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News Release

*For Immediate Release*

**Felony Lane Gang in Springfield**

For months, detectives in the financial crimes unit have been working a case involving numerous vehicle break-ins throughout Springfield and the surrounding area which began in March of 2011. Recently, detectives were able to pinpoint who was breaking into some of the vehicles and where they were from.

The SPD learned the group responsible for the vehicle break-ins are from Florida and are commonly called the Felony Lane Gang. The group's M.O. is similar in nearly every case, they hire females from the state of Florida and transport them to locations throughout the United States. Another small group of individuals consisting of 2-4 men and women also accompanies them to the same location who are responsible for breaking into the vehicles and providing the checks, credit cards and ID's of the victims to the hired women from Florida. The women then pose as the owners of the checks, cashing them at multiple banks around town. The dollar amounts vary from hundreds to thousands of dollars forged on stolen checks.

Detectives were able to locate two women responsible for forging and cashing stolen checks here in Springfield. Upon contact with them at a local area motel, detectives found approximately 34 packages of wigs used by the women to change their identities when they went through bank drive-thrus and attempted to match the victim's description. They would also use the same stolen drivers licenses and credit cards as secondary means of identification to cash the checks.

The Felony Lane Gang is a highly organized group of approximately 100 individuals from Florida who have been committing the same crimes throughout the United States and have hit numerous locations throughout Missouri in addition to Springfield; those include Raytown, Independence, Kansas City and Mt. Vernon.

The SPD would like to remind the public to not only take the time to lock your vehicles when you arrive at your destination, but to place your valuables in your trunk prior to your arrival. The SPD is seeing an alarming trend where suspects will watch open parking lots, looking for women who not only don't lock their vehicles, but will walk to the trunk and place items there. The suspects will also watch the victims as they are placing their valuables under seats or in the back seats of the vehicle or as they are attempting to conceal personal items such as purses or backpacks. The locations typically watched are churches, fitness centers, parks and restaurants.