License plate reader system helps nab fugitive

Wednesday, August 13, 2008
A man accused in Texas of sexually assaulting a minor was arrested in Caddo Parish today after he was identified by deputies using a new license plate recognition system.

Caddo Sheriff Steve Prator said Larry B. Johnson, 51, of Addison, Texas, was booked into the Caddo Correctional Center on a fugitive warrant following an investigation by the Sheriff's Patrol and Detective divisions.

Prator said Deputy Mike Vaitkus was on routine patrol using the new license plate recognition system to search for stolen vehicles when the system alerted on a license plate in the El Dorado Casino parking garage.The system identified the plate as belonging to a wanted person. Vaitkus confirmed the information through headquarters and researched the warrant further, learning the suspect had fled Addison and that city police there were looking for him in connection with the sexual assault charges.

Vaitkus called for assistance from the detective division, which used unmarked sheriff's cars to conduct surveillance of the vehicle. Shortly afterward, Johnson returned to his car and was taken into custody by sheriff's deputies.

Deputies seized Johnson's BMW and other evidence inside the vehicle.

The license plate recognition system which aided in Johnson's arrest was purchased by the Sheriff's Office this past spring with funds donated by Red Ball Oxygen. Note: *See April news releases at caddosheriff.org for more information.