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SCOUT ARCHIVE SHOWS PATTERN OF ABUSE

Files reveal no single molester profile, but many reports depict similarities in 'grooming' behavior.

By Jason Felch and Kim Christensen

The thousands of men expelled from the Boy Scouts of America on suspicion of molesting children came from all walks of life — teachers and plumbers, doctors and bus drivers, politicians and policemen. They ranged in age from teens to senior citizens and came from troops in every state.

As the Scouts long have said, the files suggest no single profile of a predator. But a close look at nearly 1,900 confidential files opened between 1970 and 1991 revealed a pattern: Many suspected molesters engaged in what psychologists today call "grooming behavior," a gradual seduction in which predators lavish children with attention, favors and gifts.

In hundreds of cases, Scout leaders allowed the boys to drive cars, drink alcohol or look at pornography. They gradually tested physical boundaries during skinny dipping, group showers, sleepovers and one-on-one activities.

"He combs the boys' hair and buys them clothes and dinner," one mother wrote to a Scouting official in 1985 about an Orange scoutmaster. "He takes them to church, motorcycle riding, skiing, flying. . . . Everybody thought he was a real nice guy. Now we know why he did these things."

Boys in a York, Pa., troop alleged in the 1980s that their 28-year-old scoutmaster invited them for sleepovers at his house, then plied them with beer and pornography.

"And then as they be-
[See Scouts, A14]

War is new currency at ancient bazaar

By Times Staff

ALEPPO, Syria — The familiar passageways have turned hostile, the comforting labyrinth now a maze of menace.

But Abu Taher threaded his way Tuesday through the alleys of Aleppo's ancient Souk Madina, past piles of debris and charred storefronts, determined to see whether his textile shop had survived the recent conflagration. He came alone, risking his fate to the hidden gunmen seeking targets.

"It's our livelihood," he explained, abruptly bursting into tears, a man of 60 weeping amid the desolation.

Abu Taher found little sympathy, however, from a group of armed rebels camped out in front of a trashed pistachio emporium, 50 yards from the front lines and the current range of government marksmen. The rebels have seen many of their comrades killed as they battle the forces of Syrian President Bashar Assad.

"Why are you crying about a shop [when] people are dying?" one combatant with a Kalashnikov rifle dismissively asked the grieving merchant, who, like others, requested that he be identified with a nickname for se-
[See Syria, A6]

ELECTION 2012: SECOND PRESIDENTIAL DEBATE



JUSTIN LANE European Pressphoto Agency
MITT ROMNEY and President Obama contest a point during their second debate, a town-hall-style event at Hofstra University in Hempstead, N.Y. They argued over issues including energy, immigration and the attack on a U.S. diplomatic compound in Libya.

A sharper tone in Round 2



BRUCE BENNETT Getty Images
AUDIENCE MEMBERS snap photographs before the start of the debate. The questions were drawn from local voters who were selected to attend the event.

This time, the president firmly confronts Romney, who holds his own in a lively exchange.

By Paul West and Seema Mehta

HEMPSTEAD, N.Y. — In a town-hall-style debate that was supposed to focus on questions from ordinary voters, President Obama and Mitt Romney circled each other on the stage and engaged in finger-pointing displays, arguing over energy, immigration and the deadly attack on the U.S. diplomatic mission in Benghazi, Libya.

Obama ducked a question from audience member Kerry Ladka about who in the administration had denied a request for extra diplomatic security in Libya, and why. But Obama seized an opening when Romney challenged the president's statement that he had described the incident as an act of "terror" on the day after the attack.

"Is that what you're saying?" Romney said. "I want to make sure we get that for the record, because it took the president 14 days before he called the attack in Benghazi an act of terror."

Obama responded sharply, advising Romney to "get the transcript," as mod-

erator Candy Crowley of CNN confirmed the accuracy of what Obama had said.

"He did in fact, sir," she told Romney, prompting Obama to respond, "Can you say that a little louder, Candy?"

According to a White House transcript of the Sept. 12 Rose Garden ceremony, Obama said, "No acts of terror will ever shake the resolve of this great nation," though he did not specifically declare that the Libya attack had been an act of terrorism.

Obama entered the night under pressure to rescue his candidacy with a more assertive debate performance. In contrast to his distracted mien in the first debate, the president watched his rival intently, sometimes leaning toward him as he listened
[See Debate, A12]

NEWS ANALYSIS

Obama is back in the fight

By Mark Z. Barabak

The President Obama who strode the debate stage Tuesday night banished the image of the dull and listless performer who almost single-handedly ushered Mitt Romney back into competition the last time the two met.

Combative and eager to confront his rival at every turn, Obama quickly dispensed with one of the big

questions hanging over his candidacy: whether he cared enough to win.

By the end of Tuesday's debate, it was obvious this highly competitive president very much wants a second term and, more, wants to win it decisively.

He took after Romney on his business record and the low rate he paid in income taxes; his personal investments and campaign promises; and pointed out inconsistencies between Rom-

ney's stances as a deeply conservative presidential candidate and the positions he held as a moderate Massachusetts governor.

In that sense, Obama's showing should reenergize his campaign and stoke the enthusiasm of Democrats who were despondent after the first debate in Denver, as well as that of volunteers who may have asked why they should give their all when he didn't seem to be.
[See Analysis, A12]

COLUMN ONE

A grim lost and found

Belongings discovered in Arizona's Sonoran Desert hold clues to their owners, who died migrating across the border

By John M. Glionna
Reporting from Tucson

She probably never imagined things would go so wrong — that she'd end up here, on a scuffed metal gurney in a coroner's office far from home.

Still, at age 22, she was old enough to know the dangers of stealing across the U.S. border from Mexico onto a lethal desert landscape, where she would have to take crazy chances amid the heat, cold and rattlesnakes to avoid capture by *la migra*, the U.S. Border Patrol.

Her body was found in early 2009 near a service road, a two-day walk from the border. She had died of exposure: Her system simply shut down in the high desert's frigid winter temperatures.

Within days, workers at the Pima County Medical Examiner's Office conducted an inventory of the left-



Photos by RANDI LYNN BEACH For The Times

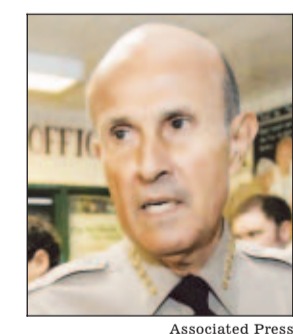
POSSESSIONS OF SOME of the more than 2,035 migrants whose remains have been found south of Tucson since 2001.

behind fragments of her short life. Inside her backpack were family photos, a Spanish-English dictionary, lip gloss, four pens, pink-and-white socks and an ID from Oaxaca that described her as a preschool teacher.

Robin Reineke, a cultural anthropology graduate student at the University of Arizona, studies such possessions like pieces of a puzzle. Most important, she said, the belongings can help determine the crosser's identity. They also tell the story of a very human decision — what personal effects to take on a possibly fatal expedition.

In the young teacher's case, Reineke likened her to a teenager heading off to college, carrying the expectations of her entire family.

"Her possessions reminded me of exactly what I would carry to college," said the 30-year-old Reineke, coordinator of Pima County's Miss-
[See Remains, A10]



Monitor will oversee jail reforms

Lacking confidence in the abilities of Sheriff Lee Baca and his staff to curb inmate abuse, L.A. County supervisors vote to hire an observer. **LATEXTRA**

Weather
Sunny and hot.
L.A. Basin: 94/66. **AA8**

Complete Index ... AA2

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