

Police solve burglary case in less than a day

Written by George Browning

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Harold F. Kotouch, 35, Salem and his wife Angela Kotouch, 32, were arrested last week for their alleged involvement in a burglary on East State Road 60.

Harold Kotouch is facing one count of burglary, a class B felony, one count of theft, a class D felony and one count of receiving stolen property, also a class D felony.

Angela is facing a D felony for receiving stolen property.

Washington County Sheriff Claude Combs said his department was called at about 4:30 p.m. on April 8 to investigate a burglary on East State Road 60.

Combs said Preston Shell answered the call and went to the scene to investigate.

“He took pictures of the damage and found a foot print in the mud and took pictures of that,” Combs said. “We talked to the neighbors and one of them had seen the pickup truck with two people in it, a man and a woman, driving slowly up and down the road around 10 a.m.”

Shell then returned to the station and gave dispatchers the identifiers of the truck. One of the dispatchers recognized the description of the vehicle from an investigation by the Kentucky State Police a few months earlier.

“She remembered where the truck was in Southway Villa and who it belonged to,” Combs said. Friday Combs, a member of the Salem Police Department, Washington County Detective Brent Miller and Indiana State Police Detective Scott Stewart executed a search warrant in the Kotouch's home on Hickory Street in Southway Villa.

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“We found several items from the April 8 burglary at that residences,” Combs said. “We brought them in for questioning and one of them confessed and told us where we could find the rest of the items had been sold. We retrieved all the items that were sold for the property owner and locked the two of them up.”

The footprint found at the scene was also matched with one of the suspects.

Most cases aren't completely solved in a matter of a 24 hour period, but Combs said it was just an example of a lot of different things coming together.

“We got a good break with the neighbor seeing the vehicle in the area,” he said. “That gave us a good start. Then in the dispatch center we had the same two girls working the night Kentucky called and that put us right where the vehicle was. That left us working to get a search warrant. IT took all day, but we finally got enough to get one.”

At press time Monday both were still incarcerated at the Washington County Detention Center.