

**VALDOSTA – LOWNDES
REGIONAL CRIME LABORATORY**

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Chief of Police

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LABORATORY REPORT

January 25, 2013

To: Lowndes County Sheriff's Office
120 Prison Farm Road
Valdosta, Georgia 31601

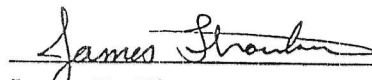
Laboratory Case Number: 2013-00042
Submission Number: 1
Agency Case Number: 13-01-01520

ATTN: Investigator Jack Winningham

Subpoenas pertaining to this case should refer to the Valdosta - Lowndes Regional Crime Laboratory Case Number.

Offense(s): Death Investigation

Subject(s): Kendrick Lamar Johnson (Victim)


James D. Thornton

Criminalist

Reference:

This report is in reference to a request for Crime Scene Forensic services made to the Valdosta - Lowndes Regional Crime Laboratory on January 11, 2013. This report may contain conclusions, opinions, and/or interpretations made by the author.

Crime Scene Narrative:

On Friday, January 11, 2013 at approximately 1048 hours, I was contacted by Captain Wanda Edwards of the Criminal Investigations Division at the Lowndes County Sheriff's Office, in reference to a deceased student at Lowndes High School (LHS), 1606 Norman Drive, Valdosta, Georgia. I advised that I would be en route.

On Friday, January 11, 2013 at approximately 1108 hours, I arrived at Lowndes High School, 1606 Norman Drive, Valdosta, Georgia. I was briefed by Investigations Staff Sergeant Jack Winningham. Staff Sergeant Winningham advised that Lowndes County Sheriff's Investigators were dispatched by Lowndes County 911 Center to the Old Gymnasium at the Lowndes High School at 1606 Norman Drive, Valdosta, Georgia. I was advised that students at Lowndes High School were in the Old Gymnasium when they decided to climb up on to padded mats that were rolled-up and in the vertical position. I was advised that when the students climbed on top of the rolled-up mats they saw what appeared to be white in color socks. The students advised that they approached the socks to get a closer look, in which they discovered that it was a body. I was advised that the students notified a teacher, in which the teacher started pulling the vertical positioned mats down into the horizontal position to access the situation. When the teacher made their way to the rolled-up mats in the back row along the Old Gymnasium southwest wall they saw what appeared to be a deceased body.

It was advised that the body was positioned head first inside of the rolled-up mat. EMS arrived on scene and the victim LHS student; Kendrick Lamar Johnson: black male, birth date 10/10/1995, of 920 Ponderosa Drive, Valdosta, Georgia was slightly pulled out of the mat and found deceased.

The campus at this address contains multiple buildings located east of Norman Drive, Valdosta, Georgia. The constructed building is a public high school campus. The buildings on this campus are constructed with red in color brick on the exterior and a grey in color metal roof. The campus also contains multiple parking lots, white in color mobile trailers, multiple classrooms, multiple offices, multiple athletic fields, a football stadium, and multiple gymnasiums. The campus contains an Old Gymnasium Building where Johnson was found deceased. The Old Gymnasium is located north of the campus cafeteria. The Old Gymnasium contained bleachers along the north and south walls. There are multiple basketball goals around the hardwood floors. There were approximately twenty-one (21) rolled-up mats in the southwest corner of the gym.

The scene was established with crime scene tape and secured by the Lowndes County Sheriff's Office personnel. While on scene I noted the following Lowndes County Sheriff's Office personnel: Captain Wanda Edwards, Lieutenant Stryde Jones, Sergeant Aaron Pritchett, Staff Sergeant Jack Winningham, Major Logan Henderson, Deputy Randy Lightsey, Deputy Mike Adams, Deputy John Marion, and Investigator Jack Priddy. Personnel on scene from the Valdosta-Lowndes Regional Crime Laboratory (VLRCL): Criminalist Lieutenant Shannon Salters, and Criminalist Ray McGraw. Personnel on scene from the Georgia Bureau of Investigations (GBI): Crime Scene Specialist Wes Horne, Agent Kristen Perry, Agent Lindsay Marchant, Agent Mike Callahan, Agent Amy Braswell, and Agent Steve Turner.

On Friday, January 11, 2013 at approximately 1125 hours, an initial walk-through of the exterior and interior of the scene was conducted by Staff Sergeant Winningham and myself. Nitrile gloves were worn by all crime scene personnel entering the scene throughout the investigation. A cursory inspection of the east side (front of Cafeteria and Old Gymnasium building) entry/exit doors and windows was conducted, in which it appeared to be no sign of forced entry.

I started processing the scene by taking overall photographs of LHS Main Entrance. With the assistance of Criminalist McGraw and Criminalist Lieutenant Salters a three-dimensional (3-D) image of the interior scene was created using the Leica C-10 Scanning System.

Upon completion of the Leica Scan Documentation, the GBI personnel entered the scene for an initial walk-through and to assist with the investigation.

I photographed the crime scene, taking overall and mid-range photographs of the campus exterior Cafeteria and Old Gymnasium. The exterior and interior of the scene was video recorded with a digital camcorder.

A cursory search of the exterior west wing (rear side of Cafeteria and Old Gymnasium) was conducted by GBI Crime Scene Specialist Wes Horne and myself. All interior and exterior trash cans in the area were searched. The entry/exit doors to the rear (west side of building) of the Old Gymnasium were locked. There appeared to be no signs of forced entry to the rear (west side of building) entry/exit doors. It was noted that on the south side of the exterior cafeteria building a window was ajar. It appeared that the window was unlocked and opened with no sign of force entry. Windows and entry/exit doors were documented with photographs.

The interior of the Old Gymnasium was documented, taking overall and mid-range photographs. During a cursory search areas of concern were identified. The evidentiary items were identified using Yellow Identification Numbers. I observed one (1) black and white Adidas shoe on the floor in front of a rolled-up mat lying horizontally in the southwest corner of the Old Gymnasium (Crime Scene Item # 1). I observed one (1) yellow two pocket folder on the gym floor in front of a rolled-up mat near the west wall of the Old Gymnasium (Crime Scene Item # 2). I observed one (1) blue in color Physical Science Book on the floor behind two rolled-up mats near the southwest wall entry/exit door (Crime Scene Item # 3). I observed one (1) grey Hollister pull-over hooded sweater on the concrete floor around multiple horizontal and vertical rolled-up mats in the southwest corner of the Old Gymnasium (Crime Scene Item # 4). I noted a rolled-up mat containing Johnson's deceased body lying in the horizontal position on the concrete floor in the southwest corner of the Old Gymnasium (Crime Scene Item # 5). There were what appeared to be bloodstains on the south wall of the Old Gymnasium. A blood presumptive test was performed on the stains by GBI Crime Scene Specialist Horne, which according to the manufactures instructions the stains were positive for blood (Crime Scene Item # 6).

It was noted that a pair of black, grey, and orange in color NIKE shoes were observed near the bleachers on the north wall of the Old Gymnasium. It appeared that the shoes had stains that looked similar to blood. A blood presumptive test was performed on the stains by GBI Crime Scene Specialist Horne, which according to the manufactures instructions the stains were negative for blood.

Mid-range and close-up photographs, with and without, a scale were taken of the items that were identified with the Yellow Identification Numbers. A rough sketch of the scene was generated. Additional documentation of the items was conducted. Crime scene Item # 1 is a men's size U.S. 9.5 shoe according to the inside tag. Crime Scene Item # 2 contained school documents belonging to Kendrick L. Johnson (deceased victim). The documents were photographed. Crime scene Item # 4 is a size M (medium) according to its tag. Two swabs of the blood stains on the south wall were collected (Crime Scene Item # 6).

With the assistance of Criminalist McGraw and GBI Crime Scene Specialist Horne approximate points of measurements were taken using the triangulation method from two fixed objects to the marked items of evidence. Point A is the Old Gymnasium west wall north entry/exit double door frame. Point B is a corner sticking out on the west wall. The items of evidence were collected and secured in my crime scene vehicle. My vehicle was locked and I maintained the keys.

On Friday, January 11, 2013 at approximately 1600 hours, The Lowndes County Corner Bill Watson arrived on scene to conduct his examination of Johnson. Johnson's body was positioned lying approximately on his left side sticking out of the rolled-up mat from his head to approximately his abdominal area. The remainder of his body from approximately the abdominal area to his feet was inside the rolled-up mat. Johnson's head was on the concrete floor in a pool of blood. Johnson's body was removed from the mat so Lowndes County Corner Bill Watson could continue his examination. Johnson was wearing a white in color undershirt, an orange in color tee shirt, a white in color tee shirt, a belt, blue in color jeans, black in color shorts, boxer underwear, and white in color socks. There was one (1) pair of white, grey, and orange in color NIKE shoes inside of the mat (Crime Scene Item # 8), which were not on his feet. The NIKE shoes were documented with photographs. Johnson's body was placed into the supine position so that his body could be examined by Lowndes County Corner Bill Watson. During his examination Lowndes County Corner Bill Watson unfastened Johnson's belt and jeans. Johnson's body was documented with additional photographs.

On Friday, January 11, 2013 at approximately 1610 hours, GBI Crime Scene Specialist Horne and I placed Johnson's body on a sterile white sheet to conduct an additional cursory examination for documentation. It appeared that rigor and livor mortis had already set in, which was consistent with the position of the way the body was found. Johnson's right arm was in a position that appeared to cover his face and his left arm was along his body with his forearm bent back towards his head. Johnson's fingers were loosely curled up on both hands. One black wire with white earphones was hooked around Johnson's left hand middle and index finger. There appeared that rigor mortis had set in because of the stiffening of his body. Levity was present on his head, arms, and chest area. Johnson's face was swollen and had blood exiting from his eyes, nose, and mouth. There was visible dried blood on Johnson's arms, chest, and face. The smell of Johnson's body appeared that it was starting to decompose. Johnson's eyes were swollen, fixed, and dilated. Blood was visible in the eyes with signs of petechia. There appeared to be no signs of blunt force trauma on Johnson's face or body. There appeared to be no visible signs of wounds to Johnson's body. There were visible signs of skin slippage on Johnson's abdomen area, face, and arm. Johnson's body was documented with additional detailed photographs.

During the removal of Johnson's body from the rolled-up mat, additional items were observed that appear to have evidentiary value. One (1) black and white Adidas shoe was located in the southwest area of the Old Gymnasium on the concrete floor near Johnson's head in the pool of blood (Crime Scene Item # 7). The Adidas shoe was a size U.S. 9.5, which appeared to be similar to Crime Scene Item # 1. Johnson's pockets were searched, in which, one (1) LG cell phone was located from his left front blue jeans pocket (Crime Scene Item #9). Approximate points of measurements were taken using the triangulation method from the two previous fixed objects to the additional items of evidence. The items of evidence were photographed, collected and secured in my crime scene vehicle. My vehicle was locked and I maintained the keys.

Approximate measurements of the rolled-up mat Johnson was found in were obtained: length was approximately 74 inches and the width of the entire diameter was approximately 34 inches. The foot end (side where Johnson's feet were) of the rolled-up mat was approximately 14^{1/2} inches in diameter at the opening of its widest point. The head end (side where Johnson's head was) of the rolled-up mat was approximately 14^{3/4} inches in diameter at the opening of its widest point.

During a cursory search of the Old Gymnasium Girls Restroom, paper towels that appeared to contain blood were observed in the trash can near the sinks (Crime Scene Item # 10). The paper towels were documented with photographs, collected, and secured in my crime scene vehicle. My vehicle was locked and I maintained the keys.

Steve Owens from Owens Transport was contacted by Lowndes County Corner Bill Watson to conduct the removal and transport of the body to the Valdosta-Lowndes Regional Crime Laboratory.

Investigator Winningham, Captain Edwards, Lieutenant Jones, Criminalist McGraw, Criminalist Lieutenant Salters, and I conducted a final walk through of the crime scene, in which nothing additional was noted. At approximately 1720 hours, I concluded my investigation and released the scene to Investigator Staff Sergeant Winningham and the Lowndes County Sheriff's Office.

On Friday, January 11, 2013 at approximately 1730 hours, Owens Transport and I arrived at the Valdosta-Lowndes Regional Crime Laboratory with Johnson's body and placed him in Body Cooler # 2. A Lowndes County Sheriff's Office Property and Evidence Form were generated for the body item # 5, which contained the chain of custody.

The evidence from the scene was placed into the Crime Scene Vehicle Bay Temporary Evidence Locker and I maintained the keys. Crime Scene Item #'s 7, 8, and 10 were saturated in blood so they were placed into drying cabinet # 1 and I maintained the keys.

On Sunday, January 13, 2013, I returned to the Valdosta-Lowndes Regional Crime Laboratory (VLRCL) to retrieve the evidence from the locker and drying cabinet. All items of evidence were sealed with evidence tape. The digital images of the scene were converted onto a DVD to be submitted as Crime Scene # 11 for evidence. The digital video recording of the scene was converted onto a DVD to be submitted as Crime Scene # 12. Twelve (12) Lowndes County Sheriff's Office Property and Evidence Forms were generated for the evidence, which contained the chain of custody.

On Sunday, January 13, 2013, I arrived at the Lowndes County Sheriff's Office located on 120 Prison Farm Road, Valdosta, Georgia, and submitted the evidence to the LCSO Evidence Locker and I secured the evidence.

On Sunday, January 13, 2013, I was asked by Lowndes County Sheriff Chris Prine if it was possible to allow Johnson's father Kendrick Johnson Sr. to make a positive identification of his son. Johnson's parents were escorted to the Valdosta-Lowndes Regional Crime Laboratory by Lieutenant Jones, and Investigator Staff Sergeant Winningham. Kendrick Johnson Sr., Lieutenant Jones, and Investigator Staff Sergeant Winningham entered the lab and were escorted by myself to the body cooler room where the positive identification was made.

On Monday, January 14, 2013, Johnson's body was released to Steve Owens for transport to the GBI for autopsy.

Remarks:

Questions regarding this report should be addressed to: James D. Thornton at jthornton@lowndescounty.com