

P R E S S R E L E A S E

December 21, 2007

Edward L. Owens

Due to results from recent supplemental DNA and Microscopic Testing insisted upon by the Davis County Attorney's Office, and after review of a defense expert report, prosecutors are moving to dismiss the case against Ed Owens without prejudice (meaning it can be re-filed in the future, if evidence warrants.) While the additional test results achieved at a reputed laboratory here in this state do not exonerate or prove Ed Owens is innocent, they create tremendous difficulty in proving this case beyond a reasonable doubt to a jury.

The Davis County Attorney's Office takes seriously the ethical obligation requiring a reasonable probability of conviction by a unanimous jury before taking a case to trial. The initial DNA test results (and the expert interpretation of such) were compelling in this direction. The more extensive testing recently requested by our office in an effort to further enhance either the probability of a conviction in this case, or to see if the results exonerate the defendant, cast enough doubt that the fair decision is to ask the court to dismiss while further investigation is conducted. The conclusion that Ed Owens "probably" committed this crime is not enough, nor should it be under our Constitution to sustain a prosecution. If sufficient evidence to proceed and prove the case beyond a reasonable doubt is obtained, the case will be re-filed.

Ed Owens remains one of the primary suspects. Investigators are actively following other avenues that have opened up in an attempt to prove who murdered Karin Strom in Woods Cross in 1980. The Davis County Attorney's Office will have no further comment on the case at this time due to the ongoing investigation. We commend the entire Woods Cross Police Department, Detective Brad Benson, and the State Crime Lab for their willingness to devote further time and resources to this investigation.

Our hearts sorrow for all of Karin's family and friends. Their courage and understanding of the factual and legal realities of this case are greatly appreciated. Justice for Karin and her survivors continues to be actively pursued.

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