

Sheriff



Larry Ashley, Okaloosa County Sheriff

1250 Eglin Parkway • Shalimar, Florida 32579-1234
Phone: (850) 651-7410 • Email: sheriff@sheriff-okaloosa.org

March 1, 2013- Two Pages

FWB MOM CHARGED IN DEATH OF NEWBORN



The Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office has charged a Fort Walton Beach woman with an open count of murder and aggravated child abuse in connection with the death of her newborn daughter. 29-year old Tonisha Lache Crowell was booked into the Okaloosa County Jail in Crestview around one a.m. this morning.

Investigators say Crowell went to Fort Walton Beach Medical Center February 26th due to vaginal bleeding. When she was examined by a doctor, she denied any pregnancy or birth. However hospital staff reported that Crowell had undergone an ultrasound at the hospital two days prior after complaining of abdominal pain, and been deemed approximately 38 weeks pregnant.

Crowell continued her denials when an OCSO investigator arrived at the hospital to question her. Deputies responded to Crowell's townhouse at 996 Leigh Anne Lane in Fort Walton Beach. They say Crowell's fiance said he had sent Crowell to the hospital after she experienced heavy bleeding she attributed to rectal bleeding.

During a search, they located a seven-pound-baby girl in a white garbage bag north of the townhomes, near a wooden fence around 7:10 p.m. When a deputy thought she saw the infant's chest rise, she attached an AED or automatic external defibrillator. It advised do not shock, so she began CPR and called for an ambulance. During lifesaving attempts at the Fort Walton



The Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office is accredited by the Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation.

"The Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office provides equal access and equal opportunity in employment and services and does not discriminate"

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Beach Medical Center Emergency Room, the infant tried to breathe at a rate of approximately four breaths a minute but ultimately was pronounced dead at 8 p.m.

Doctors believe the baby had been born around 3 p.m. Investigators say the newborn had been subjected to temperatures below 50 degrees Fahrenheit for up to four hours prior to its discovery and also suffered blood loss due to an unclamped or untied umbilical cord.

Crowell told investigators she misled her fiance and others about her pregnancy and the birth. She also relayed that after the baby was born into a toilet, she thought it was dead and never checked for a pulse or to see if it was breathing, and did not call 9-1-1. She put the newborn in a trash bag and took the bag outside.

Investigators say a child in the townhome during the timeframe when doctors believe the birth took place reported hearing a baby crying while Crowell was in the bathroom.

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IN THE CIRCUIT/COUNTY COURT IN THE FIRST JUDICIAL CIRCUIT IN AND FOR OKALOOSA COUNTY, FLORIDA

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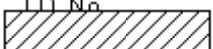
OKALOOSA CO SHERIFF'S OFFICE

WARRANT/OTTIC SERVED

REPORT NO: OCSO14ARR001965

Jail Booking No	Offense No OCSO14OFF001977	Other No OCSO14CAD035300	OBTs
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[SUSPECT]

<u>Last</u>	<u>First</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Race</u>	<u>Sex</u>	<u>DOB</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Hgt</u>	<u>Wgt</u>
CROWELL	TONISHA	LACHE		B	F	12/10/1984	29		0
<u>Eyes</u>	<u>Hair</u>	<u>MNI Number</u>	<u>SSN</u>	<u>ID No</u>	<u>St</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>OCA/Agency ID</u>		
BRO	BLK	OCSO14MNI001981			VA	D/L			

Birth Location: City: County: State: Nation: Citizenship:

Address

996 LEIGH ANN LN FORT WALTON BEACH FL 32547

Occupations (Current/Last Known is Listed First)

* none found in MNI *

Aliases (Last, First Middle Title DOB)

CROWELL, TONISHA LACHER 12/10/1984

Street Names

* none found in MNI *

[INCIDENT INFORMATION]

Occurred Date Range: 2/26/2014 14:45 to 2/26/2014 17:05 Lat / Long 30.45531 / -86.63206

No.	Di	Street	Apt/Lot	City	ST	Zip	(GEO)
996		LEIGH ANN LANE		FORT WALTON BEAC	FL	32548	2 - 17 - -

[CHARGES]

782.043

HOMICIDE

MURDER NOT PREMEDITATED DURING SPECIFIC FELONY

<u>Counts</u>	<u>Level</u>	<u>Degree</u>	<u>GOC</u>	<u>UCR</u>	<u>NCIC</u>	<u>AON</u>	<u>Bond Amount</u>
1	Felony	First	Not Applicable	090A		912	

827.03.2a

CRUELTY TOWARD CHILD

AGGRAVATE CHILD ABUSE

<u>Counts</u>	<u>Level</u>	<u>Degree</u>	<u>GOC</u>	<u>UCR</u>	<u>NCIC</u>	<u>AON</u>	<u>Bond Amount</u>
1	Felony	First	Not Applicable	130B		3802	

[STATEMENT OF PROBABLE CAUSE / NARRATIVE]

On February 26, 2014, the Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office was called to 1000 Mar Walt Drive, Fort Walton Beach Medical Center, in reference to a female presenting at the Emergency with vaginal bleeding. The source of the bleeding was due to the fact that she had, within hours, given birth to a baby.

The female, Tonisha Crowell, denied she had been pregnant and denied that she had given birth. The staff at the hospital recalled that Ms. Crowell was just seen two days prior. She had presented to them with abdominal pains, at which time an ultrasound was completed and she was told she was pregnant with a baby girl. The technician who ran the ultrasound positively identified the female in bed 13 as the same female he ran the ultrasound test on two days prior; the female in bed 13 was identified as Tonisha Crowell.

Ms. Crowell continued to deny that that she was ever pregnant or given birth; however, when Crowell was examined by the doctor he determined Crowell had given birth approximately four hours earlier, based on the size and position of her uterus.

Even after several contacts by Investigator T Robinson, Ms. Crowell continued to deny being pregnant or delivering a child. While speaking on her cellular telephone with Mr. Ricky Patterson, while at the hospital, she told Mr. Patterson, "You are going to hate me." She then admitted to being pregnant and she had the baby at the house. She advised she

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OKALOOSA CO SHERIFF'S OFFICE

REPORT NO: OCSO14ARR001965

thought the infant was dead; however, did not check to see if the infant was breathing. She placed the infant into a plastic trash bag and placed the trash bag on the side of the house. Mr. Patterson advised he did not go and get the bag, but had individuals call the "Police".

Deputies responded to 996 Leigh Ann Drive, and Deputy Kelly Henderson located a white garbage bag to the north of the townhouses, to the northwest corner of the wood fence. Inside the plastic bag, she found an Infant baby girl. Deputy Henderson thought she saw the chest "rise", she attached the AED but it advised "no shock" so she started CPR and called for an ambulance.

Per written/sworn statement by Christen Fowler (EMS) the infant female was then transported to Fort Walton Beach Medical Center via EMS with an "Agonal" rhythm of 20-30 beats per minute. During life-saving efforts at the FWBMC Emergency Room the infant attempted to breathe on her own at a rate of approximately four breaths per minute; efforts to save the Infant continued until she was pronounced deceased by attending medical personnel at 2003 hours.

Mr. Patterson advised he was not aware that Ms. Crowell was pregnant, even though they have had two children in common. Ms. Crowell had provided him medical reasons for why her stomach was upset and enlarged, to include enlarged colon, gas, and constipation. Mr. Patterson advised sometime between 3 and 3:30 pm his children came to him and stated Ms. Crowell was bleeding. He and Ms. Carter checked on her as she was in the downstairs bathroom. Mr. Patterson advised Ms. Crowell was undressed from the waist down and he observed what he described as smeared blood on her inner thighs. She initially told him she had a severe bowel movement. To which he told her she needed to go to the hospital. Ms. Carter took her to Fort Walton Beach Medical Center, but came home when she was told she could not go back with her.

While Ms. Carter and Ms. Crowell were gone, he continued to clean up the downstairs bathroom, which Ms. Crowell had already started cleaning. When Ms. Carter returned home, she completed cleaning the bathroom. The cleaning rags and towels; two white rags, a blue rag, a faded green towel and a pink towel; were then placed into the washer to be laundered. Mr. Patterson advised all items are still in the dryer. He advised Ms. Crowell had already begun to clean and mop the bathroom area. They had cleaned the upstairs bathroom, the downstairs bathroom and the trail of blood in the garage prior to being informed that Ms. Crowell had given birth.

During a recorded interview Ms. Crowell admitted to misleading Mr. Patterson and others as to her pregnancy. Crowell also admitted that while she was cleaning the house she felt a pain in her stomach and thought she had to have a bowel movement. While sitting on the toilet, she delivered the infant into the toilet. She removed the infant from the toilet and placed the infant on a bathrobe and shorts on the bathroom floor. Believing the infant was dead she then placed the infant into a trash bag, took the trash bag outside and placed the trash bag next to the building where her residence was located.

Before the Infant was retrieved by Law Enforcement and EMS she was subjected temperatures lower than 50 Degrees Fahrenheit for a period of approximately 3.5 to 4 hours and also blood loss due to an un-tethered umbilical cord.

During the interview Ms. Crowell was asked why she didn't check for a pulse on the infant, check to see if the infant was breathing or why she didn't call "911". Crowell related she was afraid that people would think that she did something wrong to cause the birth of the infant. Crowell also confirmed the infant was born at approximately 3:00 PM. Ms. Crowell confirmed she lived with Ricky Patterson at 996 Leigh Ann Lane.

Additionally, Crowell admitted it was "my fault", "it is my fault".

During the interview with Department of Children and Families Investigator Remeeka Wilson, [REDACTED] child related that he heard a baby crying while [REDACTED] was in the bathroom.

Based on the evidence developed from recorded statements, written statement(s), and subsequent investigation(s) this officer has reason to believe and does believe Tonisha Crowell did violate FSS 827.03, Aggravated Child Abuse, and FSS 782.04, Murder, in Okaloosa County, Florida.

Signature (Arresting Officer)

KALTZ, CAMERON
Name

252
ID/SSN

OCSO14ARR001965

Printed On: 3/1/2014 8:18:14 AM

COPY

Page 2 of 4

[ROBINST 2/28/2014 10:49]

IN THE CIRCUIT/COUNTY COURT IN THE FIRST JUDICIAL CIRCUIT IN AND FOR OKALOOSA COUNTY, FLORIDA

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OKALOOSA CO SHERIFF'S OFFICE

WARRANT/OTTIC SERVED

REPORT NO: OCSO14ARR001965

Subscribed and sworn to (or affirmed) before me this 1 day of March A.D., 2014 by _____

who is personally known to me or has produced _____ as identification.

Signature _____ Notary Public _____ LEO _____ CO

Commission No: _____ My Commission Expires _____

Supervisor Signature _____ Date _____ Supervisor Name (Please Print) _____ Rank _____

[PHYSICAL EVIDENCE] [NO PHYSICAL EVIDENCE LISTED]

[ARREST INFORMATION]

Arrested	Residency	Injured	Extent of Injury	Resist			
2/28/2014 23:31	Within jurisdiction	None	N/A	No			
	Arrested Prior	Arrest Jurisdiction	Alcohol	Drugs			
	No	Within jurisdiction	Unknown	Unknown			
No.	Di	Street	A/L	City	ST	Zip	Lat / Long
1200	E	JAMES LEE BD		CRESTVIEW	FL	32539	30.7625 / -86.55806
Arresting Officer	Unit		(GEO)	1 - 5 - -	Officer Type		
252 KALTZ, CAMERON	OCSO/FSV/NORTH/AC/C-SHIFT						
Reporting Officer	Unit		Original Offense Jurisdiction				
066 ROBINSON, TRAVIS E	OCSO/FSV/INV/CID		OCSO				
Forward to for approval							
OCSO/FSV/INV/CID							

Bond Set by LEO at Time of Arrest & Booking: \$0.00

- None
- ROR
- Cash
- Pro

Bond Set by Judge None ROR/Sign

Cash PTR

Any

Pro

PtdQ

Purge 30 DAY FILE _____

SC _____

Return Court: CIRCUIT COURT: FELONY Date: 4/8/2014 Time: 15:30

Instructions: OKALOOSA COUNTY COURTHOUSE, ANNEX EXT. FWB FL

IN THE CIRCUIT/COUNTY COURT IN THE FIRST JUDICIAL CIRCUIT IN AND FOR OKALOOSA COUNTY, FLORIDA

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OKALOOSA CO SHERIFF'S OFFICE

WARRANT/OTTIC SERVED

REPORT NO: OCSO14ARR001965

[COURT INFORMATION]

Court Judge Date
Sent CIRCUIT
Rcvd CIRCUIT FLOWERS 2/28/2014
Court Case Number 14-1977

Assigned To:

[DISPOSITION]

Disposition Type Release Type Other Desc
Release Date Release Time Release Officer Printed Printed By
No
Released To

Court DispositionType Court Disposition Description

[ADDITIONAL PERSONS]

COURT DISPOSITION:

(right index)

No Bill / Petition Issue Warrant Prosecution Approved

Signature of Assistant State Attorney Date

COPY