

## Ashe Woman Charged in Car Theft

Written by Steve Frank

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A car reported as stolen from Ashe County was recovered in Wilkesboro Friday, with the woman driving the vehicle arrested and charged with a number of counts. The investigation intensified after questions about the location of the woman's 2-year old son. About noon Friday, Wilkesboro Police were told the stolen 1996 Hyundai Elantra was on its way to the Coffee House there, and police in the area spotted the car on Oakwoods Road, then watched it pull onto the lot of the restaurant. Wilkesboro officers used their cars to block the vehicle in a parking space and arrest the woman as she exited the car. A search of the car turned up items of drug paraphernalia, and police noted a child seat in the back and asked suspect Jennifer Alice Andrews about her son, apparently with some knowledge of the situation, and she told the officers that he was with friend and was safe—but would not give the person's name. The 24-year old Jefferson woman was taken into custody, charged with the Ashe warrants for the theft of the car, possession of the stolen vehicle and of drug paraphernalia in Wilkesboro warrants, with bond set at \$7500. As Andrews was being processed, officers received word that her child was possibly missing, and questioning Andrews about it, officers were given a phone number, but the person who answered would not give specific information about the boy's location. After a search in the Moravian Falls area, the child and a man turned up at the Wilkes Courthouse just before 5pm, the man telling officers when he found out that the child was the subject of a search, he decided to take the child to law enforcement. He explained that Andrews and her son were at his residence several days before when he returned home, asking to stay there due to a domestic situation in Ashe County. The man said that Andrews asked him to watch the child while she went to the store, and during that trip, she was arrested. DSS has become involved in the case, and a child abandonment case is open, according to Wilkesboro Police.