

Dear Bonnie, 2/8/03
Enclosed is a copy of
the letter I send to
Huyett. I have not talked
to him yet.
I have talked to Stu
Erlenbush a couple of times.
He is somewhat interested
but is very busy with
other matters. He agrees
that we need to get Huyett
onboard.
Best Regards
Pat

A personal note to Bonnie Thompson from Pat Chesley.

Combining Forces

As the year 2002 drew to a close, I began communicating with John Foltz and Pat Chesley via e-mail and telephone. Huyett had reneged on his promise to DNA test the physical evidence in the Martin case, and he had not yet established, with any degree of certainty, the existence or location of the physical evidence in the Schneider case. I believed the evidence survived and someone else in the hierarchy of the (possible) cover-up had instructed Huyett to tell me the evidence no longer existed.

Over the course of the past nine months, Huyett had pulled a 180 and transformed from my advocate to my adversary. When I first approached him after my father's death, he was accommodating and genuinely interested in my quest for truth. We had spent hours discussing the Schneider and Martin cases, and we'd also socialized together. Then, after I discovered (and uncovered) the name on the collar of the bloody T-shirt, *everything changed*.

I felt Foltz and Chesley were the leverage I needed to get Huyett to give me some solid answers. They could also possibly persuade him to follow through with DNA testing. John and Pat felt the best way to approach Huyett was in writing, and to then following up afterwards with phone calls. I was big on paper trails and agreed with them wholeheartedly. John and Pat planned to mail their letters right around the New Year, which would mark the twenty-seven year anniversary of the disappearance of Mike Mansfield.

On Christmas Day 2002, I received an email from John Foltz and a copy of his letter to Huyett stating the following:

December 30, 2002

Mr. Tim Huett [*sic*]
Logan County State's Attorney
Logan County Courthouse
Lincoln, IL 62656

Re: Smrekar/Drabing Investigations

Dear Tim:

It was nice getting to meet you last March when I came to Lincoln to assist Bonnie Thompson in her inquiries. It was great to re-visit the office in the Courthouse where I spent many enjoyable years earlier in my career. I appreciate the courtesies extended to me at that time. Please understand that the purpose of this letter is not to infringe on your office but to convey our impressions of these cases.

Since that time, I have been able to talk to Bonnie on several occasions and to meet with her within the last few weeks concerning what she has been able to develop since that time on both the Drabing case and the Smrekar case. Based on what I have been able to see, I think Bonnie has developed some interesting and exciting information with regard to both of these cases.

In addition, I have had the opportunity to meet personally and talk on the phone with Pat Chesley, who was the other Assistant State's Attorney in the office at the time these cases occurred. Pat is now with the U. S. Attorney's Office in Springfield, Illinois (217/***-****). Pat and I have had an opportunity to make an independent assessment of the information that Bonnie has developed. In addition, Pat Chesley has talked to Trooper Stuart Erlenbush (217/***-****) about this matter as well. Trooper Erlenbush was one of the officers that initially investigated the Drabing case. Pat Chesley and I both think that there is enough new information that both of these cases may warrant a second look. Trooper Erlenbush has also expressed interest as well.

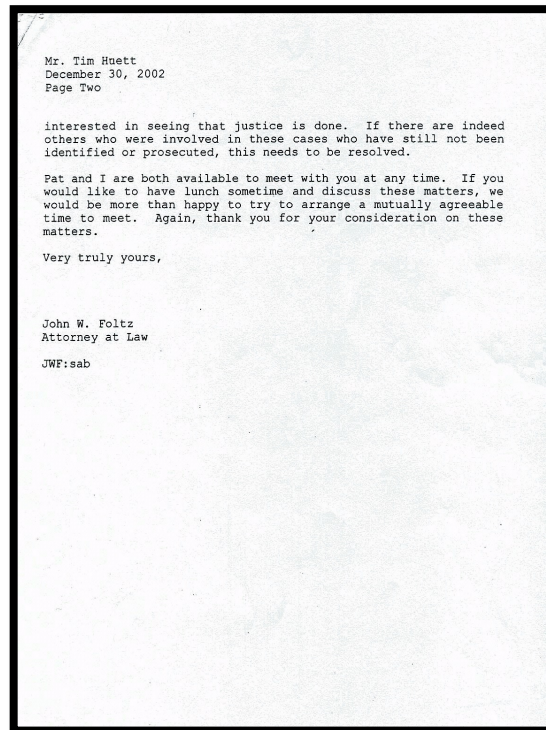
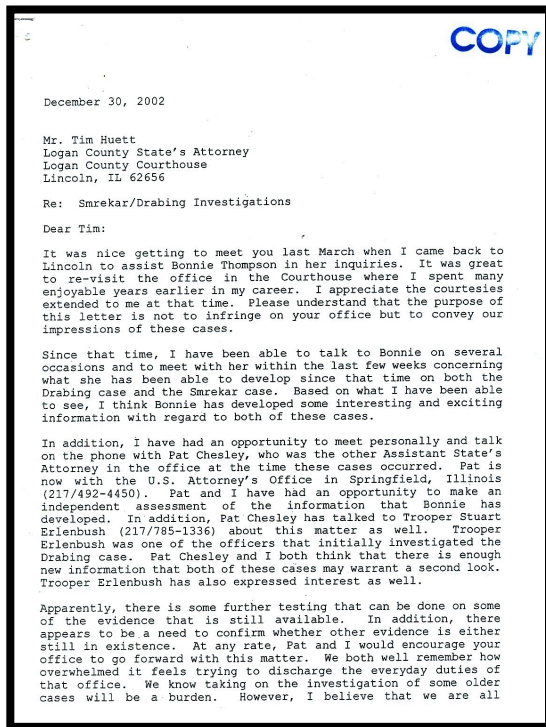
Apparently, there is some further testing that can be done on some of the evidence that is still available. In addition, there appears to be a need to confirm whether other evidence is either still in existence. At any rate, Pat and I would encourage your office to go forward with this matter. We both well remember how overwhelmed it feels trying to discharge the everyday duties of that office. We know taking on the investigation of some older cases will be a burden. However, I believe that we are all interested in seeing that justice is done. If there are indeed others who were involved in these cases who have still not been identified or prosecuted, this needs to be resolved.

Pat and I are both available to meet with you at any time. If you would like to have lunch sometime and discuss these matters, we would be more than happy to try to arrange a mutually agreeable time to meet. Again, thank you for your consideration on these matters.

Very truly yours,

John W. Foltz
Attorney at Law

JWF: sab



Shown above is former Assistant State's Attorney John W. Foltz's letter to Logan County State's Attorney Tim Huyett (written on December 30, 2002).

Shortly after receiving Foltz's letter, Pat Chesley mailed me a hardcopy of his letter and included a personal note to me along with it. Chesley relayed the following to Huyett:

January 13, 2003

Mr. Tim Huyett
Logan County State's Attorney
Logan County Courthouse
Lincoln, Illinois 62656

Re: Reconsideration of Drabing and Smrekar Murder Investigations

Mr. Huyett:

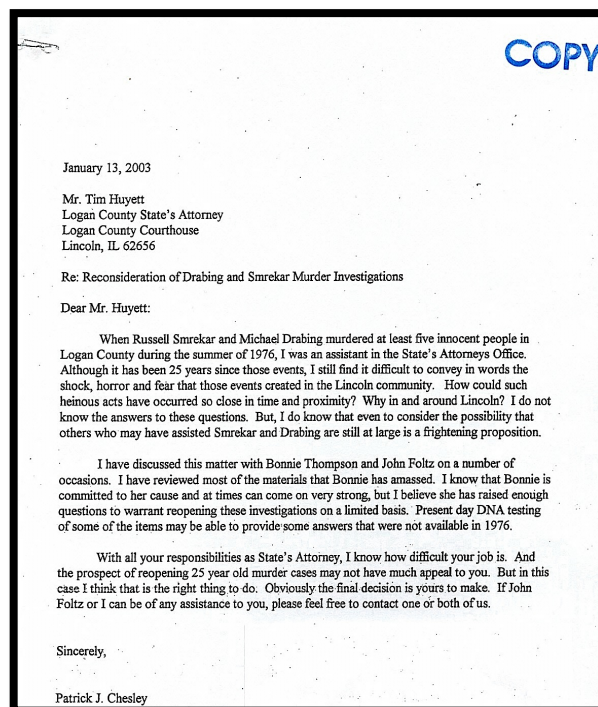
When Russell Smrekar and Michael Drabing murdered at least five innocent people in Logan County during the summer of 1976, I was an assistant in the State's Attorney's Office. Although it has been 25 years since those events, I still find it difficult to convey in words the shock, horror and fear that those events created in the Lincoln community. How could such heinous acts have occurred so close in time and proximity? Why in and around Lincoln? I do not know the answers to these questions. But, I do know that even to consider the possibility that others who may have assisted Smrekar and Drabing are still at large is a frightening proposition.

I have discussed this matter with Bonnie Thompson and John Foltz on a number of occasions. I have reviewed most of the materials that Bonnie has amassed. I know that Bonnie is committed to her cause and at times can come on very strong, but I believe she has raised enough questions to warrant reopening these investigations on a limited basis. Present day DNA testing of some of the items may be able to provide some answers that were not available in 1976.

With all your responsibilities as State's Attorney, I know how difficult your job is. And the prospect of reopening 25 year old murder cases may not have much appeal to you. But in this case I think that is the right thing to do. Obviously the final decision is yours to make. If John Foltz and I can be of any assistance to you, please feel free to contact one or both of us.

Sincerely,

Patrick J. Chesley



Patrick Chesley's January 13, 2003 letter to Tim Huyett.