

DNA Current Events Week of 8/4—8/10 2005

Compiled by Rebecca Mitcheson

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### **DNA Evidence and Crime-Solving**

“Man charged in rape, San Diego homicide Investigators say new DNA evidence links the suspect to a Volusia assault and a 1988 killing,” *Orlando Sentinel* (Florida) August 7, 2005.

When investigators compared DNA from a rape last November, they found a match to another unsolved crime, a murder in 1988. Investigators were unable to link the matching samples of DNA to a suspect until DNA from a marijuana cigarette butt seized at a traffic stop last month in Daytona Beach, led police to a 47 year old man named Mark Francis Elder. Elder has been charged with both crimes.

“Waukesha County Briefing,” *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* (Wisconsin) August 4, 2005.

Kenneth J. Botelho, 26, was charged Wednesday with theft and vandalism in a robbery in 1999. Botelho was linked to the crime after DNA evidence was taken from a baseball hat that was swiped off his head at the scene of the theft. The recent submission of the DNA from the inside of the hat to the state DNA database resulted in a “hit” to Botelho who had been convicted in the past on separate charges.

### **Expanding the DNA Databank**

“Forensic teams at crash sites,” *The Advertiser* August 6, 2005.

Crime scene investigators will now routinely work at major crash sights to collect DNA evidence to assist in accident investigations.

“DNA samples collected in nursing-home slaying,” *Chicago Tribune* August 5, 2005.

Police have been collecting DNA samples from anyone willing to provide them in an effort to track down the murderer of a 76-year-old nursing home resident. DNA samples from volunteers are being sent to the Illinois State Police crime lab.

### **DNA-based Post Conviction Challenges**

“Man Jailed In 3 Rapes; Earlier Suspect Is Freed,” *The Boston Globe* August 5, 2005.

DNA evidence from three rapes committed in 1989 has proved the innocence of one man, and the guilt of another. 50 Year old Larry Taylor pleaded guilty to the assaults. One of the victims mistakenly identified another man in the attack, Neil J. Miller who spent more than 10 years in prison before DNA evidence that was determined to be from the rapist was tested in 2000, proving it was not Miller’s. Taylor’s DNA was on record in the state crime lab for a previous prison sentence.

“The Nation; In Brief / Florida; Man Cleared By DNA Evidence Leaves Prison,” *Los Angeles Times* August 4, 2005.

Circuit Judge Christina Pereyra-Schuminer threw out five rape convictions for Luis Diaz, who had served 26 years in prison for the rapes. DNA evidence led to his exoneration.

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“Governor pardons man DNA cleared,” *Chicago Tribune* August 4, 2005.

Governor Rod Blagojevich issued an official pardon for Alejandro Dominguez after Dominguez was cleared by DNA evidence of a rape for which he served four years. Dominguez was released from prison in 2002 after a judge cleared him of the crime.

### **DNA Evidence and Sentencing**

“Murder defendant must provide DNA to compare,” *St. Petersburg Times* (Florida) August 9, 2005.

Carl Edward Roland, the man who was found on top of a 25 story crane in Atlanta, has been ordered to provide a DNA sample to be compared with DNA evidence found at the scene of his girlfriend's murder.