

# "They essentially financially destroyed that fire company ..."

## Lewisberry Fire Co.'s former chief and president charged with embezzling money

ELIZABETH EVANS – The York Dispatch

The former chief and former president of the Lewisberry Fire Co. are free on bail, charged with embezzling thousands of dollars from the fire company.

Markwood C. Albright II, 37, of 303 Harrisburg Pike in Dillsburg, is charged with theft by unlawful taking, theft by failure to make required disposition of funds, access device fraud, receiving stolen property and criminal conspiracy.

Jennifer Lou Cassada, 37, of 308 N. Third St. in Rio Grande, N.J., is charged with the same offenses.

Both were arraigned Tuesday and released on \$25,000 unsecured bail each, according to Newberry Township Police Chief John Snyder. Unsecured bail means the defendants didn't have to put up any money.

Police allege Albright and Cassada stole at least \$11,815.52 from the fire company and used the money to pay bills and to take a Caribbean cruise together.

**'Destroyed':** "They essentially financially destroyed that fire company," Snyder said. "It's a shame."

Lewisberry Fire Co. is no longer an active fire company, he said.

"The fire company was in a lot of financial difficulties. They had a lot of bills to pay," the chief said. "They did the best they could to try to fix the problem, but I think there was too much damage. ...

There were good people in that fire company, and they got a raw deal."

Snyder said Albright was chief of the company for several years, and Cassada served as its president for several years.

Investigators believe they were romantically involved at the time, Snyder confirmed. He said they turned themselves in and cooperated with the investigation, done by township Sgt. Steven Lutz.

"He did an incredible job," Snyder said of Lutz. "We're not forensic accountants -- we're cops. But Steve tracked all the transactions he could."

**How much?** Charging documents state a separate forensic audit was done by the Pennsylvania Auditor General's Office, which concluded Albright and Cassada stole at least \$13,661 from Lewisberry Fire Co.

Snyder said police believe they can only prove the pair stole \$11,815.52.

"It's my opinion we will never know how much they took," he said. "There's money we can't track. A lot of business with fire companies is done in cash. ... So how do you ever know how much was taken?"

Albright and Cassada used the stolen money, in part, to pay their utility and other bills, and also spent nearly \$4,400 to take a Caribbean cruise together, charging documents allege.

Neither Albright nor Cassada could be reached for comment.