

Farrakhan Speaks - Saviour's Day 2003 Sunday - February 23rd Hilton Hotel Greenville NC



In The News

Two Charged in Elizabeth Smart Abduction

By REBECCA BOONE, Associated Press Writer

SALT LAKE CITY - Self-proclaimed prophet Brian Mitchell and his wife were charged with aggravated kidnapping, and sexual assault Tuesday in the abduction of Elizabeth Smart, the teenager taken from her home last summer.

Mitchell, a drifter whose writings promoting polygamy had raised questions about whether Elizabeth was sexually abused during her nine-month ordeal, has told his attorney that he considers Elizabeth his wife and wants her to be rena-med "Remnant Who Will Return." Attorney Larry Long said Mitchell — whom he referred to as "the perpetrator" — considers the girl's nine-month disappearance a "call from God," not a kidnapping.

District Attorney David Yocom's office asked reporters to refrain from asking questions about the sexual assault counts "for reasons that should be obvious."

Mitchell and his wife, Wanda Barzee, also were charged with burglary. They each face a single count on each charge, for a total of six counts. They were scheduled to be arraigned Wednesday morning and a trial is expected this summer.

Mitchell, 49, and Barzee, 57, and Elizabeth were found Wednesday in Sandy, a Salt Lake City suburb.

Elizabeth was abducted from her bedroom at knifepoint on June 5.

The charging documents allege

Mitchell entered the Smart home after using a knife to cut a window screen. The teen, dressed in pajamas, was forced at knifepoint to walk four miles up a mountain trail behind the home to a concealed campsite.

Mitchell threatened to harm or kill the Smart family if she resisted, prosecutors said.

"She was under the threat of death," Yocom said. Prosecutors say that when they reached the campsite, Barzee tried to remove Elizabeth's pajamas. When the girl resisted, Barzee threatened to have Mitchell forcibly do it. Elizabeth complied and Mitchell attempted to sexually assault her, with Barzee's help, the documents say.

The couple held Elizabeth against her will at the campsite until Oct. 8 with little or no shelter, plumbing, water or food, prosecutors said.

In October, Mitchell and Barzee took Smart to California where they stayed until March 5, the state alleges.

Assistant U.S. Attorney David Schwendiman said federal charges would come "only if and when it is necessary."

Prosecutors said Mitchell and Barzee also attempted to kidnap Elizabeth's cousin on July 24. A window was cut with a sharp instrument and the child inside told police that she saw something come through the window. The attempt was foiled when the family stirred and called police.

The maximum sentence for conviction on both the kidnapping and sexual assault charges is life in prison.

Mitchell, an excommunicated Mormon, wrote a rambling

manifesto last year espousing the virtues of polygamy. The Mormon church has long distanced itself from polygamy and excommunicates those who practice it.

Before Tuesday's charges, no details had been released about any abuse Elizabeth might have suffered while captive. She had been interviewed several times by police but her parents had not asked her for details, family spokesman Chris Thomas said. Thomas has denied speculation the girl could be pregnant.

"Unequivocally, she is not pregnant and was never pregnant. She has been thoroughly examined and tested," Thomas said Saturday.

Family members have said repeatedly that Elizabeth was brainwashed during the nine months, and that her loss of free will prevented her from escaping despite several opportunities to do so.

The family had called on prosecutors to make sure they do not traumatize the girl during questioning and involve Elizabeth only as much as they need to for a successful prosecution, Thomas said.

"They have expressed their concerns for Elizabeth's well-being, and will hold the D.A.'s office accountable for any actions that might victimize her a second time," Thomas said.

Salt Lake City Mayor Rocky Anderson said Monday he would name an independent commission to examine police handling.

Investigators were criticized for concentrating on potential suspect Richard Ricci even after Elizabeth's younger sister told authorities in October that Mitchell could be the man that took her sister.



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Thief forgets phone at crime scene

By Wayne Loewe, Court TV
CANONSBURG, Pa. (Court TV) — A 22-year-old man was arrested after he left his cell phone behind at the scene of a gas station robbery.

Terrance Triplett was charged with robbing a Sunoco station on March 4. He was jailed on robbery, theft, conspiracy and other charges.

Police said Triplett was with another man — whose name was not released — when the other man pointed a gun at the clerk,

who handed over money from the cash register and his wallet. Police said they found a cell phone at the scene and traced it to Triplett.

Man walks into bar, kills computer

Lafayette, Colo. cops have arrested a man who shot his laptop inside the bar he owned — scaring customers — then hung it on the wall like a trophy.

Mistaken 911 call leads police to pot plants

By Wayne Loewe, Court TV
PALM SPRINGS, Calif. (Court

TV) — Police found 76 marijuana plants inside a house after a woman who was visiting mistakenly called 911 instead of 411. When she hung up, a police dispatcher called the number right back, and someone hung up again, according to Palm Springs police department spokesman Sgt. Dennis Graham. Two officers went to the house and found the marijuana, valued at \$76,000, growing in a room with sophisticated lighting. Officers also found three handguns and shotgun.

PORTRAIT HONORING SADIE IRENE SAULTER



School dedicates portrait of namesake

by T. Scott Batchelor
The Daily Reflector

In the past 36 years, thousands of students have passed through the doors of Sadie Sauter Elementary School, named after the late educator whose memory resonates there. Though big, block letters spelled out her name on the Fleming Street institution's brick facade, no portrait, no photograph, no painting hung inside to commemorate her contribution.

That changed Monday morning with the unveiling of a likeness of Sauter painted by Farmville artist Rebecca Thomas. "Cool!" exclaimed one student sitting cross-legged on the cafeteria floor when the black drape was lifted from the portrait. Others exhaled an excited "oooh!" when Sauter was revealed, a matronly woman wearing a pink dress and grasping a chronicle of Pitt County history.

Born in Raleigh and reared in High Point, Sauter came to what was then the segregated Fleming Street School in 1924 as a teacher. She was promoted to principal in 1942, a position she held until she retired in 1963 and headed back to High Point.

Working from a faded, black-and-white photograph dug up by one of Sauter's friends from a cache of snapshots squirreled away in the attic, Thomas conjured the colorful portrait in acrylic. She met with Sauter's friends and former students to flesh out the woman, to help them understand who she was and what she meant to the students and the community as a teacher, principal and friend. "My job was to get them all to fit together in one picture," she said of the recollections. A professional artist for 30 years, Thomas said her challenge with Sauter's portrait was "to try to make it something children would love." She chose bright colors to appeal to the pre-kindergarten through fifth-grade students attending the school; shades of blue and yellow - the school colors - appear in the background. Sauter's visage took about a month to complete, the \$700 bill picked up by the school PTA and a donation from the University Health Systems of Eastern North Carolina, which owns Pitt County Memorial Hospital.

"It's like a dream that has come true," Principal Isabelle Wicker said during the unveiling ceremony. Longtime educator, community activist and church leader Beatrice Maye said she visited the school and found out Sauter's image was missing from the walls.

"When we found out there was no picture here, my mind wondered, what can I do to see there's a picture of Sadie Sauter in the school?" It took her a year to locate a photograph, one dug up by Lucille Gorham, which Maye gave to Pitt County school board member Michael Dixon and enlisted his aid in making the portrait a reality. "You all should be proud of the legacy of Mrs. Sauter," Dixon said to the children assembled for the unveiling. "We know you'll go on to make Mrs. Sauter's legacy here very proud."

That legacy was commemorated on Sept. 17, 1967, when the Fleming Street School was renamed in her honor. Close friends of Sauter fondly remembered the traits that made the woman a community pillar and exceptional educator. "Mrs. Sauter probably didn't realize the impact her life had on people," Betty Boyd said. "It was through her love and generosity that children in attending Fleming Street School have benefited." The firm but compassionate teacher and principal "understood her students' problems and their needs; She helped because she wanted to help."

Ella Harris, vice principal at J.H. Rose High School, came under Sauter's tutelage in the 1950's. She recalled Sauter's pocketed sweaters, lace-up shoes and switches, which the woman didn't mind using if students misbehaved. "She inspired; she encouraged," Harris said. "We are so much better for having known her. Schools superintendent Michael Priddy encouraged the students to follow the example set by leaders such as Sauter."

"The reason you remember their names is because those people worked hard," Priddy said. The goal in life "is to have other people lift your name up because you can be counted on to help other people." Ann Davis, whose church, Jarvis Memorial United Methodist, "adopted" the school, providing after-school programs and other assistance to students, attended the ceremony.

"It's beautiful," she said of Sauter's portrait. "She's a good example for (the children). She's an excellent role model."

T. Scott Batchelor can be contacted at sbatchelor@coxnews.com

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