

## **Bucyrus Telegraph Forum: Haylee's custody to be decided by trial**

*By Erik Shilling*

*August 11, 2009*

MANSFIELD -- A trial is scheduled to determine who will win custody of Haylee Donathan.

The 4-year-old, living in foster care, is the daughter of Candace Watson, 25. The Crestline woman was indicted two weeks ago along with boyfriend Robbi Potter, 27, in connection with an escape from a local sex offender halfway house. That incident led to a month-long, cross-country manhunt and national headlines. Haylee traveled with the couple and was taken into protective custody in San Diego upon their capture in June.

Watson was in Richland County Juvenile Court on Monday.

Lawyers representing Richland County Children's Services and the family agreed to another pre-trial hearing to go over witness lists Sept. 8, and agreed to trial dates of Sept. 10 and 11.

Court administrator Michael Casto said because several relatives had come forward to seek Haylee's custody, the proceedings may get complicated. "We want to get the consensus between the agency and the family," he said.

Candace Watson, Haylee's grandmother Mary Watson and at least one other relative have submitted claims seeking custody to Judge Ron Spon. The judge will determine if Haylee is dependent, neglected or abused, as Richland County Children Services alleges in a complaint.

James Donathan, Haylee's father, is in Richland County Jail, accused of helping Potter escape from the Mansfield Volunteers of America

## **Cincinnati Enquirer: Cops: Woman threatened welfare worker**

*By Jennifer Baker*

*August 12, 2009*

COLLEGE HILL – A woman was arrested and charged Tuesday with threatening to shoot and kill Cincinnati police and a Hamilton County case worker when they came to her residence to check on her toddlers.

Jessica Jackson, 22, is held this morning without bond at the Hamilton County jail. She faces several charges: aggravated menacing; endangering children; and obstructing official business.

She became upset when police and a case worker with the county's Department of Job and Family Services arrived at her Casey Drive apartment Tuesday for a welfare check, court records state.

She reportedly refused to open her door so they could make sure her daughters, ages 1 and 3, were OK. Then she allegedly made violent threats.

When authorities did get inside the apartment, police said, they found the children living in filth.

It isn't clear if the youngsters are staying with a relative or were placed in foster care.

### **Columbus Dispatch: Runaway cites fear of father over leaving Islam; Police doubt city man a threat to teenage Christian convert**

*By Meredith Heagney*

*August 12, 2009*

A Northeast Side 17-year-old who ran away, saying that her father would kill her for leaving Islam, is in state custody in Florida.

But Sgt. Jerry Cupp of the missing-persons unit of the Columbus police special-victims bureau, disputes Fathima Rifqa Bary's allegation. He said her father, Mohamed Bary, appears to be a loving parent who knew about her conversion to Christianity months ago.

The New Albany High School cheerleader, who goes by Rifqa, disappeared on July 19, prompting fears that she had been abducted, Cupp said.

Authorities soon found that she was staying with a married couple who pastor a church in Orlando.

"She was petrified that her dad would kill her," said the Rev. Beverly Lorenz, who leads Global Revolution Church in Orlando along with her husband, the Rev. Blake Lorenz.

Mrs. Lorenz met the girl through a Facebook prayer group. Lorenz barely knew the girl, she said, but took her in when she called from a borrowed cell phone in Florida.

"She hopped on a bus, and from what she said, she wanted to get the farthest away she could get, and Florida was the farthest," Lorenz said.

On Monday, a judge in the 9th Judicial Circuit Court of Florida placed the girl in the custody of the state's Department of Children and Families. She is in foster care and safe, said Elizabeth Arenas, a department spokeswoman.

The girl told investigators that she was afraid her parents would kill her, but the investigation is ongoing, so Arenas couldn't comment on whether the girl's claim is credible.

Cupp has interviewed the father several times, he said, and doesn't think the man is a threat.

"The parents knew months ago that she was ... going to different religious, Christian functions," Cupp said, and there's no evidence that they threatened her with violence.

It "seems outlandish to me," he said, "but that's not for me to decide. We'll gladly let the courts work this thing out."

The children's services department in Florida is investigating the case along with Franklin County Children Services, Arenas said. Another court hearing is set for Aug. 21, and eventually, a judge will determine who will care for the girl.

## **Newark Advocate: Woman Sentenced For Child Endangerment**

*Staff Report*

*August 14, 2009*

NEWARK -- A Newark mother was sentenced to three years of community control Thursday morning in Licking County Common Pleas Judge Thomas Marcelain's courtroom.

Tina M. Mounts, 39, pleaded guilty to endangering children, a fourth-degree felony, Licking County Assistant Prosecutor Brian Waltz said.

On Jan. 30, a Simms Street resident pulled a young girl inside her home shortly after 11:30 p.m. because the child was improperly dressed for the 7 degree temperature, according to police reports.

Subsequent investigation revealed the 6-year-old had been outside for at least 30 minutes in an area known for high crime, the reports said.

The girl and her older brother were placed with their grandmother by Licking County Children's Services.