



Geneva PD Makes Arrest in Race Car Theft

Stephen Crews
Geneva Newspapers

A north Alabama man is in jail, accused of stealing a race car, after an undercover operation on Monday, June 12 in central Alabama.

Geneva Police Chief Frankie Lindsey says that Calvin Hunter is charged with theft of property in the theft of a race car in July of 2005.

The 33-year-old Orrville man, along with several others, allegedly stole Andy Pugh's race car and trailer last July. Police say the suspects broke into a Geneva warehouse and took the items which have an estimated value of around \$50,000.

When the undercover operation took place, much of the race car was found at a location near Demopolis, Al-

abama. Much of the race car was stripped down for its parts.

Police chief Frankie Lindsey says it was part of a multi-state auto theft ring. Several items that were stolen locally are being recovered in Mississippi, Alabama and Florida. Lindsey believes additional items will be recovered and additional arrests will be made in the case in the weeks and months to come.

"We just recovered a stolen motorcycle from here in Miami," said Lindsey. We believe that this theft ring is extensive and that this may be just the beginning.

Besides Calvin Hunter, Chief Lindsey says additional arrests are expected in the case soon. The Alabama Bureau of Investigation is assisting with the cases according to Lindsey.

Town of Black Will Soon See Mounds of Blue Pipe

Ann Henderson
Geneva Newspapers

A ballfield is usually crowded with fans waiting for the first pitch of a summer game.

But instead of mounds of people, the ballfield a few blocks from the Black Town Hall will soon be topped

with piles of sky-blue pipe.

R&B Contracting Company of Andalusia began moving in the PVC pipe last week for a project that will replace the small diameter cement water service lines.

During a pre-construction meeting in Town Hall on Tuesday, June 13, the time

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State Ag Chief Discusses Ways to Help Cattle Producers

Ann Henderson
Geneva Newspapers

JoAnn Baxley Smith's husband, Jimmy, had gathered 25 bales of hay on their farm near Fadette on Monday, June 12.

"It was about half of what we usually get," she said Tuesday following a meeting at the Geneva County Farm Center with Ron Sparks, commissioner of agriculture and industries in Alabama. "That is from one cutting. We usually have two by now."

The Smiths were part of a standing room only crowd that listed problems with feeding their cow-calf operations in drought conditions and heard Sparks discuss alternative feed sources such as peanuts and soybean pellets.

"We are in a critical condition," said Mary Baltikauski, Geneva County Extension Agent with the Alabama Cooperative Extension Service.

Farm and rain reports have been sent to the ag commissioner's office, said Olivia McCray, county executive director with the Geneva County Farm Service Agency. "We have made a request for emergency hay and grazing," Sparks said he expects a plan for an organized drought-relief program to be in place in two weeks. "Producers will have to make tough decisions in the next two to three weeks."

"I realize this weather pattern may not change in



Alabama Commissioner of Agriculture Ron Sparks discusses alternative feed for the 40 head of brood cattle Malvin Driggers has on his farm near Coffee Springs. State ag officials and representatives from Gov. Bob Riley's office were at the Geneva County Farm Center June 13 to discuss the drought in the southeastern Alabama counties. (Photo by Ann Henderson)

July and August," said Sparks. "If we get a break, God blessed us."

Baltikauski said a list of hay resources should be available by next week. "I've sent an email to each county office asking for producer names who are willing to sell hay. Alist should also be on the state ag department's website."

He said the main obstacle to the alternative sources is that using them takes an act of the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture.

There are about one million pounds of peanuts stored in warehouses in and around Geneva County, said Bill Brooks, president of Brooks Peanut Company in Samson.

"Most are under government contract with the U.S. Department of Agriculture," Brooks said. He thinks the majority are planned for a future shipment in the food for peace initiative in Africa.

Getting permission to release those peanuts and to release grazing land under contract in the Conserva-

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John Gilbert Rogers Found Guilty on Four First Degree Sexual Abuse Charges

Stephen Crews
Geneva Newspapers

A 10-woman, 2-man jury took just an hour and 15 minutes to convict John Gilbert Rogers, 65, of Tall Oak Road in Geneva on four first degree sexual abuse charges on Friday morning, June 16 at the Geneva County Courthouse.

Rogers was initially charged with just one count of first degree sexual abuse and three counts of sexual torture for allegedly using a cutoff wooden posthole digger, a screwdriver and a vibrator on an unnamed 15-year-old victim, who is now 16.

Chief Assistant District Attorney Bill Filmore tried the case for the State. Filmore says that he believes the term "Torture" in the statute is a bit misleading. "Sexual Torture is really sexual abuse in the first degree with the use of an inanimate object," said Filmore. "The statute is a new one (1993) and the name probably needs to be changed. The word torture as defined in the dictionary is 'the infliction of severe pain to punish or coerce' and that is not what is required by the statute. I can see how the jury didn't want to go with a sexual torture verdict and I am very satisfied with the four felony verdicts of sexual abuse in the first degree."

Due to the jury finding Rogers guilty of the lesser charge of sexual abuse in the first degree on the three sexual torture cases and the one case of sexual abuse first, Rogers is dealing with a total



John Rogers

of four Class C Felonies that carry a 1 to 10 year sentence each.

Jurors heard testimony from the victim who gave detailed information about what Rogers did to her and where the actions took place. She was also able to share with the jurors how she feared that the same thing would be done to a sister so she took the abuse.

Jurors also heard testimony from the sister who stated that she witnessed Rogers sexually abusing her sister.

Chief ADA Filmore said that the excellent work of Chief Investigator Tony Helms of the Geneva County Sheriff's Department and Shannon Hall of DHR really made the case.

"Their work combined with the testimony of Sherri Shaw from the Child Advocacy Center and Cindy Woodham, RN, from Flowers Hospital helped to insure a conviction."

As the jurors heard from each of the witnesses mentioned above, Filmore was able to complete the picture

for jurors of what Rogers had been doing to this teenager on several occasions.

Rogers was represented by Geneva Attorneys David Harrison and Jeff Hatcher. Harrison believed that the case was a victory for the defense despite the fact that their client was convicted of four sexual abuse charges.

"The offer was 20 years and he was charged with a three Class A felonies," said Harrison. "We now are looking at a maximum sentence of 10 years compared to the 99 years per charge that we could've been dealt with."

Originally Rodgers was charged with three class A felonies that had a maximum sentence of 99 years and one class C felony that had a maximum sentence of 10 years. "We were found guilty of the three lesser offenses for the Class A felonies," said Harrison.

Geneva County District Attorney Kirke Adams says that the sentences could run consecutively giving Rogers the possibility of up to 40 years if sentenced for the maximum sentence for each crime.

"We didn't feel that we could allow someone who has committed such a terrible crime to be given an easy plea opportunity," said Adams. "We can rest easy now knowing that Mr. Rogers will no longer be living so close to his victim."

Rogers was originally arrested and placed on a bond. The bond was later reduced allowing him the opportunity to be free up until the time of the trial. During this time he also was allowed to

stay with a friend who lived within a quarter of a mile of the victim.

With the difficulty of the case, defense attorney David Harrison believes that it was handled in the best way possible throughout the week.

"I thought the jury did a very good job. It's the most difficult case that I have ever been part of because of the difficulty of subjects we were discussing in this case."

Harrison was also very complimentary of the district attorney's office.

"The district attorney's office handled the case in a very professional manner as did the defense. It was a very well-trying case by all sides."

The defense went with the strategy that the victim had a history of lying and lied about the incident happening years earlier. Both Hatcher and Harrison provided witnesses that showed that Rogers is not the type of person that would sexually abuse someone. Rogers himself testified and denied any of the wrongdoings he was accused of.

In a strange series of events, Rogers hired Harrison for the case as court session began on Monday.

Chief ADA Filmore believes that although there is a conviction in the case, probably the most important thing is the 15-year-old victim, who is 16 now, can begin the healing process knowing that our system of justice does finally work.

Judge Quattlebaum remanded Rogers to jail to await his sentencing hearing on August 31.

Kinsaul Leaving Samson to take Teaching Job at Straughn

Stephen Crews
Geneva Newspapers

Samson High School head girl's basketball coach Scott Kinsaul was officially hired by the Covington County Board of Education last week as a teacher at Straughn Middle School. The move comes just three months after leading the Samson Lady Tigers to their first ever state championship.

Kinsaul called it "one of the toughest decisions" he's ever had to make in an interview with other members of the media this past week. While Kinsaul is expected to coach middle school basketball at Straughn, there is a chance that the plans could be changed and Kinsaul could coach the varsity girl's team after current coach Shannon Driver was named principal at Straughn Middle School last week. Driver has not indicated if he would keep coaching in addition to being principal.

Kinsaul leaves Samson to go home to Straughn where his family is very involved in the community as well as the school.

Kinsaul leaves Samson after eight years, the first six as boys basketball coach and the last two as girls coach. Kinsaul originally was not planning to coach basketball at Samson after he resigned after six seasons of leading the boy's program. The offer to coach the girls then came up and he couldn't turn the opportunity down.

The end result was a 26-6 record in 2005 and a runner-up finish in the 2A state fi-



Scott Kinsaul

nals. The Lady Tigers were able to top the achievement this season with a 35-1 record including a 56-52 win over Sand Rock.

Kinsaul stated that a job at Straughn was the only job he would take to leave Samson. "It's home for me," said Kinsaul.

"Straughn High School is only a half mile down the road from where I grew up. It is where my three brothers graduated from. I graduated there in 1989 and my wife Lori graduated there in 1990."

Kinsaul's father, Doyle, had a highly successful tenure as Straughn's boys basketball coach from 1959-74.

In addition to this, Kinsaul has three nephews and one niece currently in the Straughn school system, including one nephew (Neil) he will coach next year.

"It is a school that I have always loved," Kinsaul said. "It was an opportunity that came open and I felt it was the right time to go. It was one of the toughest decisions I have had to make."

Prior to taking over the
Kinsaul, see page 6A