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AROUND THE NATION

Body Identified as Store Clerk

DALLAS — A body found in a remote area was been identified as the clerk whose abduction from a store in a small North Texas town was recorded by security cameras, authorities said Sunday.

Mindy Daffern, 46, had been missing since Friday from the store her family owns in the city of Scotland, 130 miles northwest of Dallas. Surveillance camera videotape showed her being confronted at gunpoint by an unmasked man who walked her outside the store.

A man suspected in the abduction led investigators to the body Saturday and Texas Rangers confirmed it was Daffern, Archer County Sheriff Ed Daniels said Sunday.

Wallace Bowman Jr., 30, of Bowie, was being held on charges of aggravated robbery and kidnapping and Daniels said he is expected to be charged with capital murder.

Dealership, Widow Settle Suit

LONGVIEW, Texas — A Texas car dealership has settled a lawsuit filed by the widow of a man who killed himself after dropping out of a contest in which participants tried to keep their hand on a vehicle the longest.

Details of the settlement between Patterson Nissan of Longview, in east Texas, and Chalala Gutierrez, the wife of contestant Richard Thomas Vega II, are confidential.

The suit, settled Thursday, focused on a 2005 contest in which the winner of the “Hands on a Hardbody” contest was awarded a Nissan truck and other prizes.

Just before a scheduled rest break 48 hours into the event, Vega dropped out, crossed a street and broke into a Kmart store, where he took a gun from a case and shot himself.

In her suit, Gutierrez alleged that the dealership was negligent in organizing and conducting the contest.

Kids May Return to Foster Care

SAN ANGELO, Texas — More than two months after being forced to return children from a polygamist sect to their parents, Texas child welfare authorities want eight of the youngsters put back in foster care.

Individual hearings for the four mothers of the children, ranging in age from 5 to 17, are set to begin Monday.

Child Protective Services has asked Texas District Judge Barbara Walther to return the children to foster care because their mothers allegedly have refused to limit their contact with men accused of being involved in underage marriages.

None of the children currently live at the Yearning For Zion Ranch in Eldorado, where authorities swept roughly 440 children into foster care in April.