

Ravalli County Sheriff's Office  
205 Bedford Street, Suite G  
Hamilton, MT 59840



Chris Hoffman, Sheriff

Stephen Holton, Undersheriff

**\*\* SPECIAL PRESS RELEASE \*\***

**Ravalli County Sheriff Chris Hoffman released information today regarding an arson case that occurred shortly after midnight on 05-15-2016 in the Florence area. Ravalli County 911 received a report from 57-year-old Lori Miller who reported a fire in the living room of her home. Sheriff's Deputies and Montana Highway Patrol responded to the call with Volunteer Fire Departments from Florence, Stevensville, and Three-Mile.**

**Montana Highway Patrol Trooper Winchell was the first responder on scene and located Miller still inside the smoke filled living room with fire burning approximately four feet from Miller. Miller, who was intoxicated, initially refused to leave the residence and Officer Winchell removed Miller to a safe location outside and away from the structure. Officer Winchell then searched the home for any remaining people or pets. Trooper Winchell was later treated and released at a local medical facility as a precaution due to smoke inhalation. Florence Volunteer Fire Department arrived within fourteen minutes of the first call and extinguished the fire which was confined to flooring in the living room area.**

**No one was seriously injured and there were no significant property damages, due in large part to the heroic efforts of Trooper Winchell and the Florence Volunteer Fire Department.**

**Through the course of the Ravalli County Sheriff's investigation, evidence was discovered that indicated the fire was started intentionally and Lori Miller was subsequently arrested for the offense of Arson. The investigation is on-going with assistance from an investigator with the State Fire Marshal. Sheriff Hoffman credited the safe outcome to the quick and selfless response from all of the agencies involved.**