

Paravicini

92/538

3/14

fo- st desk, parks reporter
patricia barker and daniel, story on
medicaid overcharges

Photographer

ATTENTION HOLLYWOOD 531
COLOR

Neg. No.

PHOTOGRAPHIC WORK ORDER

INTER-OFFICE

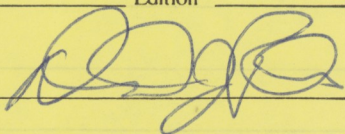
Birmingham News

Photographic Department

(THIS SIDE TO BE FILLED OUT BY PERSON REQUESTING SERVICE)

Date of SATURDAY Time 8:45 AM No. of
Assgn. _____ Photos _____

Column _____ Photos Used on: _____ Time or
Layout _____ News () _____ Day or Date _____ Edition _____

To work with DAVE PARKS Authorized
Photographer _____ Signature 

Meet at: Assignment () City Room () Dept. Charged _____

SUBJECT ~~PAT~~ PATRICIA BARKER

& FOSTER CHILD DANIEL

(DON'T SHOW DANIEL'S FACE)

MEET PATRICIA (SEE ATTACHED PHOTO)

IN PARKING LOT IN FRONT OF MAIN

ENTRANCE TO HILL CREST HOSPITAL.

AT

ADDRESS 6869 5th AVE. S

REMARKS

SHE'LL GO IN, GET DANIEL &

COME BACK OUT. SHE'S DRIVING

A 1988 WHITE OLDS AND

IS WITH ANOTHER CHILD AND

A WOMAN.

DHR's Rx for disturbed boy: Isolation, heavy medication



Larry and Patricia Barker — still awaiting Christmas for former foster child.

NEWS STAFF PHOTO/DAVE PARKS

By **Dave Parks**
News staff writer

ANNISTON — A Christmas tree with unopened presents still stands in a corner of Larry and Patricia Barker's living room.

The Barkers are saving the holiday for an 9-year-old boy they have been struggling to free from a private psychiatric hospital in Birmingham for seven months.

Their struggle illustrates the wide gap that remains between how the state Department of Human Resources treats children and how child advocates say they should treat children under a recent federal court agreement.

That agreement was reached because of lawsuit filed by child advocates after a child identified by the initials R.C. was sent to a series of psychiatric hospitals and placed on anti-psychotic medicine despite his father's wishes.

The agreement calls for the Department of Human Resources to rely less on treatment programs such as psychiatric hospitals and to base rehabilitation efforts on home and family. The Barkers' case touches on several of those issues. For instance:

The Barkers say the boy, who was a foster child in their custody and is a relative, needs a home.

The state, which has custody of the child, says he needs a psychiatric hospital.

The Barkers say the child needs firm, loving guidance.

The state says he needs anti-psychotic drugs.

The Barkers say the child needs to live with his brother and sister.

The state says he needs a group home.

The focus of the dispute is Daniel, the second of three children born into a troubled family in which the parents were unable to care for the youngsters. Enter the Barkers, relatives who were also foster parents. They knew the children since birth and wanted to adopt them.

"I love them," Mrs. Barker explained. "We wanted to give them a chance."

So about 18 months ago, the children moved in, even though they were still wards of the state. Daniel had an immediate, embarrassing problem, Mrs. Barker said. He soiled his pants almost daily.

Mrs. Barker said she led Daniel through a regimen of toilet training, and he progressed. But she had doubts, and decided to seek professional advice.

"I thought he might need somebody to talk to," she said.

When she told Daniel about her plan, his response was immediate.

"That day, he started going to the bathroom," she said. There have been only a few accidents since then, she said.

See Daniel, Page 19A