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One teen runaway found, two missing

By [Richelle Bailey](#) | The McDowell News

A national organization is pleading for information about a 15-year-old girl missing from McDowell for more than a year.

In separate cases, sheriff's deputies have located one of two teenage runaways for whom they've been searching. The other one hasn't been spotted.

As part of its ongoing search, the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children is again asking for the public's help in locating Diana Hernandez Yanez, 15, of Yancey Street in Marion. She was 14 when she left her home on July 21, 2008.

Neighbors told police that they saw her get into a red pickup truck that morning. Friends say the truck, a red 2000 Chevrolet S-10 low-rider pickup, belonged to 19-year-old Andres Velasquez Tinoco of Coxes Creek Road, whom Diana reportedly met just a couple of weeks prior to her disappearance.

According to the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children, a felony warrant has been issued for Tinoco.

When she was last seen in Marion, Yanez was described as a Hispanic female who stood 5 feet, 6 inches tall and weighed 150 pounds. She has long black hair and brown eyes. She wears braces on her teeth and earrings in both ears and has a mark on her right calf.

Tinoco was described last year as being a Hispanic male who stood 5 feet, 4 inches tall and weighed 140 pounds. He has black hair and brown eyes.

Tinoco's red pickup truck has chrome wheels, a front spoiler and a large white oval decal on the rear window with "red" in red letters.

Anyone with information concerning Yanez's whereabouts is asked to call the Marion Police Department at 652-3231 or McDowell County Crimestoppers at 65-CRIME. With Crimestoppers, your identity remains anonymous, and you could receive a cash reward.

In separate cases, one teen runaway has been located, and deputies continue to search for another. Lt. Dan Shook of the McDowell County Sheriff's Office said officers are hunting for 16-year-old Gage Duane Gersema.

Members of the Phoenix Outdoors organization, a wilderness therapy program for troubled youth, reported Sunday that Gersema walked away from a camp on Little Buck Creek with a couple of other teens, according to Shook. The others have been located.

Gersema is a white male who stands 5 feet, 3 inches tall and weighs 133 pounds. He has brown hair and brown eyes and was last seen wearing black pants, a blue shirt and brown hiking boots.

Anyone with information concerning Gersema's whereabouts is asked to call the McDowell County Sheriff's Office at 652-4000 or McDowell County Crimestoppers at 65-CRIME.

Earlier this week, another runaway, 17-year-old Jeremiah John Moore, was located in Asheville.

Shook stated that Moore left a foster home in Old Fort Sunday, and Asheville authorities found him Tuesday night. The teen is originally from Woodfin.

The detective said Moore was turned over to the Department of Social Services.