

9-year-old rape victim helps Miami police apprehend suspect

MIAMI (AP) — A 9-year-old rape victim, who said she followed advice given in a television documentary, helped police arrest a suspect by recording a license tag number and describing the man, officers said.

The child was "probably the best witness I've ever had in my life," said Det. J.J. Crocker. "She described him to a 'T' — the car and everything."

Roemy Castellano, identified by police as a Cuban boatlift refugee and migrant worker, was arrested at his home Tuesday morning.

Castellano first was taken into custody on a warrant for a traffic violation, but was charged with sexual battery and kidnapping after the girl identified him from a police photograph as the rapist.

The child, whose name was withheld, was abducted last Wednesday as she walked home from school. Police said she was driven to an avocado grove in southern Dade County and sexually assaulted.

When she was freed and the suspect drove away, the girl got the tag number, police said. She told police followed advice given in a television special on rape awareness.

"They (the TV program) told me not to cry in front of him so I didn't," detectives quoted the child as saying. "They told me to do whatever he wanted so I wouldn't get hurt."

The girl reported the rape to police immediately. Another witness, who told police he saw a dark-skinned man with a young white girl in his car and became suspicious, also jotted down the tag number.

Castellano was being held without bond at the Dade County Jail.



Camping, anyone?

The summit of Cadillac Mountain in Acadia National Park on Mount Desert Island, Me., is one of the Northeast's more popular camping areas. In the background, center, is the luxury liner Queen Elizabeth II, which visited the region during the summer.

AP Laserphoto

Pedestrian struck by unidentified vehicle

• Letitia Sandrack, 218 S. Sparks St., was crossing Atherton Street on Tuesday at the corner of College Avenue when she was hit by an unidentified vehicle, the State College Police Department said yesterday.

Sandrack crossed the street against the pedestrian "do not walk" sign and a red traffic signal, police said.

She was treated at Centre Community Hospital and released, a hospital spokesman said.

The value of the chairs and the lamp has not been determined, police said.

• Mary Plakarton, 1314 Deerfield Drive, told University Police Services on Tuesday that her wallet was missing from Pine Cottage.

The wallet was later found with \$120 missing, police said.

• Electrical wires in a University van caught fire Tuesday near the White Golf Course, University police said.

The fire was extinguished by the Alpha Fire Company, with damage estimated at about \$150, police said.

• Rifeida Confer, 814 S. Pugh St., told State College police Tuesday that a wooden bench was missing from her porch.

The bench is valued at about \$25, police said.

• Joseph Hynes, 319 W. Fairmount Ave., told University police Tuesday that his backpack and its contents were missing from the first floor study lounge in the HUB.

The backpack and its contents were valued at about \$35, police said.

• Kerry Campbell, 231 S. Atherton St., told University police Tuesday that his bicycle was missing from the men's locker room in White Building.

The value of the bicycle is undetermined, police said.

• Martha Sterling, 1736 Princeton Drive, told University police on Tuesday that her purse was missing from the Nittany Lion Inn lounge area.

The value of the purse is unknown, police said.

—by Francine Kaufman

police log

• Mary Hanley, 450 Waupelani Drive, told the State College police on Tuesday that about \$256 in cash was missing from the office of State College Manor. She said the office was entered between September 4 and 6.


• Donna Huchabee, 445 Waupelani Drive, told State College police on Tuesday that a cassette case and 22 cassettes were missing from her car.

The items are valued at about \$130, police said.

• Tish Sandrock, 218 S. Sparks St., told State College police Tuesday that her bicycle was missing from 100 Locust Lane.

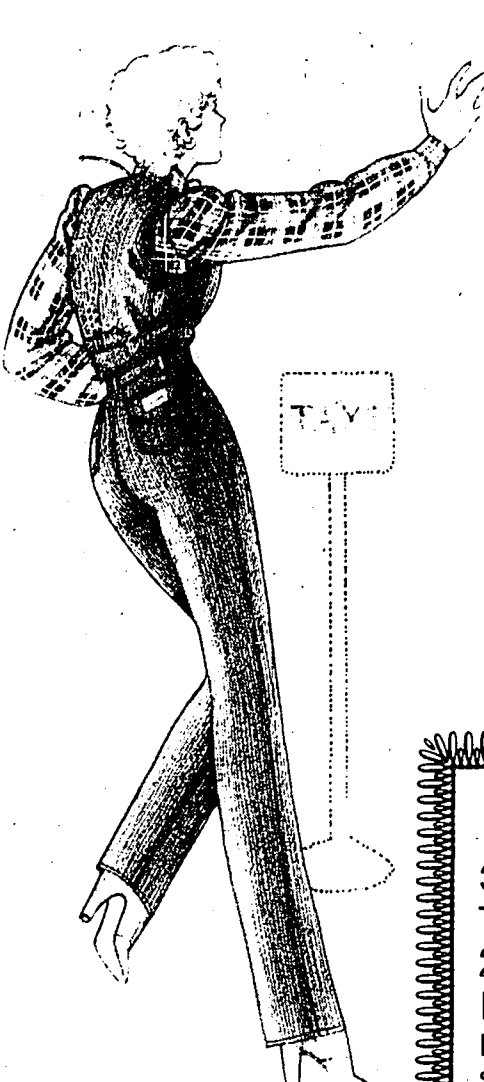
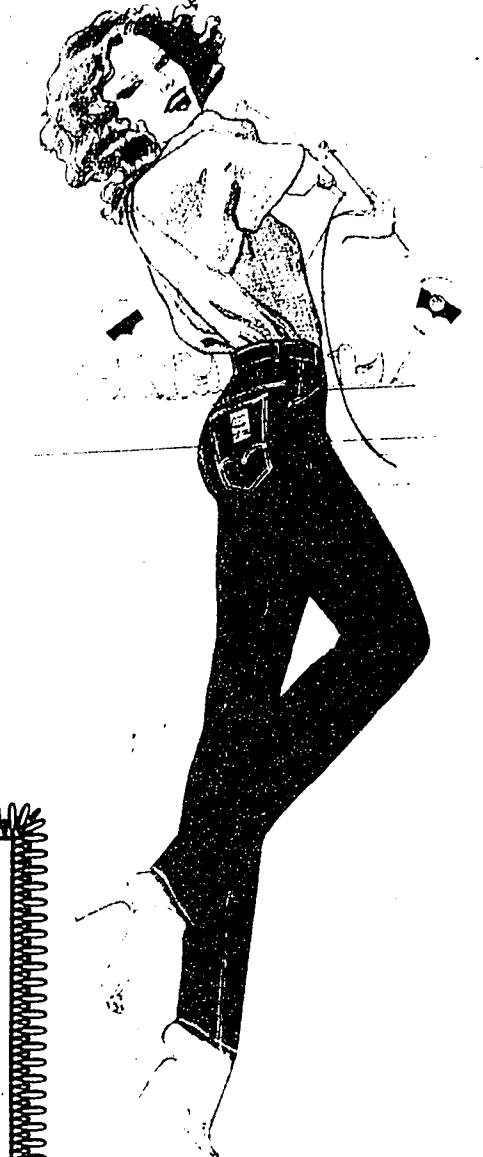
The bicycle is valued at about \$185, police said.

• Dave Horn, 917 S. Allen St., told State College police Tuesday that two wooden chairs and a lamp were missing from A.W. and Sons, 1000 Plaza Drive.



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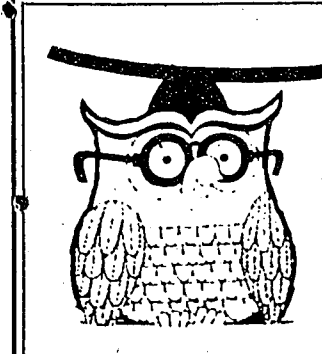
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