

DECLARATION OF PROBABLE CAUSE - NDCC 31-15-05

As an employee of the North Dakota Bureau of Criminal Investigation, I attest the to following:

Agent's Name: Special Agent Troy Kelly			
That I am a trained licensed Peace Officer with the following years of experience with jurisdiction to enforce State Law.			29
On this date: 04/13/1981-04/16/1981	At approximately this hour:		
In the County of Barnes, State of North Dakota at this location: VALLEY CITY, ND			
The suspect was identified as (full Name) NANCY JEAN TROTTIER			
Suspect date of birth: 10/02/1960	Age: 65		
Social Security Number: [REDACTED]	State of issuance: NORTH DAKOTA	Class of License:	
The vehicle/person was in violation of: (1981) Murder Intentional or Knowing (12.1-16-01(1))			
The following gives rise to probable cause to charge the suspect with: (1981) Murder Intentional or Knowing-Child Victim (12.1-16-01(1))			
<p>Circumstances and/or facts: On 04/16/1981, an unidentified deceased female infant's body was discovered in the wooded area of the Valley City State College campus, behind 265 Viking Dr, Valley City, ND. The scene was processed by the Valley City Police Department (VCPD) and the North Dakota Bureau of Criminal Investigation (NDBCI).</p> <p>Upon processing the scene, law enforcement found the infant's body to have a plastic covering over the face and the umbilical cord still attached to the body. Law enforcement located and collected items near the infant's body, that contained apparent biological material. These items included tissue paper. These items were initially submitted to the FBI's lab and then later submitted to the ND State Crime Lab in 2005.</p> <p>The infant's body was transported to St. Luke's Hospital for a pathologist to complete an autopsy, and an autopsy was conducted on 04/17/1981.</p> <p>The Autopsy Report indicated that the infant had been deceased for approximately 24-72 hours. The Final Anatomical Diagnoses indicated "Subpleural and Subepicardial petechial hemorrhages consistent with acute asphyxia in a newborn term female infant" and "expanded bronchoalveolar tree indicative of live birth" with no note of any other significant injuries. With the plastic covering the infant's face and medical diagnoses of a live birth, petechial hemorrhages consistent with acute asphyxia, and items located at the scene, it is believed that the infant was suffocated shortly after birth.</p> <p>Following the initial discovery of the body, and over the next several decades, law enforcement followed up on numerous leads, but were unable to identify a suspect or identify the deceased infant.</p> <p>In 2019, with advancements in DNA technology, law enforcement with the VCPD and the NDBCI began to review the case again.</p> <p>In July 2019, the body of the deceased infant (which the Valley City PD had named "Rebecca" when interred in 1981) was exhumed and sent to a 3rd party lab that was able to extract DNA and develop a profile from the remains of "Rebecca". The DNA profile of "Rebecca" was then sent to another 3rd party lab for further testing to include familial and genealogical DNA analysis.</p>			

In August 2020, law enforcement with the VCPD and the NDBCI received a genetic genealogy report from the 3rd party lab. The report showed possible relatives of "Rebecca". Through additional investigation, to include interviews and DNA comparisons of possible relatives of "Rebecca", law enforcement with VCPD and NDBCI conducted an interview with NANCY TROTTIER on 10/12/2021 regarding NANCY TROTTIER's family tree, the deceased infant from 1981, and the DNA linked to NANCY TROTTIER's family.

Through this interview with NANCY TROTTIER, it was discovered that NANCY TROTTIER attended Valley City State College from 1978 to 1982. NANCY TROTTIER indicated that she had been sexually active with her boyfriend (who is now her current husband) while at Valley City State College. During the interview, NANCY TROTTIER became emotional and made statements of "maybe it was me" and "It could be, maybe it was me" when informed that genetic genealogy had shown that NANCY TROTTIER or one of NANCY TROTTIER's siblings were the parent of the deceased infant. NANCY TROTTIER consented to supplying a DNA sample to the law enforcement officers, but requested law enforcement wait to speak with NANCY TROTTIER's siblings until the DNA results were returned regarding whether NANCY TROTTIER was the deceased infant's mother.

On 12/07/2021, a DNA sample was collected from NANCY TROTTIER's current husband, through a search warrant.

NANCY TROTTIER's DNA sample, and NANCY TROTTIER's husband's DNA sample were submitted to the ND State Crime Lab for comparison with other DNA evidence previously submitted to the lab.

On 06/28/2023, VCPD and NDBCI received a final Forensic Advantage Discovery Packet containing the results of all items that had been submitted to, and analyzed by, the ND State Crime Lab regarding the case of the deceased infant.

The DNA results indicated that, the most conservative estimate indicates that, it is 3,481,000,000,000,000 times more likely to observe the genetic results obtained under the scenario that the deceased infant ("Rebecca") is the true biological child of NANCY TROTTIER and her husband, as compared to an untested individual from the general population being the true biological child of NANCY TROTTIER and her husband.

The DNA results, regarding items collected from the scene in 1981, showed only the presence of DNA consistent with "Rebecca's" and NANCY TROTTIER's DNA. Specifically, DNA consistent with NANCY TROTTIER's DNA was located on one tissue paper recovered from the scene in 1981, and another tissue paper containing mixture of DNA matching NANCY TROTTIER's DNA and DNA consistent with "Rebecca's" DNA. The DNA of three (3) other relatives, to include NANCY TROTTIER's husband, could be excluded from items found at the scene in 1981.

I declare, under penalty of perjury under the law of North Dakota that the foregoing is true and correct.

Signed on the 30th day of March, 2026 at the North Dakota Bureau of Criminal Investigation Office, Jamestown, ND.



Special Agent Troy Kelly
North Dakota Bureau of Criminal Investigation