



U.S. Department of Justice

***United States Attorney
Eastern District of Arkansas***

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**CONTACT: Bud Cummins
United States Attorney
501-831-6125**

**ARKANSAN HONORED BY ATTORNEY GENERAL ALBERTO GONZALES
FOR NATIONAL MISSING CHILDREN'S DAY**

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Attorney General Alberto Gonzales today commemorated National Missing Children's Day by honoring law enforcement and citizens nationwide for their unprecedented teamwork and selfless efforts in the recovery of missing and exploited children.

"A missing child is every parent's worst nightmare," said Attorney General Gonzales. "Every day, the courageous men and women of law enforcement work tirelessly to recover missing and exploited children across our nation. We are grateful for their dedication, and today we recognize their valiant efforts to apprehend would-be predators and keep our communities safe."

Attorney General Gonzales today honored **CHARLES COGBURN** of Russellville, Arkansas for his efforts to help missing and exploited children. Mr. Cogburn was among 25 law enforcement officers honored at a Department of Justice ceremony today.

Just before heading out on his regular run to Texarkana, Charles Cogurn, a truck driver with TCL Trucking in Russellville, Arkansas, saw a televised AMBER Alert for 17-year old Shauna Leigh Owens of Plano, Texas. While driving along Interstate 40, Cogburn saw a vehicle that matched the description of the one in the AMBER Alert. Cogburn called 911 and radioed ahead to other truckers asking them to verify the license plate as the vehicle had moved ahead of him in traffic. Authorities stopped the vehicle and apprehended the suspect, who had been holding Shauna at gunpoint.

"Vigilant citizens like Mr. Cogburn can solve crimes and in some cases save lives. Every parent with a missing child prays that someone like Charles Cogburn will care enough to help stop a tragedy," Cummins states.

Nearly 800,000 children are reported missing every year. Some children run away, others may be lost or injured, while some may be abducted by a parent or a stranger. For the more than 100 children abducted by strangers each year, where the child was kept overnight, held for ransom, or killed, the first few hours after an abduction are critical. Seventy-four percent of children who are abducted and later found murdered are killed in the first three hours after being taken.

Most often, child abductions are committed by family members—more than 200,000 annually—in an attempt to deprive a caretaker of custodial rights. Of the 58,200 non-family abductions each year in the United States, nearly all (98%) of these children were returned to their families safely.

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