

Man arrested for brutal kidnapping in Rio Arriba County

Written by Staff Reports
Friday, 13 March 2020 04:39



Woman survives, gets help

RIO ARRIBA COUNTY - The New Mexico State Police Investigation Bureau was called to investigate a kidnapping that occurred in Espanola, N.M. on Feb. 29.

At approximately 2:00 am March 4, State Police uniform officers responded to the Okay Owingeh Police Department in reference to a female who reported she had been kidnapped in Espanola.

During the investigation, agents learned the female was kidnapped at gunpoint and forced into the front passenger seat of a vehicle off of Taos Lane. Agents identified Brenton Rael, 44 of Petaca, N.M., as the suspect who kidnapped the woman.

Once inside the vehicle, the woman was struck by Rael numerous times and strangled by an unidentified female who was with Rael. The woman also had her eyes taped shut and covered by a bandana. She was driven to a residence in El Duende where her clothing was removed, and she was saturated with Clorox bleach. She was then injected with heroin and driven to a bridge off U.S. Highway 74, where she was pushed off the bridge into the river.

The female victim floated down the river and was able to make it onto the riverbank. She walked to a nearby residence where she called law enforcement.

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Agents were able to locate and obtain a search warrant for Rael's residence. During a search of the residence, agents found evidence described by the kidnapped female.

Agents found tape, Clorox, a red strap, a blue bandana, human hair and a bag of clothing that belonged to the kidnapped victim inside the residence. Officers located a red bandana near the bridge on U.S. Highway 74.

On Feb. 29, a no bond arrest warrant was issued for Brenton Rael from the Rio Arriba County Magistrate Court. Rael was arrested in Espanola on March 2 without incident. He was booked into the Rio Arriba County Detention Center in Tierra Amarilla.

Rael was charged with the following:

Kidnapping (first degree felony)

Aggravated battery (use of a deadly weapon) (third degree felony)

Tampering with evidence (third degree felony)

Assault with intent to commit a felony (with intent to kill) (third degree felony)

Conspiracy (fourth degree felony)