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Saturday, June 11, 2005

## Grandparents arrested for unlawful imprisonment

**Port Orchard, Wash.** – Two South Kitsap grandparents are now under arrest following an early-morning investigation into allegations of child abuse.

A Sheriff's patrol deputy was dispatched to the 10000 block of Bethel Burley Road SE, South Kitsap, at approximately 4:26 a.m. this morning, for a report of a welfare check request on a young boy seen walking northbound along the roadway barefoot, attired only in pajamas. The deputy found a 10 year-old boy... wet, muddy, cold, tired, thirsty... and undernourished. The boy told the deputy that he had "escaped" from his grandparent's house.

The patrol deputy quickly realized that he was dealing with a victim of child abuse when he noticed excessive bruising on the boy's face, arms, legs and trunk. A plastic "zip tie" was still attached to the boy's ankle and there were ligature marks observed on the boy's wrists. The boy was provided bottled water to drink and seated in a patrol car for warmth. A medical unit from South Kitsap Fire & Rescue responded to evaluate the child's condition.

The youngster stated that he had been "hog-tied" and restrained like this for several days in his bedroom, by his grandparents. He further added that his younger sister was still at the house and he believed that she, too, was also restrained. The boy stated that he had managed to free himself from the plastic zip ties, push out a bedroom window screen and jump out of the house through the window. The boy said that he made his way down to a creek to get a drink of water, waited a little while, then decided to start walking away from the residence along the roadway to get as far away from the house as he could.

Note: utilizing the term "hog-tied" means that the hands are restrained behind the back, the feet & ankles are tied together, and the hands are then tied to the ankles.

While the initial responding patrol deputy remained with the boy, a Sheriff's patrol sergeant and two additional patrol deputies went to a double-wide, pre-manufactured mobile home, some two and one-half miles south from where the boy was found, for a welfare check on any other occupants. Once inside the house, they found an eight year-old girl hog-tied, also with plastic zip ties, lying on a floor mattress underneath a blanket in a bedroom.

A third youngster, boy aged 11, was also found in the residence. He was not restrained.

Upon finding the little girl, deputies immediately detained a 66 year-old man and a 61 year-old woman (husband & wife). Sheriff's detectives arrived on-scene soon afterwards to continue the investigation.

Deputies' reports indicate that all three children appeared thin and undernourished. The two restrained children reported that they had been held like this for several days, "as punishment." They said that they were given graham crackers and ice cube chips on a plate as sustenance, but they were not permitted to be untied to eat them. According to the children they were periodically released to use the toilet but, when finished, they would be immediately restrained again.

While en route to the scene, a fifth responding patrol deputy purchased take-out breakfast meals for the children. All three youngsters were subsequently transported to Harrison Memorial Hospital (ER), Bremerton, for further medical evaluation. They have since been turned over into the care of Child Protective Services, Washington State Department of Social and Health Services.

Sheriff's detectives have served a search warrant on the residence and property, as part of their investigation, to obtain further evidence.

Detectives report that the actual relationship between the two adults and the three children is somewhat confusing. Apparently the 11 year-old boy is the grandson of the adult couple; however the two younger children have been "adopted" and are no blood relation to the suspects. All three children have the same mother, but separate fathers. The whereabouts of the childrens' actual biological parents is unknown.

The man and woman were arrested and booked into the Kitsap County Jail on an initial charge of unlawful imprisonment. Bail was set at \$100,000 each. They will make their initial appearance in Kitsap County Superior Court on Monday, 06/13/2005, at 3:00 p.m.

A motive, or reason, behind the excessive "punishment" inflicted on the children remains part of the investigation and is still to be determined.

The investigation by Sheriff's detectives continues, including other allegations of physical abuse of the children.

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