



■ Suspect

From page 1-A

his information, Rouse was apparently headed west on Ala. 10, when a State Trooper passed his vehicle. Persons in a car behind Rouse's reportedly saw him throw an object from the vehicle.

According to Johnson, at Compton's Store in Nanafalia, the Trooper turned off in another direction, Rouse turned around and went back to the location, pulled off the road, got out and started looking for the object, which was said to be some type of can.

Johnson said that a local resident who passed by recognized Rouse and knew what had occurred between him and Johnson last summer, and called Johnson to tell him that he had seen Rouse on the side of the road and that he appeared to be looking for something.

"I immediately told him to call the troopers, call the sheriff, call anybody else he could think of and get them there,"

Johnson said.

The man went to Choctaw Co. Sheriff's Deputy Tony Gates' house and alerted him to what was happening, Johnson said.

Gates got on the radio and called ahead for officers to be on the lookout for Rouse, Johnson said.

What happened next was that a "slow chase" ensued, sometimes as slow as 45 mph, with Rouse heading toward Butler on Ala. 10.

"He got to town and started making slow loops around Butler, and it was obvious to me he was trying to find a way to get away," Johnson said. "He peeled off down Ala. 17 (South Mulberry), and attempted to pull into the Thompson driveway."

Johnson said that Rouse almost hit his vehicle as he jumped the curb into the Thompson yard.

According to Johnson, Thompson was outside and witnessed the entire incident.

"When we got out, he (Rouse) acted like he didn't

know what was going on," Johnson said. "I told him I was on phone to the law, that they were on their way, and that the can of dope had been seen. Well, as soon as I said 'can of dope', he turned, ran to the other side of his vehicle, grabbed a can and started waving it in my face."

Rouse reportedly took off running behind the Thompson house, with Johnson just a few steps behind trying to keep him in sight.

According to Johnson, Rouse tossed the can into the woods and came back toward him, threatening to whip Johnson.

"Daniel (Rouse) then hit me in the face, and I lit into him," Johnson said. "Tommy (Thompson) was trying to pull me off of Daniel. He almost got away, but I got control again. When he tried to run again, he stumbled and fell and that's where the cops found us."

Johnson said that officers initially took him into custody, too, but when Gates arrived on the scene a search was performed of the wooded area where Rouse had reportedly thrown the can of suspected narcotics, and Johnson was released.

"They found the can, alright," Johnson said.

Rouse was taken into custody at the scene and charged with unlawful possession of drug paraphernalia, unlawful possession of controlled substance, and disorderly conduct, records at the Choctaw Co. Jail show.

Prior to the incident last summer, Johnson had signed a harassment war-

rant against Rouse, whom he said he had to ask to leave his place of business because of alleged drug activity.

Johnson said he met Rouse through the racing circuit and got to know him through their mutual interest in racing motorcycles.

"We met at a drag strip," he said. "He had purchased a cycle that I had done a lot of work on, and since I manufacture racing components, I tried to help him out with the prices on some of the parts."

Johnson, who owns Johnson Racing Enterprises and also works at the local Georgia-Pacific paper mill, said that the demands of his racing business became so great that he had to have some help.

"I needed help, he said he had experience, was having personal problems and was looking for a job, and it just seemed like a good fit," Johnson said. Instead, he said, it turned out to be the "worst nightmare" of his life.

"I let him stay at our place for a short time, but I soon found out that he did not have the experience he said he had," Johnson said. Soon afterward, a customer confronted Johnson with concerns that Rouse was allegedly handling illegal narcotics out of Johnson's shop.

"The man who told me is one of the most upstanding men in this community, so I had no reason whatsoever to doubt what he said," Johnson told the *Sun*. "The minute I found out

about dope in my building, I stopped it right then. Daniel wasn't here at the time, so I called his phone and left a message that he had to get out ... and I meant right now."

Johnson said he allowed Rouse to return several times to get his personal belongings.

"That's when the harassing phone calls started," he said. "He would call here a hundred times a day, threatening me and my family. That's what led to my filing harassment charges."

Just before daybreak on Aug. 18th, Johnson and his wife, Paula, awoke to find a person they suspected of being Rouse trying to break into the cycle shop.

"We could heard him banging, trying to break in, and we had a camera pointed at door, so we could see that it was him," he said.

With gun in hand, Johnson said he ran around the building and yelled for Rouse to come out. When he didn't appear, Johnson locked the door of the building, and — at the urging of his wife — started looking down nearby driveways and dirt roads trying to find Rouse's vehicle.

"He slipped out, because I found him in his car at the edge of the woods behind the airport," Johnson said. "I rammed my truck into the back of his car to lock him in so he couldn't escape. I had my gun, because I figured he had a gun or knife, and I told him to get on the ground so that I could tie him up."

Rouse came up swinging, a struggle ensued, and the gun fired, possibly striking Rouse in the hand.

Johnson said he could see that Rouse either had not been shot or was not seriously hurt, and proceeded to tie him up with duct tape to hold him until authorities could get there.

"I walked over to my shop and called the sheriff, told him what had happened, and that Daniel was taped up at airport and might be shot," he said.

When authorities arrived on the scene, Johnson turned over his gun, but across the street at the airport, authorities found that Rouse had apparently managed to free himself from the duct tape and had fled the scene.

Rouse led authorities on a chase that ended several hours later about a mile from the scene when tracking dogs from the State Prison at Atmore located the suspect.

At the time of his arrest on Aug. 18th, Rouse was charged with harassment, possession of a controlled substance, possession of marijuana (1st degree), and possession of drug paraphernalia. He was later released from jail on a \$16,000 bond. Those cases have not yet been set for trial in the Circuit Court of Choctaw County pending results of tests to be performed by the Alabama Forensic Science Lab on the seized material.

Sheriff Lovette told the *Sun* that an investigation into the latest incident is ongoing at presstime.

■ Dee Ann

From page 6-A

members make more than their counterparts in any of our surrounding counties.

During the previous election — and most elections throughout the past — those running for positions on the school board have campaigned on the premise that they are doing it 'for the children.' It was the basis for their candidacy, and the reason they were elected.

Is it not unreasonable to ask them to take a big step toward showing us that they did indeed do it 'for the children'?

The challenge to each of our school board members is simple:

Voluntarily give up your \$900 per month for the next 4 years in order to put that money back into the school system's budget so that we can take another step toward meeting our fiscal responsibilities as required by the state.

By doing so, we could put \$54,000 per year back into the budget, a total of \$270,000 over 4 years. While that, in itself, will not solve the problem, it will help — and it will also send the message to the public that you do care about our children, that you did run for the position because you care, and that you ARE in this solely 'for the children.'

And that sacrifice, my friends, could save the jobs of at least two custodians who, I'm sure, need their jobs far more than you need that \$900.

If it's time to sacrifice, then I challenge the members of the Choctaw County Board of Education to lead the way.

■ Tommy

From page 6-A

RECORDED VOTE to be held when at least four senators ask for one, and, 2) the fact that state law that says an elected official's salary cannot be raised once the new term of office begins.

But that is, after all, Montgomery, and haven't those people pretty much done whatever they wanted over the years without giving a hoot what the law says or what you and I think? I think we all know the answer to that one.

We did some checking and found that, according to federal income statistics for the state, the \$49,250 that our lawmakers gave themselves is much higher than the per capita 2004-level incomes of every one of Alabama's 67 counties, and was higher than the median household income in every county except two.

It would be nice to get paid \$49,250 per year for working part-time for about three months out of the year, wouldn't it? (You must remember that most of these legislators have good-paying full-time jobs over and above their part-time legislative positions.)

To be fair, legislators who go to Montgomery and actually do their jobs deserve a reasonable pay raise from time to time. But the key words there are "reasonable" and "do their jobs".

True enough, legislators have not had a pay raise for several years, but also in the "true enough" category is the fact that a salary increase for elected officials should have been the LAST item on the 2007 regular session agenda. Alabama does, after all, have schools, roads, bridges, law enforcement, health and a host of other necessary public services that need to be funded FIRST, and to those amongst 'em who don't understand this simple fact, we — the voters — need to send them a clear message in 2010 by sending them home.

I recall that Democrats and Republicans alike made a big deal of publishing long lists of campaign promises in 2006, among them being pledges to go to Montgomery and conduct business in a more accountable manner.

Odd, but I don't recall seeing "vote ourselves a big, fat pay increase" being mentioned by any candidate of any party, do you?

So much for campaign rhetoric and political grandstanding.

I do realize that it is expensive for legislators to travel to and stay in Montgomery for the legislative sessions. But every one of these people knew full-well what the jobs paid BEFORE they ran for the office and — as with any job in the private sector — if a person cannot live with what a job pays, look for another job. It's as simple as that!

There are thousands of lower-income Alabamians right now — many with no insurance and no retirement benefits — who are struggling to "make ends meet", feed their families, pay the rent and wonder how they are going to buy gasoline at \$2.50 a gallon much longer on their minimum wage jobs. We know. We have heard from many of them right here in Gilbertown, Silas, Needham, Lisman, Butler, Pennington, Yantley and other communities who are mad enough to spit about this mess, and they have every right to be.

If you are as mad about this as I am, contact your local legislators and ask them how they voted.

I think the children in our overcrowded, portable classrooms deserve some answers.

I think the people whose tires are destroyed by our rough, pothole-riddled roads deserve some answers.

I think we all deserve some answers, don't you?

■ SoundOff

From page 6-A

We would like to commend you on doing such an exemplary job of covering the news and events not only in Choctaw County but in the surrounding communities as well. We have a "river" home in Coffeerville where we spend our weekends and we look forward to getting your paper each week. The *Sun* often has stories or photos of people we know in both counties. Keep up the good work!

I just want to say if a teacher, any teacher, ever took one of my children to a honkey-tonkey I would beat his or her ba-donk-a-donkey. No one cares if a teacher goes to a bar, but it makes it everyone's business if it also involves students. Teachers are supposed to set good examples and bar hopping, in my opinion, is not a good example. If a teacher wants to take them somewhere and set a good example he or she should take the students to church.

As a teacher at CCHS, I resent having my school referred to as "pitiful" in a recent SoundOff. I wish people would stop blaming the school for things that we as faculty and staff have no control over. Mr. Howard spends time each and every day trying to find someone to fill that math position. Do the people in Choctaw County not realize how difficult it is to find ANY kind of teacher in the middle of the year, much less a math teacher? Do they think we can just pull one in off the streets? They just don't exist! Math teachers are in extreme demand and in extremely short supply nationwide, and schools everywhere are in the same situation as CCHS — trying to fill empty math positions. I don't have to tell you that a young math teacher would find it much more attractive to accept a position in a large system that offers better pay and better support from the public. As long as this county continues to insist on draining off its valuable support and resources into a private school system that keeps this county split on many different levels, then we will be fighting an uphill battle when it comes to attracting teachers for ANY positions, much less the nationally hard-to-fill ones. And parents, there are open meetings every summer to revise the dress code policy if you have such a hard time with it. I just wish you could see the way some of our students dress on out of uniform days, and you might see one of the main reasons to support the school uniforms.

Why does the county maintain certain public dirt roads and not others? Some of these roads have not been kept up by the county in years. If it is the landowner's responsibility to maintain these public dirt roads, why shouldn't they be allowed to put up a locked gate on these roads? Would you please look into this?

If the Choctaw Co. Board of Education would get

■ Letters

From page 6-A

Mrs. Moore, whom I will say both returned my calls and answered most of my questions. They have several things they are working on, but the school year is almost over and a lot of damage has been done.

I would like to know if the students' do not pass the class, will that go against their grade point average and be on their school record and how will all that they have missed or do not understand be re-taught to them. If the math classes today are like they were when I was in school then they all build on each other and if you don't get a part of it you will not be able to progress to another level.

I know this is not the first time that the school has been in this situation and something needs to be done to determine why they can't keep a math teacher and then fix the problem.

Michelle Walker

It is with heartfelt thanks that we, the family of Walter (Pee Wee) Williams, express our gratitude and

rid of some of those over-paid, "pork" positions in the central office that were created for no other reason than to give certain people jobs, there would be no shortage of funds. Maybe it would be a good thing for the State Dept. of Education to take our system over for a few years. I'll bet there would be some changes then!

Isn't it funny how, when the Pennington Town Council asked the person from AlaTax to come meet with the businesses, so they could have their questions answered about the new tax law, only a few showed up. It seems to me the business owners only wanted to complain to the Council and not have their questions answered by AlaTax. It is not fair to amend the ordinance of a business when the Council does not know the gross receipts of a business.

I would like to comment on Dee Ann's super article on the Allen family. I knew this family growing up in Alabama. We all attended church together. Not only would "Mrs. Esther" be so proud of Buddy, but her entire family as they have stuck together through the hard times. They are all representative of what "family" is really about ... sticking together through good and bad. Congratulations to Buddy on his retirement.

I am publicly asking Rep. Marc Keahey, Rep. Thomas Jackson, Sen. Pat Lindsey and Sen. Bobby Singleton to be men of integrity and step up and admit to us, the voters, who among them voted for that ridiculous pay raise that they gave themselves a couple of weeks ago. Come on boys, we are waiting to hear from you with great anticipation because we want to start lining up CANDIDATES to run against those of you who voted for this incredibly unnecessary waste of taxpayers' money!

As you know, there were some kids taken to jail and booked for drinking, but did anyone notice that only a few of the names appeared in the paper? Yes, all of the kids were over 18 and yes they were taken to jail, but just because of the "last names" of some of those kids, nothing else was done. What is this world coming to? (*ED. NOTE: Just so that you know, the Sun printed all of the arrest records that were listed on the jail log for that time period, just as we always do. — Tommy.*)

I live inside the city limits of Butler and there are several stray dogs that run around the neighborhoods. Does Butler have a dog pound? My dog was recently picked up out of my yard and taken to what the city calls a pound. I have also been told by several people that certain dog owners around Butler are being called before the city employees make rounds to pick up stray dogs, so they can be sure to put their dogs up. If they are going to pick up one dog running around the neighborhood, they should pick up all stray dogs. I was in a neighborhood the other day, where the Butler police were making rounds, while a bulldog was chasing the police car up the road! Why wasn't this dog picked up and taken to the pound?

appreciation for the overwhelming love and support shown to us during the loss of our father.

Mere words are so inadequate for the many prayers, cards, food, and acts of kindness we have received. It is comforting to know that we are in the prayers and thoughts of our friends.

Thank you again for every kind act shown to us. Please remember us in your prayers as we adjust to life without our loving father.

Linda Williams, Randy Williams, Charlotte Armstrong and family

The family of David Moore would like to thank everyone for their acts of kindness during our time of sorrow. Words cannot express how appreciative we are for all of the visits, calls, cards, food, prayers, words of encouragement and kindness.

We would like to thank Sis. Mae Jewel Moore and Bro. Donald Turner for their up lifting messages. We would also like to express our thanks to Rocky Bumpers and his wonderful staff for the love and encouragement they gave us.

May God bless each one of you. Please keep us in your thoughts and prayers.

Ellen Moore and family

