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Baby's remains found in Sykesville fire; woman sought

07/14/2007

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SYKESVILLE - Police have discovered what are believed to be the remains of an infant child inside a Sykesville home that was destroyed in a fire early Thursday. DuBois-based state police said in the course of the investigation at 90 Dr. Fugate Drive, Sykesville, the remains were found. An autopsy has been scheduled to confirm the identity of the child and the manner of death. According to Jefferson County Coroner Bernard Snyder, the remains of the baby have been transported to Erie for an autopsy to be conducted by Dr. Eric Vey. Snyder said Vey is a forensic pathologist and use of his services is standard procedure in such a case.

Snyder said "it's going to be a while" before officials know the identity of the baby, and other details such as its sex, when it died and how it died. Snyder added that officials do not currently know for sure who the baby's parents are. He is not aware of any criminal charges being filed yet. Police are asking the public for help in locating a woman who lived in the home. Out of concern for her welfare, police are trying to locate Joey Lynn Offutt, 33. Offutt is described as 5 feet, 3 inches tall, with a thin build and brown hair and eyes. She may be driving a red 1994 Saturn coupe bearing Virginia registration JXN8871. The car reportedly has visible damage to the front portion of the hood. She has been officially declared a missing person and has been entered into the National Crime Information Center data base. Anyone with information is asked to contact police at 371-4652.

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