are from Virginia, from both citizens and law enforcement agencies. All are being explored, but for now there have been no confirmed sightings. Brittany's and Easley's whereabouts are unknown.
- The Roanoke County Police have released surveillance video from the Salem Walmart, where Brittany and Easley were seen last Friday evening, December 3, between 8:00 and 8:30 p.m. purchasing camping gear and miscellaneous items. A link to the video can be found at [www.FindBrittany.com](http://www.FindBrittany.com). Release of this video was delayed for investigative purposes.
- Through the efforts of the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children, electronic billboards in multiple states, including Virginia, North Carolina, West Virginia, and Tennessee, are currently displaying information about Brittany's abduction.
- The National Center's missing child poster has also been sent to the National Association of Truck Stop Operators, which will send the poster electronically to all their member truck stops.
- People are encouraged to use e-mail, Facebook, Twitter, or other social media to get the message out about Brittany. Images, flyers, posters, and a link to the Walmart video are available on Roanoke County's website or the new, easier to remember site [www.FindBrittany.com](http://www.FindBrittany.com).

- Chief Lavinder reminded people that although she looks more mature, 12-year-old Brittany is still a child and needs to be brought to safety as soon as possible. Each day that passes places Brittany at greater risk.

Unless there is breaking news, the next briefing will be at 3:30 p.m. on Saturday, December 11 at Roanoke County's Public Safety Center, 5925 Cove Road, Roanoke, VA.

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**Below is the email that alerted the media that 12-year old Brittany Smith had been located.**

**From:** Teresa Hall  
**To:** Adkins, Miranda; afoster@wset.com; amanda.codispoti@roanoke.com; Amy Morris; Andrea Amiel; Angela Hatcher; aprichmond@ap.org; aroberts@wsls.com; Becky Freemal; Bedford Bulletin; Bella Magazine; Beverly Amsler; Blue Ridge Business Journal; Breanna Rick; Brian Kelley; Bruce Hedrick - WMDV/WGSR-TV; cathy.benson@botetourtview.com; Cave Spring Connection; cavespringconnection@mainstreetnewspapers.com; Cody Lowe; Connie Stevens Henson; David Parsons; David Seidel; David Tate; dcexaminer; deannamalone@clearchannel.com; desk@witn.com; Drew Densmore; Duncan Adams; Dutchie Mirolli; Dwayne Yancey; Education; elizabeth1116@hotmail.com; Evan Jones; Flora, Emily; Franklin News; Franklin NewsPost (newspost2@charterinternet.com); Gage Harter; Gene Marrano; Hale, Stan; Harvey.T.Goldberg@abc.com; Heather Bell; Hibbert, Meg; hiliary.magacs@witn.com; Jay Warren; jayhart@clearchannel.com; jbinner@southbostonva.us; Jean Jadhon; jennifer.m.pereira@abc.com; Jenny Kincaid Boone; Jerry Caldwell; Jessica.M.Hopper@abc.com; jgunn@actionnewsjax.com; Jim Kent; Joe Dashiell; jorge.valencia@roanoke.com; jshotton@ncmec.org; Karen McNew; Keith Humphry; Kimberly McBroom; Larry Contratti; Larry odell; Lawson, Debbie; Leisure Publishing; lhenley@wric.com; Lindsey Nair; McCoy, Ed; mecassada@yahoo.com; Melissa Preas; Natalie Faunce; New Messenger; Newsroom for Roanoke Times; Newsroom for WDBJ TV; Newsroom for WFIR Radio; Newsroom for WSET TV; Newsroom for WSLS TV; newsroom@wtop.com; nturyn@wset.com; Paul at City Magazine; Penny Anderson; philip.gast@turner.com; Rhonda Fleming; Richmond Times; Rick Mattioni; Roanoke Regional Chamber; Robert Freis; Schnabel, Megan; Scott Leamon; Smith Mountain Eagle; sonny@gazettevirginian.com; SoSalem; sskotak@ap.org; Stephanie Ogilvie; Steve.A.Osunsami@abc.com; Stuart Revercomb; Swo-Co; The Roanoke Star; Thom Brewer; Thornton, Tim; Tim Martin; Valley Business Front; vintonmessenger@mainstreetnewspapers.com(...)  
**CC:** corinne.geller@vsp.virginia.gov; Gray Craig; Penny Lloyd  
**Date:** 12/10/2010 6:28 PM  
**Subject:** Urgent - Jeffrey Easley & Brittany Mae Smith LOCATED

Good evening,

12-year old Brittany Mae Smith has been safely located and 32-year old Jeffrey Scott Easley of Roanoke County, VA has been taken into custody in another state.

More details to follow. We will hold a press conference at 8:00 p.m. in the lobby of the Roanoke County Public Safety Center located at 5925 Cove Road, Roanoke.

Teresa

Teresa Hamilton Hall  
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Roanoke County, VA

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[www.RoanokeCountyVA.gov](http://www.RoanokeCountyVA.gov)





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### MISSING ROANOKE COUNTY GIRL LOCATED SAFELY IN CALIFORNIA

*32-year-old Abductor in Custody in San Francisco, Calif.*

ROANOKE COUNTY, VA (December 10, 2010) – Roanoke County Police Chief Ray Lavinder tonight announced that missing 12-year-old Brittany Mae Smith and 32-year-old Jeffrey Scott Easley have been safely located in San Francisco, California.

Friday afternoon (Dec. 10) Brittany and Easley were in a retail store in San Francisco when a woman recognized them from a broadcast news report. San Francisco Police were notified and immediately responded to the store. Easley was taken into custody without incident and is currently being held in San Francisco pending his extradition to Roanoke County, Virginia. Easley faces a felony abduction charge in Roanoke County and felony counts of attempted credit card fraud and credit card larceny in the City of Roanoke.

Brittany is safe with San Francisco Police and in good health. She has had the opportunity to talk with family in Virginia and will be returning home soon.

San Francisco Police notified Roanoke County Police of their discovery at 6 p.m. (EST). San Francisco Police are processing the location where Brittany and Easley had been staying, which is not far from the retail store. Police are still searching for the silver 2005 Dodge Neon.

Several Roanoke County Police detectives will head to California to work with California authorities and return Brittany and Easley to Virginia. Meanwhile, Roanoke County Police are continuing their investigation into the death of Brittany's mother, Tina Smith.

"To Brittany's family, I want to express my sincere appreciation for your patience and support during this past week," said Chief Lavinder. "Your willingness to go public and reach out to Brittany and Jeff took incredible courage and strength. We also thank Jeff's family for their cooperation and for also making the difficult decision to come forward and make a public appeal to him."

Chief Lavinder also publicly recognized the more than 50 law enforcement personnel working this case from Roanoke County Police, State Police, FBI, U.S. Marshals Service, Secret Service, the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children, City of Salem Police, and City of Roanoke Police. "I personally want to extend my thanks to and applaud the incredible work accomplished by the team of investigators who have worked day and night since Monday to find

Brittany and bring her home safely. Their outstanding professionalism, dedication, and skill have played a critical role in solving this case.”

In addition, Chief Lavinder applauded the efforts of broadcast and print media in helping bring the search for Brittany and Easley to a successful resolve: “Thanks to the media’s vigilance and persistence to keep this story out there and keep the public informed, we are able to bring Brittany safely home to her family and put Jeffrey Easley behind bars where he belongs.”

Brittany and Easley were last seen Friday, Dec. 3, in Roanoke County. On Monday, Dec. 6, Brittany’s mother, Tina, was found murdered at the home the three of them shared in Roanoke County. Thus began a nationwide search for Brittany and Easley and a homicide investigation into the circumstances surrounding Tina’s death.

The weeklong investigation generated more than 700 leads from the people and law enforcement agencies nationwide.

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