

Cowboy owner to pick Alkman if price is right

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Multi-Care program/1B

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Staff photo — Rod Aydelotte

Mark Miller, Elizabeth Whittington helped track down Bryan (left) and Denver Young, whose father was arrested for child stealing.

TO THE RESCUE

A Houston duo finds two boys near Gholson a year after they were reported missing by their mother.

By **MARK ENGLAND**
Tribune-Herald staff writer

Denver and Bryan Young's mother didn't have to depend on a milk carton to find her missing sons.

Thanks to a Houston man and woman, deputies with the McLennan County Sheriff's Department Thursday afternoon arrested Denver Eugene Young, 28, for child stealing on an Oklahoma arrest warrant and took Bryan and his older brother, Denver, into protective custody.

Hours later, about 10 p.m., Shirley Olsen — after driving nonstop from Fort Smith, Ark. — hugged her boys for the first time in al-

most a year.

In the entrance to the sheriff's department, Olsen had a hug, too, for the man and woman who found her boys: Mark Miller and Elizabeth Whittington. They are the founder and president, respectively, of the American Association for Lost Children, a non-profit organization based in Houston. Less than 7 years old, the group has found 18 children abducted by either a parent or stranger.

"Thank you for finding my kids," Olsen told Miller.

"Oh, God, bless you," said Shirley Bohm,

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Boys found near Gholson a year after they disappeared

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the boys' grandmother. "So many times we thought we had located them."

"We had so little help until these people got involved," Olsen told an onlooker.

Miller and Whittington spent three weeks checking with private detectives, talking with friends and relatives of Young, and calling school districts before tracking

Young to the Wasco area, to a house outside Gholson. Young allegedly fled with Denver, 10, and Bryan, 6, in April 1988, after an Oklahoma judge awarded his wife custody.

For a year, Young kept his boys in Gholson, not enrolling them in the local school district, said Deputy Don Goates. They had eat in their house during the day. Goates added, and were allowed outside to play only after school ended.

"Missing kids deserve more than

being put on milk cartons," Miller said. "That won't cut it. You have to get out and look for them. If it means going from city to city or state to state. You have to track them down."

Miller said the break in finding Denver and Bryan came when he learned Young has distant relatives in Gholson. After "some surveillance," Miller and Whittington drove to Gholson Wednesday night. Working from photographs, they sighted the children and contacted the McLennan County Sheriff's Department.

"At first, I was kind of apprehensive about them," Goates said. "But now I'm impressed. They work strictly on their own money, raising money as they go along. I think they did a super job. Their information was correct. There was a warrant out for the father. And the children were where they said they were. It worked out just great. The kids might never have found if they hadn't gotten involved."

Miller said he became interested in looking for missing children as a stockbroker in Houston. He made some inquiries, what he learned surprised him. Approximately 500,000 children are missing in America and no one is really looking for them, he said.

Groups such as Find the Children and the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children are resource centers, Whittington said.

"They help all they can, but they won't look for the children," she said. "We decided someone needed to be looking for them. If we hadn't looked for these children, they might have stayed in the woods for



Star photo — Fred Arndt/ute
Bryan (left) and Denver Young hug their mother, Shirley Olsen, for the first time in a year.

the boys about a baby brother, Coye Olsen, they had never seen.

"It's been the pits," Olsen said, as her son ran outside to his grandmother. "The holidays, especially, were bad. You can't describe the feeling. You don't know where your children are at. You don't know if they're alive. You don't know anything. You try to carry on like nothing's wrong, but you think about them all the time."

Olsen said she read about Miller and Whittington in an Arkansas newspaper and contacted them as a last resort.

"I knew they would find them," she said. "They sounded different. He told me they would find them. And they did. And they didn't miss

charge me anything. They deserve all the help they can get."

Miller said his organization exists on donations, which can be made by calling 1-800-873-LOST.

Following the laughter of her youngest son, Olsen went outside. Bryan Young quipped, though, as he walked over to Whittington, who was sitting on the curb.

"I'll miss you," she said, hugging Bryan.

"Come see us," he said. Watching silently a few feet away was Goates. His shift had ended five hours before and he had come directly to the sheriff's department from his part-time job.

"I was hoping I wouldn't miss this," he said.

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