**Arrest made in serial killings**

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St. Landry Bureau Writer

**OPELOUSAS** A 33-year-old Lafayette  
man, described by law enforcement officials  
as a serial killer, was arrested Tuesday after  
driving the car of his last alleged victim  
more than four days.

Relatives of John Peter Malveaux, 304  
Snipe Road, called the St. Landry Parish  
Sheriff’s Office Monday night, saying he  
was driving a 1981 Dodge Dynasty previously  
owned by Tammy Duplichon Smith.  
“He was seen driving the car as early as  
8:30 a.m. Thursday,” said  
Chief Deputy Laura Balthazar. Smith was missing  
since last Wednesday. Her  
body was found in Evangeline Parish on Monday.  
Breaux Bridge police  
found Malveaux sleeping  
in the car Tuesday morning,  
detained him and then turned him over  
to the St. Landry Parish  
Sheriff’s Department.

Law enforcement agencies had been  
looking for Malveaux in connection  
with four murders this year:

- Tammy Duplichon Smith, 30, of Lafayette. Her body was discovered Monday in Evangeline Parish. She had been missing since Oct. 30.
- Carolyn Breaux Nichols, 26, of Opelousas. Her body was discovered July 26 near the Martin Luther King Extension in Opelousas.
- Melinda Blake Wilson, of Baltimore, Md. Her body was recovered hours after the discovery of Nichols near the Opelousas Airport.
- Melissa Thomas of Opelousas. She was discovered early in the morning of Jan. 31 in the Little Zion Cemetery in Opelousas.

In addition to being a suspect in the four  
murders, Opelousas police are charging  
Malveaux with aggravated rape and  
tried first-degree murder in connection  
with an attempt in the 14-year-old.

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**Killings**

Opelousas woman on Oct. 19.  
According to police, Malveaux  
lured the woman to a shed in  
the north Opelousas and almost  
strangled her.  
“We found her almost dead,”  
Opelousas Police Chief Larry  
Caillier said of the victim. “He  
attacked her and left her for  
death.

He said the nature of the  
attack was identical to the four  
murders. All the women were  
black and sexually assaulted. The  
four women killed were all strangled  
to death and left partially  
made in isolated areas.

Due to the continuing nature  
of the investigation, law enforce-  
ment officials declined to release  
any further details.

“There are similarities  
between them all,” said Rene  
Seyer, Chief of Detectives for  
the St. Landry Parish Sheriff’s  
Office. “But as for the crime  
scenes, we can’t get into that.”

On Tuesday, Malveaux was  
charged with first-degree murder  
and second-degree murder in the  
education of Wilson and Nichols. He  
is expected to be charged in the  
other cases over the next week.

Investigators from the St.  
Landry Parish Sheriff’s Office,  
the Evangeline Parish Sheriff’s  
Office and the Opelousas Police  
Department chased Malveaux  
for the past several months  
trying to apprehend  
Malveaux.

Malveaux was taken into custody by Breaux Bridge police at 6:45 a.m. Tuesday in the parking lot of  
Walmart, 1400  
“Please see KILLINGS on page 8A.

The residents of St. Landry Parish can sleep  
at ease tonight.”  
Laura Balthazar  
St. Landry Parish sheriff’s deputy

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