

# The Times-Picayune

## 2nd Crimestoppers billboard suspect arrested

### Tactic is getting results, JPSO says

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By Allen Powell II

A billboard campaign by the Jefferson Parish Sheriff's Office and Crimestoppers aimed at nabbing criminals posted another success this week with the arrest in Houston of an Avondale man suspected of murder.

Anthony Smith, 25, was arrested Tuesday at a relative's home after a tip to Crimestoppers, Jefferson Parish Chief Deputy Newell Normand announced Wednesday. Smith had been wanted on a second-degree murder charge since July 2006 in connection with the shooting death of Kendall Payne, 31, in Avondale.

Payne was found face down in the grass in front of his home, and deputies believe he was killed over a neighborhood dispute. Smith, who was arrested without incident, is awaiting transport to Louisiana.

It was the second arrest in the past month that has been tied to the billboards launched in New Orleans and Jefferson Parish in November. On Dec. 6, Bennie Bannister, 37, was booked with second-degree murder in the shooting death of Alvin Clark Jr. of Jefferson on Sept. 4. Bannister was arrested in the Beechgrove apartment complex in Westwego.

Crimestoppers has placed a billboard in West Jefferson and in Central City featuring the pictures of four men accused of homicide. Anonymous tips that lead to indictments can produce up to a \$5,000 cash reward.

Normand said that recent arrests are proof that the program is working, mainly because Crimestoppers extends the reach of law enforcement agencies and provides a level of protection for people with information.

"This is evidence that the community is coming forward to help us," he said. "We applaud the public for the role they have played in these arrests."

Darlene Cusanza, the executive director of Crimestoppers, said the agency has seen its calls double in the past few weeks because of the increased interest in the region about crime. She urged residents to maintain their enthusiasm, and said that the agency should be posting some new criminals on its billboards within the next month.

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