

Houck man jailed on rape charge

Written by By Bernie Dotson Sun Correspondent
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Victim was 15-years-old

A Houck, Ariz., man remained jailed June 22 on criminal sexual penetration and kidnapping charges, according to an affidavit for arrest warrant. The alleged incident took place on the west side of Gallup at a truck stop and a motel, records state.

Derek Avery, 32, was taken into custody June 21 on a sex charge that took place in October 2015, the affidavit states. Avery is charged with picking up a 15-year-old girl at the Love's travel stop and then taking her to a nearby motel, where he sexually assaulted her various times, records show.

McKinley County Adult Detention Center Warden Steve Silversmith said Avery is being held on a \$10,000 bond. He was still in custody June 23, according to jail records.

The crime was reported about a month later by the victim because, according to investigators, she didn't think she'd be believed.

The victim told McKinley County Sheriff's investigators she ran away from her home to the west side Greyhound bus station so that she could take a bus and visit her father in Tucson, Ariz. That's where she met Avery, who forced the victim into his vehicle. The affidavit states that Avery gave the victim a drink, and the victim said the drink may have been spiked with something.

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Once arriving at the hotel, the victim was forced to disrobe and have sex multiple times, the affidavit states. Investigators obtained motel registration records and subsequently located Avery. Investigators were able to put together a suspect lineup in which the victim identified Avery.

Avery has made a first appearance in court before Magistrate Cynthia Sanders, records show. It was not immediately clear if Avery had any previous charges in McKinley County.

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