

Murder suspect to have forensics exam

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A 1970 dark gold Buick station wagon once owned by Bailey is now at the Michigan State Police post in Northville. Police traced the vehicle to its owner and present user, a Wayne State University student. Detective Sgt. Joe Kresz said technicians from the post's crime lab are analyzing the car. Witnesses to Kenneth Myers' kidnapping said the suspect drove a brown station wagon.

Livonia police Lt. Bobby Duren said police are "investigating cases of a similar nature that took place during the time framework when Bailey was back in Livonia." Bailey was in Florida from 1980 to 1983.

"Nothing is zeroed in on, but everything is under investigation," Duren said. "We're checking all the cases that fit the pattern of the crime."

Both Alfred Bailey and Charles Murphy, Farmington Hills-based co-counsel to Ronald Bailey, said they feared an escalation of reports linking Bailey to other crimes.

"They will link him to every unsolved crime they can find," said Alfred Bailey.

Murphy said the linkage could link people into a false sense of security if the real killer is still loose. He also said the increasing media coverage of the case could lead to the "suspect's inability to get a fair trial" in Livingston County.

MURPHY described Ronald Bailey as "physically and mentally exhausted" and "overwhelmed" by the events of the last week. Bailey left Michigan for Florida Wednesday, Sept. 11, after 12 hours of police questioning. He eluded capture Friday when police came with

a warrant for his arrest on a kidnapping charge, spending nearly two days on the run in snake-infested woods in central Florida before his capture Saturday evening.

Bailey faces his second forensic exam to determine mental competency to stand trial. The first one came in January 1974, when then Livonia District Court Judge James Miles (now a judge in Wayne County Circuit Court) remanded Bailey to the center for a psychiatric evaluation. Bailey, then 16, was facing assault, kidnapping and attempted murder charges in the attack on the Dearborn Heights boy. At the time, Bailey was committed to the Northville State Hospital.

In May, Circuit Court Judge Robert Colombo declared Bailey competent to stand trial. In October, Bailey pleaded guilty, but mentally ill, to a charge of kidnapping. Circuit Court Judge Thoo-

dore R. Bohn sentenced him to five years' probation and assessed him \$825 in fines over the probation period.

"WE WERE attempting to get this young person some help through the system that was available at that time," said Roy Christiansen, Bailey's Detroit-based attorney at the time. "If a child has leukemia, a parent would seek medical help to the nth degree. This boy, too, had a disease."

For the Bailey family, "help" meant their son's confinement at Northville State Hospital for three years.

"That was the only place he could get such help," Christiansen said. "The system worked in this case. Everything that could have been done was done. But it's not easy, as with a medically sick child. With a sick child, you know if his temperature is normal, if he's eating well, if he looks good. You know when he's cured. And you take him home."

"There's no tests you can give to the mentally ill. You can't put a thermometer in his mouth and say, 'you're well.'"

Added Alfred Bailey: "The doctor told me they were letting him out (of Northville). I asked, 'Is he ready?' They said 'yes.'"

BAILEY said his son got a job as an auto prepper for an auto dealership and did other "menial-type" jobs. He also began to have a "nice social life."

Bailey quit Schoolcraft after one semester because he "didn't like school," his father said.

"We never saw any girls, and he seldom brought friends home. Then he moved in with some buddies."

One of the conditions of Bailey's probation was that he not leave the state without the court's permission. Bailey left Michigan in 1980.

"By that time, he was an adult," Alfred Bailey said. "He handled the move to Florida by himself. He got the court's permission himself. He wanted a different job. The only time he came back was to pick up furniture."

The family apparently did not know about two warrants issued in Marion County, Fla., in which Ronald Bailey was charged with contributing to the delinquency of two minors — ages 12 and 15 — by giving them alcohol. The first warrant was issued in November 1982, the second in May 1983.

ONE OF THE keys to the murder charge now lodged against Bailey is that he, his step Renegade, and another person with him allegedly were seen by witnesses near Gladwin over the Labor Day weekend. Bailey allegedly was staying at a cabin owned by his girlfriend's parents.

Alfred Bailey said the girlfriend was the first girl Bailey ever brought home. "She talked of marriage, but he

didn't want to get tied to one specific person," his father said.

A tow truck receipt discovered last Wednesday provided one of the big breaks in the discovery of Shawn's body. During the police investigation, police came up with a receipt from a Flat Rock, Mich., towing service. Police contacted the service and learned that it had helped Bailey right an overturned four-wheeler.

An employee of the service also identified a female companion of Bailey's, who was later identified as his girlfriend.

When police contacted the girlfriend, she said that Bailey told her he had been at her parents' Gladwin-area cottage where he had mowed the lawn over Labor Day. Bailey told police he spent the Labor Day weekend in Caseville.

Police, who praise both the Bailey family and the girlfriend's family for their cooperation, immediately began a search of the area.

Alfred Bailey is well-known throughout the community as a little league coach. The father described his son as a "good athlete, but not in competitive sports."

"We couldn't get him to go out," he said. "But he snow skis like a champ."

Rich Perlberg of the Brighton Argus contributed to this report.

Police: awareness a safety tool

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said. "Unfortunately, there are people who prey on kids. You can't put kids in a cocoon. So kidnappings are going to happen. But you can help reduce the chances by being aware."

Tell your children that when a stranger tries to grab them, "do what Shawn Moore did" — kick and scream. Try to create a commotion in an effort to help attract attention and may draw aid from someone.

Murphy offers an option for people who witness an assault, but for whatever reason — don't want to get involved. "At least get a license number and a vehicle description and call the police right away," Murphy said. "You don't have to leave your name. It's the information that counts."

The longer a child is missing, the less chance there is of finding the child alive, he added.

DON'T LET the fact that kidnapping of children is rare in the Farmington area lull you into a false sense of security, Murphy warns.

As he put it: "It could happen anywhere, even in the suburbs. Parents in Oakland County tend to be more aware of the danger because of the child killings, but even they forget. They still lock babies in cars while going into a supermarket or still send a child into a public restroom alone."

In Murphy's view, there's worth in child fingerprinting, a service offered by local police and service groups in which children are fingerprinted, with all copies given to the parents for use in emergencies.

But such prints are useful in identification only. Says Murphy: "They don't aid in getting a child home."

"And they're of no use if you don't keep them in a readily accessible place. Ask parents where the fingerprints they had made of their children a year ago are now, and many will tell you they can't find them."

TO HELP turn the spotlight on preventing child abduction, Attorney General Frank Kelley and State School Superintendent Phillip Runkel have unveiled "Protect Our Children." The program is designed to help heighten awareness in school and at home.

"While the numbers may vary on just how many children are abducted each year, this program is designed as a preventive measure. It encourages parents and children to sit down and discuss the matter," Kelley said.

Added Runkel: "This is an educational program. It is not intended to scare anyone. It is intended to remind parents and children that child abduction is a serious matter, one that should be discussed. The more that both parents and children learn about prevention, the better off we all are."

The program is a joint effort of the Office of the Attorney General, in cooperation with the Michigan Department of Education.

THE PROGRAM's brochure, which will be available to every public and non-public school student in the state, "is very readable for parents and understandable for children," Runkel said.

It offers hints and suggestions for parents and children alike.

"The points made are oftentimes common sense, but this is one of the first of its kind to put that much information in one package," Runkel said. "I believe it is a must for all families in this state with school-age children."

Added Kelley: "As the chief law enforcement officer of this state, the Attorney General's Office is often called in after the fact. This program is designed to do something before tragedy strikes."

IF YOUR child is missing, the brochure suggests that you call the police and say you want to waive any waiting period. Tell them you want to file your child's description with the FBI immediately.

Call your friends, relatives and neighbors and organize a search party. Don't forget to put up posters, contact the media and check to see if any other neighborhood children are missing.

Call Child Find Inc., a national nonprofit group dedicated to the well-being of children, at 1-800-1-AM-LOST.

A Child Finder Kit, available through Child Find and other "help" organizations, can be invaluable should your child be missing, according to the brochure.

THE BROCHURE also indicates what's required if you want to put together your own kit: recent color photographs of your child; fingerprints and footprints; a birth certificate; a photograph of scars, birthmarks, deformities; dental and medical records; a lock of hair; a physical description; a sample of handwriting; a recording of the child's voice, and a complete family history.

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