

# VHRU is helping to field calls and tips



**CHRISTINA EICHELKRAUT / PVT**  
J.J. Lynch and Andrew Paris, two members of Pahrump's Volunteer Homeland Reserve Unit team, sort through a stack of call requests generated from tipsters giving information about the identity of a little girl who was videotaped being sexually assaulted.

By **CHRISTINA EICHELKRAUT**  
PVT

The search for the identity of the little girl who is seen on a videotape being brutally sexually assaulted has gone nationwide, and tips from people all over the country have been flooding the Nye County Sheriff's Office with phone calls.

To help filter through the information and develop leads, the Volunteer Homeland Reserve Unit, an organization made up entirely of retired law enforcement officers, has been called in.

The VHRU was contacted by Sheriff's Capt. Bill Becht Wednesday morning, and within a few hours eight members showed up and set up a work station at the Nye County Nuclear Waste Repository Project Office.

By yesterday morning, additional members from Las Vegas VHRU teams had come in to lend a greater hand.

When tips are called into the sheriff's office, the call generates a call request, a typed form giving the caller's name, contact information, and the tip being given.

The VHRU volunteers form teams of two members

and go through the call requests, filtering through the inevitable crank calls that occasionally pop up.

Because the organization is made up entirely of retired law enforcement officers, with an average of at least 20 years experience per member, they are already trained in questioning people and discerning plausible leads.

Some of the leads are vague, stating only that the caller recognizes the girl or may have seen her.

In that case, a volunteer would call back and ask for more information.

If the information needs to be developed, a member would write a report and give it to the sheriff's office to be further investigated by detectives.

"We're not investigating this, but we're helping," Ted Farace, president and coordinator of the VHRU said.

By nine in the morning, stacks of call requests were already being sifted from all over the country.

And since investigators are still uncertain as to where the tape was made, each and every call is considered valuable.

"Any information at all

— whatever information you have — can be valuable," Farace said.

If you have any information regarding the identity of the little girl or the perpetrator contact the Nye County Sheriff's Office at 775-751-7000.

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Gibson also said that reports of Tuck showing the video to other people were "absolutely untrue."

Although Tuck told investigators that he found the tape in the desert, the detective said the tape "wasn't in the condition you would expect to have been found in the desert."

Tuck was arrested and booked on two charges of possessing child pornography but released on his own recognizance.

He is scheduled to appear in court in November, although charges have not yet been filed by the office of District Attorney Bob Beckett.

Boruchowitz said there is no reason to believe that Tuck had any involvement in making the tape, as the camera angle indicated the film was made using a tripod.

"There's no evidence at this time to indicate he would be involved in making this video," Boruchowitz said. Tuck, however, reportedly has not been cooperative with authorities until recently.

A meeting with Tuck, Gibson, and the DA's representatives was held Tuesday afternoon.

"There is a spirit of cooperation between my client and DA's office now," Gibson said later. "He's told them everything he can."

The defense attorney added that he was confident the evidence would show that Tuck was not guilty of any crime.

Some advances have been made in the otherwise frustrating investigation, however, including information establishing a possible time frame for when the video may have been made.

The dress the sexual assault

victim is wearing in the tape has been identified as a Laura Dare Leopard Rose dress, from the company's 2003 spring catalogue, DeMeo said.

In addition, Boruchowitz said a television in the background of the video tape is estimated by the manufacturer to be a 2003 model, and a DVR in the video is thought to be a 2004 model.

DeMeo added he approached the FBI to investigate issuing a John Doe warrant for the man in the video.

The sheriff's office has been assisted by numerous law enforcement agencies nationwide.

The Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department has stepped in and helped to enhance video images, and the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children has also offered their

assistance.

Locally, the Volunteer Homeland Reserve Unit (a local organization made up of retired law enforcement officers) will be manning a call station for tips (see related article on page A1), and the Sheriff's Auxiliary Unit have also been enlisted to help field the phone calls Boruchowitz said have "literally been pouring in" from across the country.

In fact, DeMeo said he received the tip about the dress from a woman in Charlotte, N.C., who contacted him after seeing the photo.

The sheriff's office has also established an email address for anyone who has information that may lead to victims or the suspect: [findchild@nyesheriff.net](mailto:findchild@nyesheriff.net).

Anyone with information regarding the crime may call 775-751-7000.