

# Maricopa County Sheriff's Office

## Joe Arpaio, Sheriff



Date: May 2, 2008

### ILLEGAL ALIEN RAPES, IMPREGNATES 11 YEAR OLD GIRL

AND

### INMATE ON INMATE ASSAULT RESULTS IN DEATH IN FOURTH AVENUE JAIL

**(Phoenix, AZ)** An 18-year-old illegal immigrant from Mexico is under arrest by Maricopa County Sheriff's deputies for raping an 11-year-old girl living at her home in Rainbow Valley, outside Buckeye.

Enrique Jacobo-Valdez (8-13-89) is known to the young girl's family. He is currently unemployed and had a warrant out for his arrest from Pinal County for possession of dangerous drugs. Now he is in far more serious legal trouble.

"Because of our strict policies to investigate and arrest illegal aliens, we determined Valdez is here in this country illegally," Arpaio says. "If the criminal justice system in Pinal County had done what we do, the suspect might have been deported or held in jail and that little girl would have be spared this fate."

Yesterday patrol responded to a phone call from the victim's grandmother indicating that she found the 11 year old locked inside a bedroom early in the morning. The suspect was running from the home when the girl finally opened the door.

The grandmother and mother of the 11 year old victim took the girl to a local hospital where it was determined that she is at least six weeks pregnant and may have been infected by the rape.

The suspect returned to the girls' residence where he was arrested by deputies for the Pinal County felony warrant. During a subsequent interrogation, he admitted that he knew the girl was only 11 years old and that he had sexual intercourse with her knowing it was wrong to do so.

Valdez in currently in the Fourth Avenue Jail booked on two counts of sexual conduct with a minor, Class 2 felonies.

News Release

100 West Washington, Suite 1900, Phoenix, Arizona 85003

Phone: (602) 876-1801 Fax: (602) 258-2081

Media Contact: [SheriffsMediaRequests@MCSO.Maricopa.Gov](mailto:SheriffsMediaRequests@MCSO.Maricopa.Gov)

In an unrelated matter, last night an inmate housed in the Fourth Avenue Jail was beaten to death by another inmate. This marks the first inmate assault resulting in death in the near five years since the Fourth Avenue Jail was opened.

At approximately 8PM, the victim, Robert Leroy Cotton (8-3-79) went against jailhouse regulations when he entered another inmate's cell. That cell housed the suspect, Pete Van Winkle (4-9-82).

Chief of the Custody Bureau, Jerry Sheridan, says that moments after his officers performed their security walk on housing unit 4-A and for unknown reasons at this time, Van Winkle followed Cotton into the cell and out of view of tower security, assaulted Cotton. So far our investigation shows that a video camera caught portions of the assault. The cell view was not on any of the six monitors inside the tower at the time of assault because nothing out of the ordinary appeared to be happening in or around that cell. Also no other inmates, even an inmate who walked by the assault three different times, made an attempt to contact detention officers. The assault was out of sight and sound of the security tower.

When Van Winkle then dragged Cotton out of the cell and attempted to throw him over the second floor railing, detention officers rushed to the scene. Upon arriving, the victim appeared lifeless and officers immediately performed CPR. The suspect, Van Winkle, gave himself up without resistance. He has been rebooked on first degree murder charges. A homicide investigation is currently underway.

Victim Cotton, a day labor carpenter, has a lengthy criminal record and was booked into jail by Mesa PD over one year ago. He did serve time in the state prison in 2002 and 2004.

Suspect Van Winkle was just out of prison when he was arrested by Phoenix PD on February 29, 2008 for attempted second degree murder charge and misconduct involving weapons. According to his booking information, Van Winkle has ties to the Aryan Brotherhood and had a number of assaults on staff and inmates while incarcerated with the DOC.

Sheriff Arpaio this morning went to the crime scene and personally spoke with staff about the incident.

“Jails house violent criminals. I am sorry this occurred and my condolences go to the victim's family and friends. They can be assured we will do everything we can in our investigation to secure a death penalty conviction against Van Winkle. This man deserves it.”

(Booking photos are attached.)

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