

## DECLARATION OF LISA BENNETT

I, Lisa Bennett, hereby declare as follows:

1. I am the legal assistant to Attorney Richard Beshwate, in regards to the case against Timothy Young.
2. On Friday January 20<sup>th</sup>, during closing arguments by the defense team in the sentencing phase, I was asked to step out of court by one of the Tulare Police Officers who guards the door to the courtroom.
3. A lady by the name of Virginia Walker was outside the courtroom and wanted to talk to someone from the defense team of Timothy Young. I told her my name and my position.
4. At that time she stated that the Young brothers were not involved in the murders at Pato's Place and she knew who was. She identified a person who had been implicated by others early on in the police department's investigation. She also stated that she had written a letter addressed to Judge Coulliard with the information that she had and faxed it on two separate occasions to the court. As of Friday January 20<sup>th</sup> she still had not received a response. She was concerned that the Judge and or the District Attorney had not made her information known to the defense so she felt compelled to hand deliver her letter to us.
5. She had me read the letter and made the following statements to me:
  - a) She had intimate knowledge of who committed the crimes.
  - b) She had dated Melvin Nicks and he confessed to her.
  - c) Melvin Nicks said that he wore a ski mask and named others involved.
  - d) Melvin Nicks put her in contact with Sharon Edwards.
  - e) When confronted by Ms. Walker, Edwards also confessed to participating the crimes to her.
  - f) Edwards directed Ms. Walker to go to his apartment and get the guns that he used in the crimes so that the police would not find them.
  - g) Edward and Nicks told her that there was a female involved with them and others.
  - h) She took this information to the police who interviewed her on 12-3-96.
  - i) However, she states that they never contacted her again.
6. I asked her if she knew the Young brothers and or had any anterior motives for coming forward at this time, she stated, "no". Her only motivation was that she was sure that these were not the persons that committed these crimes and could not understand why at this time these men were found guilty even after she had told the police who did it.

7. I also asked why she did not come forward earlier. She stated that she was very scared, especially of Melvin Nicks, however she did call the court to try to locate the names of defense counsel without success.
8. She was concerned that no one had responded to her letter and why it was not given to the defense team.
9. I then asked Ms. Walker to please stay outside the courtroom until I returned.
10. I took the letter into the court and immediately showed it to Mr. Beshwate. It was difficult to explain the whole situation since our team was in the middle of closing arguments. After court concluded the team stepped outside with Ms. Walker, she then relayed the same information to the Attorneys that she had previously told me.
11. On Monday, January 23<sup>rd</sup>, the defense was presented with discovery by the District Attorneys office, which showed that they had directed their investigator (Herman Martinez) to conduct an interview with Ms. Walker over the weekend.
12. It is my belief, due to the actions of the District Attorney and their investigators, that prior to Friday January 20<sup>th</sup>, they knew of Ms. Walkers letter and had suppressed it from the defense.
13. Ms. Walker called me on Thursday, January 26<sup>th</sup>, and told me that Herman Martinez, a detective for the DA, came to see her and asked her to sign her name again on the same letter she had faxed the court and at this time he also requested the pen that she wrote the original letter in. He then took the letter and the pen with him.
14. Ms. Walker at this time is very scared for her safety, however would be willing to help in any way that she can.