Sandlin/Keen Meth

On 02/18/2012 at approximately at 10:56 P.M. deputies from the Echols County Sheriff's Office responded to the Sandlin residence located at 1426 Sardis Church Road after receiving information of possible methamphetamine being manufactured there. Upon arrival deputies observed Joseph Sandlin 30 of Lake Park and Kenneth Keen 54 of Lakeland at the rear of the residence trying to burn something. Upon initial contact and after receiving verbal consent to search from Sandlin deputies noticed that Sandlin and Keen were trying to burn a meth lab and all of its components. Deputies retrieved the evidence from the fire as well as some finished Methamphetamine product, which was wrapped in paper on the ground near the spot where both individuals were standing. An initial pat of Keen, Keen produced and dropped a hollowed out pen from his pocket which Keen later admitted was used for smoking Meth. Keen reached down and grabbed the pen before deputies could get it and threw it into the fire. Both Keen and Sandlin were taken into custody. Both individuals admitted to snorting and smoking meth earlier. While in custody Keen retrieved a hidden hand cuff key from somewhere on his person and attempted to use it to unlock his handcuffs for a possible escape attempt. Deputies retrieved the defective key from Keen. Both Sandlin and Keen were charged with felony manufacturing methamphetamine, and felony possession of methamphetamine and Keen was charged additionally with destruction and tampering with evidence. Sheriff Randy Courson stated that this is about the fourth time in the past four months in which they have responded to this particular residence for methamphetamine activity , which has resulted in several arrest. Sheriff Courson stated "We will continue to be aggressive in addressing and combating these types of calls." Courson also credits the calls coming in from concerned citizens stating "This is a joint effort between the Sheriff's Office and the citizens of this community in an attempt to clean up these areas. "A lot of what we deal with is people who are not even from the county, but who come from elsewhere to try and produce this poison in our backyard and we just won't stand for it."