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PRESS RELEASE

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DNA TESTING IN GIRL SCOUT MURDER CASE IS INCONCLUSIVE

Mayes County District Attorney Gene Haynes announced today that DNA testing of evidence from the 1977 murders of three girl scouts in Mayes County is inconclusive. The testing, using the latest DNA technology, was conducted by private laboratories under contract with the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation. The tests sought to establish a DNA profile of the person or persons who sexually assaulted and killed the girls. However, crime scene evidence was too deteriorated to obtain a DNA profile. If the tests had been successful, the DNA profile could have been compared to the known DNA profiles of suspects, and entered into DNA databases for possible matches.

In 2007 the OSBI received a federal grant to have DNA evidence in unsolved cases examined by private laboratories using DNA testing not available at OSBI. OSBI selected Identigene of Houston, Texas to perform the testing. Identigene was selected after inspection and auditing by OSBI to insure the lab met OSBI standards. Identigene is able to perform Y-STR DNA testing.

In April 2007, the OSBI contacted Haynes seeking permission to test semen stains from pillowcases and evidence from an anal swab from one of the victims. Permission was necessary because the testing would completely consume the evidence from the anal swab. After consulting with the families of the victims, Haynes granted permission.

In May 2007 Identigene issued a report that no DNA results were obtained from the evidence. In June 2007, the remaining evidence from the pillowcases was returned to OSBI who sent it to Sorenson Forensics in Salt Lake City, Utah for further testing.

In July 2007 Sorenson Forensics reported to OSBI that it conducted Y-STR DNA analysis on the sperm fraction of the evidence, and miniSTR DNA analysis on the epithelial

(female) fraction of the evidence. No results were obtained from the sperm fraction, but a degraded partial miniSTR DNA profile that genetically types as female was obtained from one of the pillowcase stains.

In response, OSBI sought to reanalyze the DNA from the victims. It was discovered that the existing samples were too old. In September 2007 OSBI contacted Haynes' office for assistance in obtaining DNA samples from the parents of the victims. Samples from each of the surviving parents were obtained and submitted to OSBI in October 2007.

OSBI conducted DNA analysis on the parent samples and compared the results to the partial female DNA profile obtained from the pillowcase by Sorenson Forensics. In December 2007 OSBI reported the partial female DNA from the pillowcase cannot be excluded as being from one of the victims.

In January 2007 the District Attorneys Office discussed all the results with OSBI and then forwarded the information to the families of the victims. After allowing the families time to review the results, Haynes decided to make the results public.

“It is unfortunate the testing did not produce a DNA profile,” Haynes said. “We had hoped the testing would bring an end to the debate over who committed these terrible crimes. The families of the victims certainly deserve an ending to the case. This is one of the most infamous crimes in state history. Over thirty years later my office still receives inquiries about the case, as well as letters and calls from people claiming to know who committed the murders.”