

Toddler reunited with parents after 2-year wait

The similarity of the boy's name to a deceased Islamic militant's caused delays in immigration, an advocacy group claims.

Associated Press

HERNDON — A groggy toddler from Morocco was reunited with his parents in the United States in the wee hours Tuesday after a separation of two years because of bureaucratic delays on his immigration papers.

Abdeloihab Boujrad, 38, a U.S. citizen originally from Morocco, and his wife, Leila, had been trying since June 2005 to get the necessary paperwork for their now 3-year-old son, Ahmedyassine, to join them in the United States.

An Islamic civil rights group that took up their cause suspected the delay was caused by a similarity in Ahmedyassine's name to the founder of the Palestinian Islamic militant group Hamas, Sheik Ahmed Yassin, who was assassinated by Israel in 2004.

In June, after media reports highlighted the Boujrads' plight, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services approved the paperwork allowing



Abdeloihab Boujrad, 38, arrives at a press conference Tuesday with his son, Ahmedyassine, 3, who had been living with his aunt in Morocco since 2005.

Ahmedyassine to immigrate.

The boy arrived Tuesday at Reagan National Airport after flying from his hometown in Morocco to Casablanca, and then on to Washington via New

York.

At a news conference, Boujrad explained how his son was asleep when he got off the plane. As his parents tried to wake him, the boy opened his eyes, saw his mother and father and muttered "I must be dreaming" before falling back to sleep.

His parents roused him a second time, and his eyes opened wide. "I am with you now," the boy told his parents. "I rode three airplanes to see you."

Boujrad, who lives in Alexandria, admitted he was a little nervous that his son might not recognize him. But the family kept in touch through video hookups on the Internet and frequent telephone calls during the separation, so the faces and voices remained familiar.

"We were worried maybe he forgot us, but he was OK. He's a good kid," Boujrad said, as his son sat quietly and contentedly on his lap while he played with some new toys.

Immigration officials never explained the delay, but officials with the Council on American-Islamic Relations, which advocated on the family's behalf, said they felt certain the boy's name caused the delays.

Morris Days, a legal director for CAIR's Maryland and Virginia chapter, said he is working on more than

a dozen cases in which Muslims are facing unexplained delays on various immigration issues, particularly when it comes to taking their citizenship oaths.

"You can term it almost collateral damage from post-9/11," Days said. He called on federal officials to expedite other cases in the same way they handled the toddler's case after it was publicized.

Boujrad was living in Morocco in 1997 and engaged to Leila when he won an immigration lottery that allowed him to come to the United States. He married his wife in 1999 but was unable to bring her to the U.S. until 2005. She is now a legal permanent resident.

In the interim, Ahmedyassine was born in May 2004 in Morocco. Leila reluctantly left the boy in the care of her sister in the fall of 2005 when her visa allowing her to emigrate to the U.S. was about to expire, assuming that the paperwork problems for her son could be handled quickly.

The boy's name was a compromise between Boujrad, who preferred Yassin, and Boujrad's father, who preferred Ahmed. Boujrad said he didn't know who Sheik Ahmed Yassin was until somebody told him earlier this year that the name similarity might be causing the immigration problems.

Historian noted for studies on Holocaust

Raul Hilberg, who died Saturday, published the first major study of the Nazi atrocities.

Los Angeles Times

Raul Hilberg, who established himself as the pre-eminent scholar of the Holocaust with his monumental and still controversial 1961 book "The Destruction of the European Jews," the first comprehensive study of the Nazis' genocidal campaign, died of lung cancer Saturday at a hospice in Williston, Vt. He was 81.

A longtime professor at the University of Vermont, Hilberg was considered the dean of Holocaust studies for his portrait of the "machinery of destruction" that annihilated more than 5 million European Jews during World War II.

"Raul Hilberg's work and great opus, 'The Destruction of the European Jews,' set the standard and created the foundation for the development of the whole field of Holocaust studies," said Paul Shapiro, director of the Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington.

Hilberg's book, which drew on mountains of documents from the Nuremberg trials, demonstrated the systematic nature of the Nazi slaughter. He also wrote "Perpetrators, Victims, Bystanders" (1992), which examined the bureaucracy of accountants, guards, engineers, architects and other anonymous workers whose cooperation enabled Adolf Hitler's killing machine to roll relentlessly in service of gruesome ends. In defining what Shapiro called "the three roles of human beings in the genocidal situation," the latter work created a framework for scholars to follow.

Hilberg's primary focus on the perpetrators and some of his conclusions — in particular, his assertions about the lack of substantial Jewish resistance — drew criticism from some Jewish historians and the Jewish public, whose attacks continued through most of his career.

He came to his life's work through tragedy and luck.

An Austrian Jew born in Vienna in 1926, he narrowly escaped the Holocaust as a teenager. He witnessed his father's arrest in 1938 when Germany annexed Austria, but because his father had served in World War I, Nazi policy allowed the entire family to avoid internment by giving up their property and leaving the country.

They fled first to Cuba, then to New York. After high school, Hilberg was drafted into the U.S. Army and returned to Europe. His division helped liberate the Dachau concentration camp.

He also assisted in the hunt for German documents that could be used in the prosecution of war crimes. While stationed in Munich at the former Nazi party headquarters, he discovered crates containing Hitler's private library. He later worked for a project to organize and microfilm captured German documents. That archive became the foundation for his landmark study.

After attending Brooklyn College, he entered Columbia University, where he earned a master's degree in 1950 and a doctorate in 1955. One of his Columbia professors, Franz Neumann, taught classes about bureaucracy, particularly how the development of a nation such as Germany relied on the labor of a vast system of functionaries.

"That idea sparked a similar one in my mind," Hilberg told the Chicago Tribune some years ago. "I grasped that the Holocaust could only have been possible through the efforts of a similar bureaucracy, which must have left its records too."

PARKWAY: List of planting sites expected by Jan. 1

FROM 1

But some marred landscapes can be healed over time with strategically planted saplings that grow into development-blocking trees.

During the past three years, Friends has organized more than 700 volunteers for spring and fall plantings along the parkway in the Roanoke Valley.

Those efforts resulted in 2,000 saplings along Cotton Hill in Southwest Roanoke County and near the parkway intersection with U.S. 220.

Richard Wells, president of Friends, said the organization is making plans for additional plantings around development sites. But they must wait for approval from the Park Service.

"We take our lead from the parkway," he said. "We're ready. When they tell us where to go, we will go."

The parkway, which winds 469 miles from Shenandoah National Park in Northern Virginia to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park in North Carolina, is the most visited national park in the country. Roanoke is the larg-

est city along the parkway.

The Roanoke Valley Friends chapter monitors 50 miles of the parkway, including the 28 miles through the valley that are considered endangered.

Susan Mills, executive director of Friends, said the organization focuses on three targeted viewsheds at a time because that's easier to manage.

The parkway is more than just a national park to Mills and others like her who were raised in this area, she said: It's like home.

"Blue Ridge Parkway is just a part of who I am," she said. "And that is how people see this site."

Plans are under way for Friends and the Park Service to devise a list of planting sites by Jan. 1. From that list, Friends will select three for organized planting projects.

"There's a tremendous amount of work to be done," Mills said. "But what we need is more doers to help."

Debbie Pitts, executive director of Explore Park, said both organizations are trying to get more people involved with the viewshed activities in the near future.

"There's always room for people to get involved and to protect what we have," she said. "Maybe people take it for granted, but the more the merrier."

Explore Park assists with transportation, educational tutorials for young volunteers and entertainment, and has participated in every viewshed project Friends has held since 2004.

The preservation of the parkway will be beneficial for Roanoke and other cities as our metropolitan areas begin to grow, Pitts said. Development is nothing to fear, she said, but people need to safeguard a refuge where nature sprawls across the mountainside, preserved and unrestrained.

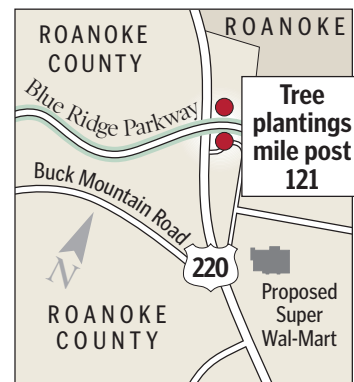
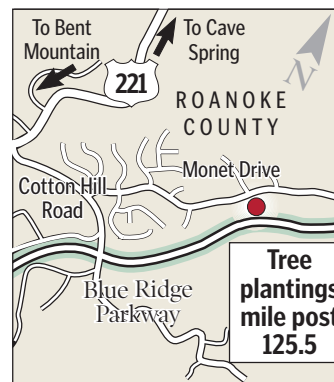
"It's very difficult to balance development and nature as cities and communities grow," she said.

"This is a way for preserving both."

Anne Childress, chief of interpretation and education at the Park Service, said administrators who sign off on Friends projects are away at this time but that everything will run smoothly.

Protecting the Blue Ridge Parkway

Over the past three years, the Friends of the Blue Ridge Parkway has organized more than 700 volunteers for spring and fall tree plantings to help preserve the views from the parkway through the Roanoke Valley. The group planted 1,000 trees at mile post 125.5 and more trees on both sides of the parkway at mile post 121.



The Friends of the Blue Ridge Parkway is about to begin planning its next viewshed project.

To suggest a place for plantings or to volunteer to help plant trees, call Mark McClain, Roanoke chapter president, at 387-0930. To find out more, go online at www.blueridgefriends.org.

SOURCE: Friends of the Blue Ridge Parkway

The Roanoke Times

NUCKLES: Psychologist says Nuckles is severely depressed

FROM 1

Roanoke County Commonwealth's Attorney Randy Leach asked that Nuckles serve 25 years in prison. "Parents had entrusted their children to this man, and he abused that trust and sexually abused that boy," Leach said.

Swanson sentenced Nuckles to 40 years suspended after he serves 15, above the recommended state guidelines.

Though Leach was disappointed that Nuckles' sentence wasn't longer, he was still pleased that Nuckles would be locked up for a long time.

Early last year, Nuckles was a teacher at Country Bear Day School on Starkey Road, and the 4-year-old boy was a student in his class. On April 19, 2006, as the boy's mother was

driving her son home, he said Nuckles had performed oral sex on him. She pulled over and questioned her son, who repeated what he'd said and made a gesture demonstrating what he said Nuckles had done.

She took her son home, bagged his clothes and called police the next day.

At Tuesday's hearing, Catherine Taylor, the psychologist who is treating the boy, testified that the boy, now 5, has told her Nuckles molested him on more than one occasion.

Country Bear administrative director Aimee Sparger testified that Nuck-

les passed criminal background checks and had excellent references, and that no parents ever complained about him until the April incident. Other Country Bear employees testified that they never had observed Nuckles doing anything inappropriate.

Painter called psychologist Doris Nevin to point out flaws in a psychosexual evaluation of Nuckles prepared by Flora Counseling Services, a sex offender treatment provider. But asked by Leach if she would feel comfortable leaving Nuckles alone with a 4-year-old child, Nevin replied, "Absolutely not."

Both Nevin and Flora Counseling concluded that Nuckles has a low to moderate risk of committing another sexual offense. Nevin said Nuckles shows symptoms of severe depression.

Nuckles told his evaluators that his father sexually molested him as a child and that he was gang-raped in college. His family members never knew of either incident until Painter notified them last week, the attorney said.

Painter said that Nuckles regrets what the boy's family has gone through.

Leach said the boy and his family have been traumatized by what Nuckles did. The family is doing what it can to return the boy to a normal life. "They want to privately heal at this point," Leach said.

plantings in Roanoke that have just been wonderful," she said.

"We're delighted and very fortunate to have Friends and other partner groups to help us."

SHOOTING: Police want tipster No. 125 to call back

FROM 1

drug-related," said Roanoke County Commonwealth's Attorney Donald Caldwell. "For general community concern, this does not appear to be just a random act of violence."

Prosecutors declined to further discuss the case.

No arrests have been made, but investigators are reaching out to an anonymous tipster who called Crime Line on Monday with information

about the killing.

Police are asking that the tipster, who was assigned the identification number 125, call the police at 853-5314 to clarify the earlier report.

Police say the caller can remain anonymous and still receive up to \$1,000 for information leading to the killer's arrest.

Police Capt. Chris Perkins said the call provided "extremely good information." He added, "This case

is going pretty good right now."

Neighbors have reported hearing three gunshots shortly before 11 p.m. Friday.

Randall DeHart said he found Motley lying on his back a few feet from his apartment doorway with a gunshot wound to the back of his head. He was breathing but unresponsive.

Motley's apartment door was open and his keys and a bag of takeout food were

lying beside it, DeHart said.

DeHart said he believes Motley came home and was startled by someone inside his apartment.

"His keys were lying like he dropped them near the door and took off running," DeHart said.

Traci Garrett, who was visiting her boyfriend's apartment at the time of the shooting, has said that her boyfriend looked out the window after hearing three gun-

shots and saw a man running east on Brandon Avenue.

DeHart said he heard a police officer say a gun had been recovered near the apartments. Police declined to confirm that a weapon was found.

Motley died early Saturday at Carilion Roanoke Memorial Hospital.

His death was the second homicide this year in Roanoke. There were 11 killings in the city in 2006.