

DOE NETWORK

Articles by Kelly Foreman, Public Information Officer

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At the feet of a grove of maple trees, the sun shines down on a Barbourville gravestone visited only by strangers. The woman beneath the stone's name is unknown. On the Internet, she is listed only as 192UFKY – a case number accompanied by photos of battered jewelry and details of her death.

Unknown, or 192UFKY, had a name once. She is surrounded on the Doe Network by others who once had names; others whose names are left on the tongues of loved ones searching for answers to their disappearances.

Read the stories of the missing northern Kentucky constable, the man whose family finally found him after 18 years and the unknown Barbourville woman found inside an old refrigerator on the side of a state highway. These are the stories of the Doe Network – a site dedicated to those trying to find their way home. >>

◀ This refrigerator was found alongside U.S. 25E with the body of an unidentified, red-headed woman inside in 1985.

Home At Last

Doe Network helps bring home a man missing for nearly two decades

Deep in the woods of a small New England town, the bitter winds of a Vermont winter carried more with them in November 1985 than the smells of trampled forest leaves and falling snow. The ice-laden dirt couldn't hide the scent of something that didn't belong from the wet and anxious snout of an experienced hunting dog.

As the dog wildly pawed at the ground, his master discovered beneath the fallen branches and frozen blades of grass a young man – decomposing in his shallow grave from a lengthy stay. Nothing among the few possessions buried with him led the hunters – or later the police – to the man's name.

More than 1,200 miles away in Clay, Ky., a newlywed wife had been searching for more than a year for her groom. While hitchhiking, the father of her then 2-year-old twins – Roger Seth, his daddy's namesake, and Courtney Beth – met a man who was headed for Canada.

Her blue-eyed, high school sweetheart, Roger Jeffreys, 22, had an ache for traveling. It was not unusual for him to hitchhike from his family's small-town home to Nashville, Tenn. or even Texas, said his wife, Loretta Gish.

Before leaving town that September morning, Jeffreys stopped at his mother's home in town with the stranger who had offered him a ride, said his goodbyes and headed north. A few days later, Jeffreys called home to say he was in Maryland and everything was OK.

But everything was not OK.

In Vermont, the state police circulated information about the unidentified body found by the hunters in the woods. Police suspected the man was murdered in September 1984 – the result of blunt force trauma to the head. The information was published as far as Tennessee, but no leads surfaced.

With no family to claim him, John Doe's remains were buried in an indigent's grave in the green mountain

state, marked with a stone that read, "No. 9."

As more time passed in Kentucky, Gish said she became desperate for answers. Jeffreys' children were growing up without any memory of their dad – only a story from their mother.

"I raised my kids telling them that their dad was dead and in heaven and to look up at night for a big bright star and it would be him sending his love down," Gish said.

She went to see a psychic, who told her Jeffreys was dead and buried in the woods. She believed her, and kept looking around the Maryland area where she knew he had last been. Gish wrote the Unsolved Mysteries television show for help, to no avail. She talked to police, who she said told her he had probably been killed by a drug dealer.

Even after formally divorcing Jeffreys and moving on with her life, she still never gave up hope that she would find him.

"So I just kept looking and looking and no one would listen," Gish said. "My brother-in-law in October of 2002, called me and said, 'I found this Web site, come over here.'"

He had found the Doe Network – a Web site devoted to connecting nameless remains with the missing.

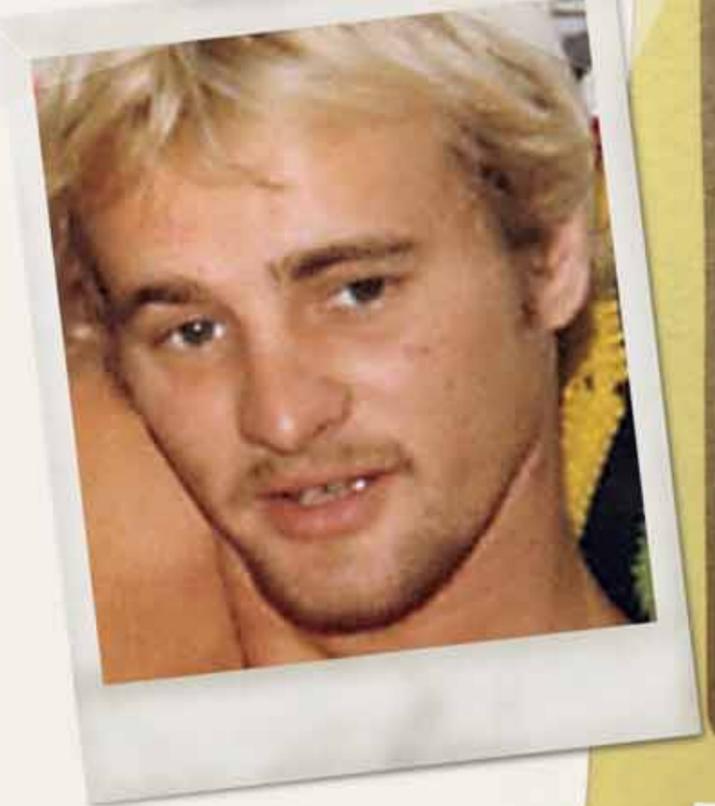
"And I got to looking on Doe Network and I was like, 'Oh my God, all these bodies,'" Gish said. "I had seen this one picture of one guy in Maryland that had been reconstructed that kind of favored Roger, but I couldn't tell. So that was when I wrote Kylan."

Kylan Johnson, known to most on the Doe Network as "Kat" had been volunteering nearly a full work-week of her time each week to working cases on the Web site for about two years when she first heard from Gish.

"She got my name off the Doe Network and contacted me because she wanted to know if there were any Maryland unidentified cases from 1985," Johnson said. "I started e-mailing back and forth with her and she started telling me a little more information, like Roger's middle name, that he left with some guy that nobody knew that was really creepy, that he told the family he was going up north and he called last from Maryland."

"And when she mentioned that, it clicked that there was a case up in Vermont that the case file said they believed the guy's name was Roger and he may have been from down south," Johnson continued. "[His tattoo] had initials with RGJ and she told me his middle name was Gene. So it was kind of like, whoa, I wonder if this could possibly be him."

Gish and Johnson continued to pass information back and forth through e-mail. Jeffreys had broken his arm when he was younger – the Vermont case file showed >>



Roger Jeffreys was 22 years old when he left his home in Clay, Ky. Hunters found him dead in a shallow Vermont grave without any sign of his identity.

Jeffreys case

>> the man found in the woods had, too. Johnson contacted the Vermont State Police with all the information she and Gish had collected. They, too, believed the evidence pointed to John Doe "No. 9" being identified as Roger Jeffreys.

It had been nearly two decades since Jeffreys left home. His children were grown. Gish had remarried. For the first time since he left, Gish came

everybody else thought he was living under a different name. But I knew deep down that he was dead. I didn't have a body to prove it, but I knew it. I knew that was him.

"The kids were excited that possibly that was their dad," Gish continued. "I didn't have a doubt. It was all too right there in black and white. I knew the DNA was going to come back positive."

searching until I could find their dad. And that's what I did."

Still, there are unanswered questions about what happened to Jeffreys. An arrest never has been made in his murder. Gish said police have evidence that the man who picked up Jeffreys was a Tennessee prison escapee, who later robbed a bank in the area near where Jeffreys' body was found.

"And I always made a promise to my kids that I didn't care how old I was or how long it

took me I would keep searching until I could find their dad." — Loretta Gish, wife of Roger Jeffreys

home one afternoon from work to a message on her answering machine regarding the whereabouts of her husband. The call was from the Vermont State Police.

Someone finally was listening.

"He told me, 'I think this body I've got here is what you have been looking for,'" she said of a Vermont officer working "No. 9's" case. "He said, 'We have had this body here for 18 years and we have been unable to identify it.' He wanted pictures and DNA so I said, 'OK.'"

DNA samples were taken from Jeffreys' children, mother and Gish. Now all they could do was wait.

"I was kind of excited because I had been searching and the kids always needed that closure," Gish said. "His mom refused to believe he was dead. His sister thought he had amnesia, ev-

She was right. DNA positively and finally identified the remains in the Vermont cemetery as those of Roger Gene Jeffreys. Gish had found her husband.

"When I was at work that day and they came to tell me that the DNA tests were positive, and I left my work, honestly I don't know how I made it back between Evansville and Henderson," she said. "It was like someone just wrapped their arms around me and I could just feel so much peace. There is not a doubt in my mind that it was Roger thanking me for never giving up on him. And I mean I believe that deep down.

"I had searched and searched and searched and couldn't find him," Gish said. "And I always made a promise to my kids that I didn't care how old I was or how long it took me I would keep

"Everything leads to him," Gish said. "I heard he told someone that Roger told him he was in over his head and that he was going to go home to his family and that is supposedly when the guy killed him. The worst part is not knowing whether he was actually dead when this guy was throwing dirt in his face or if he was hanging on, but all we know is he died from blunt force trauma to the head."

While it is difficult for the family to swallow that justice has not been served for Jeffreys, Gish said they have found comfort in having him back home. About a year after he was positively identified, Jeffreys' body was returned to a cemetery in Henderson.

There on a rock, in place of the number that once told his story, is an inscription that reads simply, "Home at last." J



Roger Jeffreys' wife, Loretta Gish, left, the couple's son, Roger Jr., and other family members spent years searching for Jeffreys after he disappeared in November 1985. His body was returned home nearly two decades later with the help of a Doe Network volunteer.

/Photo by Elizabeth Thomas

Jeffreys case
FOUND!

Matching the Missing With the Mysteriously Disappeared

Somewhere, a mother is searching for her son. A child is desperate for her mother. A wife is lost without her husband.

That son, mother and husband may be lost to their families, but they are found to strangers. Hunters find them in the woods. Passersby find them alongside busy roadways. Strangers find bodies miles away from home – sometimes closer – stripped of their identities and dignity.

Across the nation, law enforcement agencies and medical examiners are left sorting through pieces of evidence for clues in the cases of an estimated 40,000 unidentified remains, according to the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System, or, NamUs.

But when those clues seem to lead to nowhere, that mother, child, wife and millions of other family members are left to wonder, fear and cling to hope that someday their loved one will come home to them.

That is why groups of citizen volunteers have banded together to create Web sites such as the Doe Network, and why the U.S. Department of Justice created NamUs – to help those somedays become today.

For John and Jane

"I do not want to be one of those people

looking for my child," said Todd Matthews, Doe Network media director and NamUs advisory board consultant and member. "I don't want to be one of those people looking for my mother, my brother or my wife. I want to eliminate this problem and not have to deal with it personally."

The Doe Network developed over time from a Yahoo! Internet group comprised of people working on cold cases, Matthews said. In 1999, the group branched out and into its new home on the World Wide Web to become what is known today. A database of cases from across the United States and Canada was developed to include both unexplained disappearances and unidentified victims.

On the site, an Internet page is devoted to each person's case with details such as vital statistics and circumstances surrounding either their disappearance or location. The agency the case belongs to also is listed.

Forty-five missing persons are listed in Kentucky. Twenty-one John Does and 11 Jane Does are listed from across the state. Some cases date back as far as the 1800s while others are as recent as 2006. Cases are listed on the network based on whether they meet certain

criteria related to the death or disappearance date, its listing with law enforcement agencies and the availability of images, whether they be reconstructions or photos of the victim's possessions.

"They are our cyber sleuths," said Dr. Emily Craig, a forensic anthropologist for Kentucky's Medical Examiner's Office, of Doe Network's volunteers. "They can see both sides of the equation and they send the appropriate agencies

kind of a heads up and then it is up to the agencies to follow through and see if there is a way to scientifically match the missing with the unidentified."

Each year, Craig said the medical examiner's office sees an estimated 50 cases of either unidentified human remains or bodies. Most are identified, but not all of them.

"I think it is critical to have these types of volunteers mining the Internet," Craig said. "We can barely keep up with our current caseload, let alone leaf through hundreds of thousands of case files out there.

"Thanks to television, people don't

understand what a problem it is to identify victims," Craig continued. "They just say, 'Well why don't you just do DNA?' DNA is a genetic code not a barcode. We have to have a good idea of who it is before we can get a reference sample. We have to get a sample from a family member. And to do DNA on bone it takes approximately one year."

In addition to cases of the dead and unexplained, the Doe Network also features cases involving estranged and endangered runaways and other cases of the terminally missing.

"Whereas the persons' disappearances may technically be explained, we do feature cases in which no contact with the runaways has been received in recent years," the Web site states. "We also feature cases of family abduction. These cases are selected if there were no further communications or sightings of the victim and abductor for more than nine years. The Doe Network considers such cases to fall into the unexplained category, as the whereabouts and condition of the people involved are unknown."

Solving the cases

Since its inception, volunteers on the Doe Network have either solved or assisted in the solving of 47 missing persons or unidentified decedent cases. The first case was that of a Bowling Green woman who died in 1993 after she was hit by a train in Waco, Texas.

Doe Network volunteer Helene Wahlstrom, who also aided in the site's creation, worked together with another Doe Network volunteer

and the National Crime Information Center to connect the accident victim with the Kentucky missing persons case. Since then, two other cases with Kentucky ties have been solved by the Doe Network.

There are more than 290 volunteers who each are carefully screened, Matthews said. Some are family members and friends of missing people and others simply are willing to help. The network often receives media coverage and then becomes flooded by citizens hoping to volunteer their time. But Matthews said they are very careful about to whom they distribute information to maintain all the volunteers' credibility.

"What if you cannot fully vet a volunteer?" Matthews said. "And then they are using your reputation and other people are expecting that that person should have the same qualifications that you have. Basically you are endorsing them when you are letting that person be a volunteer."

Several of Doe Network's volunteers are connected in some way to law enforcement and are a valuable link to solving cases, Matthews said.

"We like law enforcement volunteers and retired law enforcement," he said. "That is somebody that you have always got a door open for because they are not bringing empty hands looking for work. They are bringing ideas, knowledge and insight. So of course you want that person more so than somebody who has no experience."

But once a volunteer is ready to take on a case, there are a variety of obstacles to overcome. Among them >>

DOE NETWORK LINKS

The Doe Network — www.doenetwork.org
National Missing and Unidentified Persons System — <http://www.namus.gov/>

KENTUCKY LAW ENFORCEMENT

BY THE NUMBERS

600%

Increase in reports of missing persons nationwide from 1980 to 2005. (www.trutv.com, 10/08/08)

2,300

Approximate number of adults and children reported missing each day nationwide.

475

Average number of active missing cases in Kentucky.

3,012

Number of adults reported missing in Kentucky in 2007. (KSP Report, 10/08)

3,805

Number of children reported missing in Kentucky in 2007. (KSP Report, 10/08)

30,000

Approximate number of unidentified remains nationwide which have not been entered into the NCIC; mostly victims of homicide. (The Bureau of Federal Statistics)

6,218

Active cases of unidentified persons nationwide as of January 2007. (NCIC, 10/08)

40

The number of seconds between each new child who goes missing in the United States. (www.missingchild.wordpress.com)

>> is gaining the trust of those close to the case who often are wary of strangers doing their own investigating, Matthews said.

"In the past it was validation," Matthews said of what makes the job difficult. "Talking to law enforcement who didn't know who you were and basically said, 'Who are you and why do you want to know?' It was pretty much a shut door."

As notoriety of the network has grown, it has become easier to work with the professionals working the cases. But because the volunteers mostly are civilians and do not have full access to law enforcement files and evidence, getting good data to work with also is problematic.

Improving the data

"The problem is that no one gives the Doe Network sufficient evidence on the missing," Craig said. "They do not have access to dental records, medical records – all they get is what they can find on the Web. Hopefully NamUs will correct that huge deficit in information. It is my opinion that if the Doe Network could get good data, they could do much more efficient and comprehensive matching than they do now."

Matthews agreed.

"I think our obstacles are going to be solved by systems like NamUs," Matthews said. "I think it is going to make the voluntary network more efficient in operations. You are getting good clean data and people will have good things to work with."

NamUs was created following a 2005 national strategy meeting in Philadelphia, its Web site states.

The Identifying the Missing Summit hosted federal, state and local law enforcement officials, victim advocates and families, coroners and medical examiners, law makers and forensic scientists from across the nation to "define major challenges in investigating and solving missing person and unidentified decedent cases," the Web site states.

"One of the most significant issues identified by the National Missing Persons Task Force was the need to improve access to database information by people who can help solve missing and unidentified deceased persons cases," the Web site states.

In July 2007, the first phase of NamUs was launched by the Office of Justice Programs' National Institute of Justice. In the first phase, the Web site was created and its initial design was constructed. National resources for missing persons – such as the Doe Network – were pin-pointed and the legal ramifications of releasing previously private information publically were studied.

NamUs is in the process of developing phase two, Matthews said, which will connect an online missing persons database to the existing unidentified decedents database. The third phase, expected to be completed next year, will complete the integration of the databases "to allow simultaneous searching of missing persons records against cases in the unidentified decedents database to identify unidentified human remains and solve missing persons cases," according to the Web site.

But even as the federal government continues to expand NamUs, Matthews said it has its limits because, for

now, it only operates within the United States' borders.

"It is still a USA situation, so groups like the Doe Network that work beyond borders are still going to be vital," he said. "We are still going to need somebody to be working in Canada. Until everybody develops a NamUs database that is universally connected, we will need volunteer organizations."

With all the media coverage over the years, Matthews said he still is amazed by the number of people across the nation who are unaware of the magnitude of this cause. Unfortunately, the case loads continue to rise, he said, and the public is the most valuable resource available for aiding in the solving of these cases. Matthews himself has been working to solve mysteries for the unidentified and missing for more than two decades and summed up his work as "doing the best you can with the talents you are given."

"It's not glamorous work, but it is definitely something you can do," Matthews said. "If that is your way of contributing to society, I think you should. I am not crazy about pollution either, but I can pretty much just clean up my own yard. Every problem that you help tackle helps other problems too, because if you are alleviating stress on one problem it allows focus more on the other problems. God knows we have enough problems in our nation and our world right now.

"Are there more worthy causes?" Matthews said. "Probably. The missing family member wouldn't tell you that. To them it is the most worthy cause. But you find your niche, and for many of us, this is the niche we have found." J

What Makes a Good Missing Persons Report?

/James Clark, DOJT Louisville Training Instructor

/Shawn M. Herron, Staff Attorney, Legal Training Section

Most missing persons cases in Kentucky begin by a responding officer completing the Kentucky Missing Persons Report (KSP 261). The information on that form is critical to ensuring a good result, and mistakes made on that initial report can haunt the investigation for some time. Failure to do a complete report at the outset may prove an embarrassment, or worse, to both the officer and the agency, when the case develops far beyond what it originally was believed to be. The report form itself seems straightforward, but a lack of consistency in completing the form the same way each time may cause confusion.

As examples, the full, legal name (Robert rather than Bobby) is essential. It seems simple, but when the information is being obtained from a distraught relative, it is easy for that reporting party to use a family member's nickname rather than their complete name. Other commonly misunderstood blocks include the date and time last seen, and the date and time missing. In many reports, these are indicated as the same, but in fact, in most cases, they should not be. If a child is last seen leaving the house to go to school, or an adult to go to work, and especially if it is confirmed that they did make it to their destination, their time missing should be different on the report. For example, the reporting party may have had contact with the missing person by telephone after the time they last saw the person.

The address listed on the report should be the missing person's home address. If that is unknown, or if the address where the individual was living was a temporary facility such as a foster home or shelter that should be clearly noted on the report. Their normal home address also should be indicated in the comments section on the second page of the report. Although the report does not request a zip code, that would be beneficial for statistical purposes.

Scars and other permanent skin markings should be indicated in detail, by location and appearance. Although they are not usually necessary for identification, they might be useful if a missing person is found in a situation where they are unable to communicate.

Of particular importance is the block for mental state. This block should include information not just about the individual's state of mind but also any specific mental disabilities, such as suspected Alzheimer's, mental retardation or diagnosed schizophrenia. Such details are absolutely critical in determining the urgency of a search effort and whether a Golden Alert is appropriate. Medical information, particularly with respect to medication, should also be included in detail, as it might give clues as to an individual's physical or mental condition.

In many cases, the report is not made by the missing person's legal next of kin – either by blood or marriage. Legally, this is the person most closely related and thus entitled to inherit, but it also generally is accepted that this is the individual able to make decisions on behalf of the missing person as well. If the next of kin is not the person making the report, that should be made clear on the report. The report should contain as much information as possible about both the next of kin and the reporting party, including contact information.

If the missing person is a juvenile, and attending school, it is essential that the name of the school be properly spelled out. That information is relayed to the Kentucky Department of Education, which then notifies the school that a student has been reported missing. An abbreviation, such as MCHS, may delay this process by a day or more.

Finally, it is vital that officers make full use of the other comments block on the second page of the report. This block should be used to indicate any other details relevant to the missing person's disappearance that do not clearly belong in one of the other blocks. For example, a person missing only a few hours might not suggest that the situation is an emergency, unless the individual's spouse has an outstanding EPO for domestic violence. The information in that block might provide the details necessary for an officer to decide what the next steps in the investigation should be.

Every case begins with this report, make it a good one! ■

Lost and Found

Two Kentucky cases of an abandoned mother and a missing father

Her hair was red, her eyes hazel.

She had freckles and a birthmark above her ankle. She wore two necklaces – one bore a pendant with the wide-spread wings of a golden eagle and the other with a large heart-shaped charm.

Medical examiners believe she was asphyxiated, though they do not know if someone choked the air from her body or if she was unable to breathe after her tiny body was shoved into an old, white Admiral refrigerator bearing a decal that read, “Super Woman.”

She was between 24 and 35 years old, officials believe. Marks on her abdomen indicate that at some point, the red-headed victim had given birth. And it was that fact that former Knox County Coroner Jerry Garland said he never could shake.

“I always said she was somebody’s baby and somebody’s mommy,” Garland said, 23 years after the female was found murdered alongside a highway in Gray, Kentucky.

Someone, somewhere, was looking for their mommy. It’s a desperate kind

of feeling Judy Barber and Anita Boyer know all too well.

In the early spring of 1961, their father, Campbell County Constable George Hawkins, left home and never returned. A few days after he vanished, his car was found by the banks of the Ohio River. But there was no sign of Hawkins.

Someone, somewhere, knew what happened to their daddy. It’s a desperate kind of feeling, the sisters said, knowing that the man who made their breakfast each day, ran their family store and took them sledding, despite his ailments, was lost.

The nameless red head and small-town constable now are listed by Kentucky case numbers on a Web site, the Doe Network, where strangers are trying to fill in the “someone” and “somewhere” blanks that might hold the answers to their mysteries.

Doe Network Case 192UFKY – UNIDENTIFIED

“Some gentlemen went to a garbage dump one morning

and they were dismantling old washers and dryers and refrigerators, I guess,” Garland said of the morning the red head was found. “They went to this little dump on the side of the road here in Knox County off U.S. 25E and there was an old refrigerator. They just naturally opened it and when they did, there she was inside. She hadn’t been in there very long. As a matter of fact, we think probably at that time it was less than 24 hours.”

The woman had nothing with her to tell her name. She wore only two pair of short, dirty socks – one white pair and one with green and yellow stripes.

Nearby was a pair of brown boots. >>



Where her name should be, the word “unknown” is etched in the stone marking where the unidentified red-head rests. Since her body was found in 1985, local law enforcement has been unable to determine her identity.

/Photo by Elizabeth Thomas

Unidentified
Case 192UFKY

DOE NETWORK LINKS

Unidentified woman — <http://www.doenetwork.org/cases/192ufky.html>
Missing constable — <http://www.doenetwork.org/cases/1261dmky.html>

>> "We put everything out that we could," Garland said. "I had people from several different parts of the country call before we buried her to look, but no one could ID her. I have had several phone calls over the years inquiring about her and I have sent photos and done this and that, but nobody has ever claimed her."

Several days later on a windy April day, a memorial service was conducted for the woman in a tiny, outdoor chapel. Hymns were sung and tears were

placed by strangers in her honor.

"This homicide took place back when they were having the red-head murders up and down the Interstate and we always sort of thought because she was red-headed that she might have been one of them," Garland said. "A couple of guys in the pen said they killed her, but we think they just wanted to take credit for it. They couldn't give any details and whoever killed her would know exactly where he put her."

"Mom hadn't heard from him so we waited a couple of hours. We closed the store and mom and I went out looking to see if we could see him anywhere in case there was a car accident or whatever."

That night when the girls went to sleep, their daddy still was not home. The family called Campbell County Police to be on the look out for him.

"That was on a Monday and nothing was found, no sign, no trace, no nothing, until on a Thursday, they found his

"What I remember for the first days is just sitting in a chair in the living room watching for the car lights to come up the hill, but he never did." — George Hawkins' daughter, Anita Boyer

shed by people who never knew her or her name.

"It was difficult from the standpoint of not being able to ever get any leads," Garland said. "It was the first case of that stature and I just couldn't understand why that if her face was published nationwide, why somebody wouldn't recognize her. That was difficult to understand."

For a couple of weeks, her body was held in a temporary vault awaiting a name and a family to claim her. No one came.

Troy Hampton, a local funeral home director, buried the woman in a small cemetery on a hill behind the funeral home. At the foot of some tall, old trees, a granite stone was placed to mark where she was buried. Her marker reads — Unknown, April 1, 1985. Even now, 23 years later, a bouquet of pink silk flowers has been

Doe Network Case 1261DMKY — MISSING

George Hawkins, 46, had served as a Campbell County constable for as long as his eldest daughter, Judy Barber, could remember. The family lived in Persimmon Grove, where Hawkins and his wife, Mary, operated a small general store. In 1961, Barber was 19, married to one of Hawkins' deputies and living with her parents while their house was being built.

April 3rd of that year was like any other day. Hawkins made breakfast, hugged his girls goodbye and left home in his tan 1959 station wagon to see his attorney, among other errands. By 1 p.m., Barber said Hawkins called her to tell her he had picked up all the paint for her new house and would be home soon.

"I got home between 4 and 4:30 and he wasn't home yet," Barber said.

car on the banks of the Ohio River," Barber said. "There was not a thing in the car, nothing. Absolutely nothing. All the paints and everything he had picked up for me were gone. There wasn't even a scrap of paper. And inside the car it looked like it had been washed out with muddy water."

Barber's sister, Anita Boyer, was 10 years old.

"What I remember for the first days is just sitting in a chair in the living room watching for the car lights to come up the hill, but he never did," Boyer said.

The Cincinnati Enquirer reported the next day that a resident near the river saw the car and reported it to the police.

"Members of the Dayton Volunteer Fire Department dragged a 40-foot deep sewer basin outlet in the Ohio River near the shore for several hours,"

the newspaper reported. "They found nothing."

Days passed, then months, then years. Barber hired a private detective and beat the pavement looking for someone with information about her dad's disappearance.

"I went around talking to different people and one of them was Big Jim Harris," Barber said. "He was running the Highlight Club at that time. When I went in to talk to him he said, 'Judy, go home and leave it alone.' Later on I talked to a Newport policeman and he told me that he saw my dad's car about 1 a.m. on that Monday and there were two people in the car. They were pouring concrete at the club where the aquarium now sits."

As legend goes, Hawkins had become victim to the world of organized crime that was prevalent during that time in the Newport area. Some say he was buried in the concrete of that club. But when the demolition began for the Newport Aquarium, nothing ever was found. Others say the mob held contracts for the construction of Interstate 75 being laid through Campbell County and that he is buried beneath the freeway.

But the legends are just that — and they don't help Hawkins' daughters sleep at night. Barber, who will be 67 this month, said her father's disappearance consumed much of her adult years.

"I would say for the first 25 to 30 years, I would go down the streets and every car I would pass I would have to look," she said. "He was a very good, wonderful father. He was a good provider and we had a good family life."

Although after all this time Barber has doubts that information about her father would surface, she said she is pleased to know someone on the Doe Network still is trying.

"Well, it is wonderful if it could bring some closure," she said. "Even after all these years, at his age he probably would be dead anyway. But just to know. Just to know and to have the closure. My mother has been dead now for 14 years. But I know the kind of man he was and the kind of relationship that our family had and everything — he was killed. He was murdered. I don't have proof, but I know it in my bones."

Carrying the cause

While these cases are sad and seem hopeless, the fact is that there are many more out there — both in Kentucky and around our country, said Todd Matthews, Doe Network media director. In 2007, National Institute of Justice editor Nancy Ritter wrote about missing persons and unidentified remains, calling it a mass disaster.

"The facts are sobering," Ritter wrote. "On any given day, there are as many as 100,000 active missing persons cases in the United States. Every year, tens of thousands of people vanish under suspicious circumstances. Viewed over a 20-year period, the number of missing persons can be estimated in the hundreds of thousands."

That fact alone is why it is so important to keep going, Matthews said.

"I feel like the volunteers help keep hope alive in cases that might otherwise be forgotten," he said. "It happens all too often — the leads grow cold and other cases take front stage. Some-

times so much time passes that it is almost impossible to re-ignite. But ... if you keep digging — at the level only a half-obsessed volunteer can — eventually you will find something — some shred of information that can help change everything. You just have to keep going." J



Campbell County Constable George Hawkins disappeared in April 1961, leaving a wife and two daughters to wonder for decades as to his whereabouts.

MISSING
Case 1261DMKY

Golden ALERT

Search Still on for Missing Local Woman in Henderson County

Missing Alzheimer's Patient in Lincoln County

Florence Police Search for Critically Missing Woman with Alzheimer's

Missing Person Killed in Crash (Pike County)

Police Searching for Missing Woman (Shelbyville)

/Shawn M. Herron, Staff Attorney, Legal Training Section

Headlines like those above are becoming a staple in local news stories. The common elements are that all of these incidents occurred in the past few years and they all occurred in Kentucky.

On April 1, Gov. Steve Beshear signed Senate Bill 125, the "golden alert" bill, into law. Although the actual changes to the involved statutes (KRS 39F.010, KRS 39F.020, KRS 39F.180) are minimal, it is critical that law enforcement agencies be prepared to properly implement a golden alert. Even more important, however, is the understanding that proper compliance with this law may prove essential in expediting the safe return of an endangered missing person.

Individuals with Alzheimer's disease or related conditions with dementia as a primary sign often are physically able to walk and drive, and many still have the desire to do so. Critical wandering, both in a vehicle and on foot, is a reality for many individuals with diminished mental ability. They are at great

risk both to themselves and to others, as their mental ability to operate a vehicle and navigate does not match their physical ability.

Those afflicted are easily confused, unable to handle obstacles (such as running out of gas or having to detour from the normal route), become lost even in familiar territory and are often disoriented as to time and place. Some will try to go to a location at an inappropriate time. For example, they may drive to church in the middle of the night. Others may become fixated on an inappropriate task (such as picking up children from school, when the "children" are now adults). They will pursue that task diligently, becoming lost or injured in the process, not realizing that a task that should have taken five minutes has taken them five hours and many miles away from home.

Unlike a traumatic brain injury, Alzheimer's comes upon individuals slowly and insidiously, and often these symptoms occur, unfortunately, long before there is even recognition by family members that there is a problem, let alone a formal diagnosis. In many cases, the first instance of critical wandering is the

first solid indication that a loved one is developing Alzheimer's disease.

The Kentucky golden alert is modeled after similar statutes in other states, although most of those statutes are referred to as silver alerts. Georgia, Illinois, Virginia, North Carolina, Texas, Michigan and Colorado have such statutes, and other states, such as Florida, Louisiana and New York, have bills pending before their respective state legislatures. Although these statutes have minor differences in content, they are all designed to achieve essentially the same goal – to promptly publicize the disappearance of an endangered adult, using appropriate broadcast and print media outlets. (In addition, the U.S. Congress has a bill pending, House Resolution 6064, that would encourage, enhance and integrate silver alert plans throughout the U. S.) The original silver alerts focused exclusively on elderly victims of Alzheimer's disease or related dementia impairments as a result of advanced age. Kentucky's golden alert statute is broader, however, and extends beyond the parameters of the other silver alert laws across the nation.

Elderly Man Reported Missing Since Saturday (Bowling Green)

Remains Found of Two Missing Ohio Women (Carrollton)

Missing Women Die in Crash After Going Wrong Way on I-24 (Grand Rivers)

Even prior to the passage of the golden alert bill, the disappearance of an Alzheimer's subject, or a similarly-impaired individual, was required by Kentucky law to be reported immediately to the local emergency management director and the search and rescue coordinator. In some states, silver alerts served to change any existing express or implied waiting period before a report can be taken on an adult, but Kentucky law has never required or explicitly suggested a waiting period for any missing persons. In cases of Alzheimer's or related situations, waiting periods were already specifically prohibited.

Kentucky's golden alert adds a definition to KRS 39F.010 for impaired adults that includes all adults who have verified mental or cognitive impairment and whose disappearance would be logically expected to pose a threat to their health of safety. Whether an individual qualifies is specifically left to the local law enforcement agency that receives the initial call. This places a tremendous responsibility on that reporting officer or deputy to make a sufficient inquiry to determine if an individual reported missing does qualify as an impaired adult.

In some instances, the family, or other reporting parties, may not be forthcoming concerning the actual mental status of their loved one, either because they have not yet recognized the family member has Alzheimer's or dementia or because they are concerned that they will be blamed in some way for an endangered adult who becomes missing. It is vital that the responding officer ask detailed questions, and document the responses, in order to properly classify the missing subject as endangered, if appropriate, and to trigger the appropriate resources.

The primary change to existing Kentucky law under the golden alert bill requires that searches for endangered adults be promptly reported to not only emergency management officials, but also to local media outlets. The specific responsibility for the notification falls upon the agency managing the search, which in many instances will be a local law enforcement agency. (In some cases, another public safety agency, such as a rescue squad, may actually lead the search, but as a rule, the missing persons report will come to law enforcement initially.) Most Kentucky counties have multiple law enforcement agencies to whom such a report might be made, from local city police departments or sheriffs' offices to the Kentucky State Police. All law enforcement agencies within a county should develop a plan, coordinated with local emergency management, as to the media outlets that will be notified and specifically how they will be notified. Notification options, for example, may include telephone, fax and e-mail, and agencies should agree as to how much detail should be shared with the media, balancing the need for privacy and safety.

Although the actual changes in Kentucky law created by the golden alert bill involve only the addition of a few words, the goal behind these changes is critical. Agencies and individuals that fail to comply with the requirements of this new law may be subject to civil and even criminal liability, as failure to follow any provision of KRS 39F that does not specify another penalty, is a class A misdemeanor. It is crucial that a search for an Alzheimer's or similarly-impaired subject be immediate and use all available resources, including the media. Research indicates that a high percentage of such subjects not found within 24 hours will be found deceased. In addition, many

Alzheimer's subjects, particularly those who are not yet formally recognized or diagnosed as having the disease, are driving or are otherwise mobile by using mass transportation. Disseminating information via media outlets concerning the disappearance beyond the immediate area may be the only way to bring such disappearances to a successful resolution.

The golden alert may help avoid the potential tragedies of endangered missing persons, particularly those with cognitive disabilities. Law enforcement agencies are encouraged to discuss how the golden alert law will be put into effect with local emergency management and other law enforcement agencies, to ensure consistency. As the front-line responders in implementing this new law, Kentucky law enforcement officers will play a critical role in its success. J

Kentucky law permits a law enforcement officer (or anyone) to refer any individual for a medical evaluation, should that officer have "reason to believe" or have "observed an individual driving or behaving in an erratic or dangerous manner which indicates a possibility of a physical or mental disability which may impair his driving ability." 601 KAR 13.090, KRS 186.570.

Transportation Cabinet form TC 94-86 is to be used for this purpose. You may find this form at <http://transportation.ky.gov/DrLic/mrb/mrb-affidavit.pdf>. ■