

ALBANY/MID-VALLEY ALBANY (P) DEMOCRAT-HERALD, THURSDAY, SEPT. 2, 1999 A3

# New tip sparks another look into missing girl case

By Gene Roberts/Memo

Albany Democrat-Herald

The Lane County Sheriff's Office

announced its investigation this week

into the 13-year-old disappearance of

Michelle Ann Pickle, but quickly

ended it again.

The sheriff's office received a tip

last week, who remained in

900 at age 13, was alive and resided

in east Lane County.

Detectives received the information

from an Albany attorney who

said it from a client. They

checked out the woman who the

client said was Pickle, but found

that she was not the missing girl.

"We would love to find Michelle,"

said Sheriff Dave Burright. "We

have a great interest in this

case."

According to Burright, the

man who was identified as a mem-

ber of Pickle's family. He did not

identify her as his wife or relative.

Burright said the office doesn't

usually get new information on

the Michelle Ann Pickle case, but when

he "dropped" it seriously.

"We still follow up each and

very lead," Burright said, later

saying, "It's not our case that she

is dead, but it's always the hope

that she may be alive somewhere."

Pickle was living with her

mother and stepfather, John and

Jana Achroy, when she disap-

peared July 15, 1986, from her home

at the state Highway Division main-

tenance yard at Siskiyou Junction.

Here her stepfather worked.

Pickle's mother was at work

at John Achroy told detectives he

saw her girl at 11 a.m. He said

that he went into the

yard to take pictures of trees and

he girl was gone when he returned.

Her mother reported her missing

he next day, which set off an

extensive search for the girl in the

eastern Lane area.

Achroy was convicted in 1991 of

the 1978 murder of Kaye Jean Turner

of Eugene. The indictment and

his conviction were overturned after

the state's highest court ruled that

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time Turner was killed, was the last

person who reported seeing the 20-

year-old jogger alive on near Camp

Streetman. He said her remains in the

woods near that area eight months

later. Achroy is serving five life sen-

tences without possibility of parole for

the two counts of aggravated murder

and three counts of murder in connec-

tion with Turner's death. He has not

been known where Pickle is. If

she is alive, Pickle would be 21.

Her aunt Julie Sery of Sweet

Home had heard about the recent

investigation, but said she periodically

checks in with the sheriff's office.

Sery said the family still strug-

gles with her niece's disappearance,

but that objective now is to

find her body. They long ago gave

up hope that she'd be found alive.

"She would have called,"

Sery said, describing the girl she

calls Cherie as a "sweet girl who

liked to do her hair and makeup."

In the nine years that Pickle has

been missing, her family mem-

bers have worked to cope and have

changed their own lives as a re-

sult, especially as they have grown

to believe she is dead.

They no longer go into the woods

for hiking or hunting for fear they will

find her remains, Sery said. Although

they don't want to discover the body,

they continue to hope that people in

the area will bring a lead for her re-

turn. Sery believes Pickle's body was

left somewhere between the area

where she lived and the Siskiyou

Pass.

Pickle's father Steve Pickle

moved to Alaska to get away from

the area, Sery said, and her mother

lives in California. Her brother Steve,

who was 14 when the girl disappeared,

lives in Sweet Home with an uncle.

Both of Pickle's grandmothers

died last year.

"Our greatest hope and our wish

was that we could bury her and say

our goodbyes before my grand-

mothers passed away," Sery said.

Although that didn't happen,

they continue to hope for closure.

"We would all like to know what

happened to her and where her re-

mains are and say our final good-

byes."



Oak Elementary secretary Sherrell Coleman, center, lip syncs "Don't Be Cruel" Wednesday at South Albany High. Backing her from left are Kris Cram of Oak, and Ginger Colebit, Viderni Peters and Cindy Miller of Lafayette Elementary.

# Rally brings out spirit in educators

By Jennifer Moody

Albany Democrat-Herald

As Albany area assemblies aren't just for

students held up before the home game, Super-

intendent Tim Carman believes they provide a

morale boost to teachers and staff heading

back to the classroom after three-month holi-

ds.

"I can just feel a sense of enthusiasm, a

energy alive as we move forward to next Tuesday,"

Carman said more than 400 Albany educators

gathered Wednesday at South Albany High for

the district's annual Back to School Rally.

In keeping with this year's theme, "Celebrate

Our Strengths," the rally included statistics

about academic improvement, a teacher-staff

talent show and a student-produced slide show

with pictures of every employee in the district.

The talent show began with Rich Sipe of

West Albany High, who brought in the "The

Wander Dog" to perform tricks — includ-

ing a calculus problem.

Then, holding of South Shore Elementary and

Denna Pensing and Julie Sipe of Liberty El-

ementary joined forces for a string trio. Hiding

and Sipe on guitars and Pensing on ham-

mond dulcimer.

Leslie Wind of North Albany Middle School

performed a solo, "Through the Eyes of a

Child," and Erik Hale of West Albany did a

standing routine about his experiences as a

new teacher. Sherrell Coleman of Oak Elementary

entertained with her Elvis lip sync, and Jerry

Van of Clatsop Middle received a standing

ovation for a library version of "Oh Susanna."

"The things all we could do is run

schools," quipped Assistant Superintendent

Pat Bolten.

Keynote speaker Ruby Payne, a longtime

educator from Bayview, Trask, spoke about

the experiences that led to her book, "A Frame-

work for Understanding Poverty."

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# Non-reservable campgrounds offer best hope for campers

By Gene Roberts/Memo

Albany Democrat-Herald

Campers looking for a place to

pitch their tents this weekend are

encouraged to try one of the state's

newest, first-come parks.

"We have nearly 1,000 sites

but we do not reserve," said

Trig Taiter, the assistant public

lands manager for the Oregon

Department of Parks and Recreation.

"Altogether, we have 24

non-reservable campgrounds all

across the state.

Among the first-come first-serve

sites in Cascade State Park, 14

miles east of Cascade.

All the parks which do accept

reservations, a limited supply of

sites are still open, including sites

at LaPine State Park, 27 miles

southwest of Bend; Tule Lake, 10

miles northwest of Bend;

Metolite State Park, 10 miles

west of the Dalles; and Devil's

Lake State Park in Lincoln City.

For those willing to travel,

Paradise Bend State Park, near O-

regon, has an abundance of open sites.

For more information or to

make a reservation, call Reser-

vation Northwest, (800) 452-5887.

Reservations Northwest is the

central reservation system for

campsites in 26 Oregon and 2

Washington state parks.

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Your ad can be seen every day when you use the Albany Democrat-Herald's "Little Giant" program. Call retail advertising.

Advertisement for Jim White, thanking him for flowers, food, memorial contributions, prayers and the many cards received upon the loss of his son & daughter. Contact: BJ & Barbara White, Cheryl Lee & Kathy Drummond & families.

Advertisement for NEAL SUPERMARKET, listing various products and prices. Includes a section for ALBANY CINEMAS 7 and 8.

Advertisement for WINTERSIDE THEATRE, listing showtimes and ticket prices.

Advertisement for SATEL THEATRE, listing showtimes and ticket prices.

Advertisement for Sweet Corn Melons • Tomatoes, located at 4380 NE Highway 20 • Corvallis • 752-6097. Open 7 days a week from 10am to 5pm.

Advertisement for CAFE MED, offering coffee and pastries. Text: "...for what ails you. TAKE THE WEEKEND OFF! We are closing at 2pm Fri. Closed Sat., Sun. & Mon. Labor Day. See you Tuesday morning! 926-9660. 871 E. St. S.W. Albany.

Advertisement for Time to Fruit, listing various fruits and prices. Includes a section for Organic Chili Garden.

Advertisement for CORN... 7 for \$1.00, listing various produce items and prices. Includes a section for Organic Chili Garden.