

Chapter 1 : CHILLER IN CHOWCHILLA!

The Chowchilla kidnapping was the abduction of a school bus driver and 26 children, aged 5 to 14, in Chowchilla, California on July 15, The kidnapers put their victims into a buried box truck within a quarry in Livermore, California.

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Chapter 2 : Kidnapped! At Chowchilla - Gail Mook Miller, Sandra Tompkins - Google Books

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Kidnapped and buried alive Where are they now? Chowchilla, California CNN How long does it take to overcome the trauma of being kidnapped and buried alive? As a fourth-grader, she and 25 other children were snatched from their school bus by three men, taken to a remote quarry and forced into a moving van buried six feet underground. It was the largest mass kidnapping in U. For 16 hours, the children waited for either rescue or death. Read More The younger ones cried helplessly. The older ones tried to comfort them. All of them buried in a "coffin," the stench of vomit and filth intensified by the searing California heat. Fred Woods -- the last kidnapper remaining in prison -- could be freed by a parole board, despite having been sentenced to life without the possibility of parole. Now 49, she said she is "living the whole ordeal all over again It was the second-to-last day of summer school for the kids at Dairyland Elementary School in Chowchilla. It was such a good time," Carrejo Labendeira said. Everyone signed it -- the teachers, the students, even bus driver Edward Ray. So the children -- ages 5 to 14 -- boarded the bus home, delighted. The youngest ones were still in their bathing suits after swimming in the community pool. As they drove down the narrow Avenue 21, a van in the middle of the rural road blocked the bus. And as quick as his words were coming out, they jumped on the bus with their guns pointed at us. And told Edward to go to the back of the bus. They had pantyhose pulled over their heads. Carrejo Labendeira ducked under her fourth-row seat, just inches away from the barrels of the guns. Her three sisters who were also on the bus panicked in the back. The gunmen drove the bus through a thicket of bamboo. The drive jostled the students with each stalk the bus hit. The gunmen told the children to get inside. CNN Map "It was dark, the windows were painted in. No one could see in, and no one could see out," she said. Jennifer Brown Hyde, who was 9 at the time, said the conditions were miserable. It was over degrees," said Brown Hyde, now Carrejo Labendeira suspects she knows why the kidnappers drove around so long. But at that hour, no one was around -- just the gunmen and their hostages. The kidnappers asked each child his or her name, age, address and phone number. They also took a piece of clothing or a belonging from each student. But the gunmen never explained why they were abducting the children. With only some construction lights illuminating the dark quarry, the kidnappers ordered the children and bus driver into what looked like a massive grave -- a moving van hidden underground. It was like a tomb," Carrejo Labendeira said. It was like a giant coffin for all of us. One by one, the children climbed down a ladder and into the van, which was covered under several feet of dirt. After the last student entered, the kidnappers removed the ladder. But there was only enough food to last one meal. Several mattresses lay scattered on the floor -- perhaps an indication of how long they would be held hostage. Brown Hyde said she thought she was about to die, especially because the ventilation system had failed. Children vomited amid the odors of urine and filth. The younger ones screamed and cried for their parents. The food quickly vanished. Workers excavate the buried moving van where 27 hostages were trapped. The bus driver and several of the older boys struggled to move it. And are we going to get shot for coming out? Because all you saw with them were the guns. Their timing was impeccable -- the kidnappers were asleep. Dirty and exhausted, they stumbled to find help. And just above the quarry was a small building. From life sentences to freedom Woods, along with brothers Richard and James Schoenfeld, pleaded guilty to kidnapping and were each given 27 life sentences without the possibility of parole. We felt safe growing up knowing we were assured that they would never get out," she said. All three kidnappers became eligible for parole after an appeals court overturned their original sentences. The appellate court ruled the men caused no serious bodily injury; therefore they should have the chance for parole. Richard Schoenfeld was paroled in ; his brother James was released earlier this year. Handleman, their attorney, said the Schoenfeld brothers are not speaking to the media. But he said Woods should also be paroled because he is not a danger to society. Woods has no animosity toward any of them," Handleman said. Ray was hailed as a hero for helping the 26 children escape. A lifetime of trauma The young children are now in their late 40s and early 50s. Many suffer from claustrophobia and say the kidnapping has affected even their

own children. Lynda Carrejo Labendeira said she still grapples with flashbacks and panic attacks. Until recently, she had to sleep with a nightlight on. And she still has chronic nightmares. I saw myself at my own funeral. Yet here I am -- a mess.

Chapter 3 : Chowchilla school bus kidnapper James Schoenfeld paroled - CNN

Kidnapped! At Chowchilla has 9 ratings and 1 review. Kristel said: Kidnapped! At Chowchilla by Gail Miller & Sandra Tompkins tells the true story of the.

Some of the officials who put the culprits in prison are calling for their parole — a sore point for many residents. In the way of small towns, the connections to that dark moment are personal. Jodi Heffington Medrano, who owns a salon on the square, was one of the children who disappeared. Thirty-five years ago, three young men from wealthy families kidnapped a bus full of 26 schoolchildren and their driver in this San Joaquin Valley community and entombed them in a rock quarry. The whole place was shouting back and forth. Where does justice end and vengeance begin? In , a two-person parole board panel deemed Schoenfeld "suitable for parole," an initial step on the long road to possible release. A new panel is scheduled to reconsider that decision at a hearing Tuesday. Even if the panel sticks with the earlier finding, Schoenfeld, now 56, would not be scheduled for release until , and his parole would have to clear several more hurdles, including review by the governor. The other two kidnappers have yet to be found suitable for parole. It was July, hot, the next-to-last day of summer school. The big yellow school bus from Dairyland Unified was lumbering down country roads lined with fruit trees, same as they are today. The bus driver, farmer Ed Ray, was born in Chowchilla. He knew all the kids. Some were the grandchildren of his own classmates. They ranged in age from 5 to The youngest, Monica Ardery, would ask the gunman with the pantyhose over his face, legs hanging alongside his head like ears, if he was the Easter Bunny. The oldest, Mike Marshall, was the son of a rodeo cowboy. Ray saw a white van stopped in the road. He slowed down to see if it was someone with engine trouble. Three gunmen jumped out, commandeered the bus and drove it into a dry canal bottom, where another van waited. The children and Ray were herded into the back of the two vans. With no water and no bathroom breaks, they were driven for 11 hours, the smaller kids throwing up from motion sickness, the older kids singing songs to cheer them up: The kidnappers made each of them give their name and a piece of clothing, then climb down a ladder into a buried moving van. Along one wall were dirty mattresses and containers of water. It was stuffy, with only two air tubes. Above them, the men started throwing dirt over the roof. Ray tried to soothe them, but he was crying. He was sure the roof was going to cave in. Ray, Marshall and the older boys stacked the mattresses, climbed on top and used wooden slats to dislodge a steel plate on the roof of the van that was covering the hole through which they had entered. Two tractor batteries were holding down the plate. They poured water over their heads to fight heat exhaustion and kept pushing until they moved the plate.

Chapter 4 : Chowchilla kidnapping - Wikipedia

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Infamous Chowchilla school bus kidnapper paroled No ordinary hijacking On July 15, , 26 Dairyland Elementary School students were returning home after a day of summer school in Chowchilla -- an inland farming community some 40 miles north of Fresno, California -- when their bus was commandeered by Schoenfeld, his younger brother Richard, and a friend, Fred Woods. The captors -- men in their 20s from well-to-do Bay Area families -- made the entire bus and all of their hostages disappear for days. The inside of the van in which 26 Chowchilla, California, school children and their bus driver were held captive. According to reports, it was early evening when the trio stormed the bus and took it to a nearby drainage ditch where they hid it in a thicket of bamboo. The captives were forced to descend below the rocks and gravel into an underground bunker fashioned out of the trailer of a moving truck that the kidnappers then entombed in dirt, according to the Fresno Bee. The cell was about 8 feet by 16 feet and was crudely ventilated, but was stocked with water, snacks, a flashlight and mattresses, according to media reports. Ray, who passed away at age 91 in , said "there was a lot of crying and begging for mama," according to a New York Times obituary. Daring escape Although the kidnapping itself was executed with terrifying precision, the plot, it seemed, was never fully conceived, because the three captors were bested by Ray and the children -- aged between 5 and 14 years old -- before ransom demands were even made. After several hours in the bunker, Ray and the older children began stacking the mattresses in a way that enabled them to access the roof of the truck. Once there, they were able to tunnel their way above ground. The entire escape took place as the Schoenfelds and Woods napped, according to the San Francisco Chronicle. A legacy of nightmares The Chowchilla kidnapping is a frightening scenario that is perhaps unfathomable for most students, parents and teachers in an era of hyperconnectivity, where cell phones and wifi-equipped school buses mean students can communicate just as easily with the world outside as they can with person sitting right next to them. But it was , well before such technological luxuries existed. Although none of the 26 children were physically harmed by the Schoenfelds or by Woods during the affair, the trauma they endured still persists for many of the victims, who are now in their 40s and 50s. Jennifer Hyde is one of them. She said she was nine years old when her childhood ended on that bus in Chowchilla. While Hyde remains a prisoner of fear, James Schoenfeld will join his brother Richard -- who was paroled in -- in freedom no later than Wednesday, according to the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. Fred Woods will then be the last of the Chowchilla kidnappers behind bars. The year-old will have his 15th parole hearing on November 19, according to Patino.

Chapter 5 : Was A Chowchilla Victim Paid to Ask For Kidnapper's Parole? | Inside Edition

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Chapter 6 : They've Taken Our Children: The Chowchilla Kidnapping (TV Movie) - IMDb

Thirty-five years ago in Chowchilla, Calif., three young men from upscale families kidnapped a bus full of children and their driver and buried them in a quarry. Some of the officials who put the culprits in prison are calling for their parole -- a sore point for many residents.

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Chapter 8 : Buried alive: California mass kidnapping victims - CNN

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Chapter 9 : Chowchilla, CA - Chowchilla, California Map & Directions - MapQuest

Chowchilla is a city in Madera County, California. The city's population was 18, at the United States Census, up from 11, at the U.S. www.nxgvision.com illa is located 15 miles (24 km) northwest of Madera, at an elevation of feet (73 m).