

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FROM: Anthony Martin, Commonwealth's Attorney for Nelson County

DATE: October 2, 2014

RE: Hannah Graham and Alexis Murphy cases

The Nelson County Commonwealth's Attorney's Office, the Nelson County Sheriff's Office, FBI and Virginia State Police again maintain that there is no credible evidence linking Jesse Leroy Matthew, Jr. for the abduction and murder of Alexis Murphy in which Randy Taylor was convicted.

Randy Taylor was the last known person to have had contact with Alexis Murphy on August 3, 2013 shortly before she went missing. All of the physical evidence at trial showing a violent struggle was located inside Randy Taylor's camper. This physical evidence consisted of a diamond stud, a fingernail fragment, a long black hair that showed signs of being forcibly removed, all of which had Alexis Murphy's DNA and were found on the floor of Randy Taylor's camper and the hair was found on Randy Taylor's pillow.

Alexis Murphy's shattered cellphone was found in the brush outside Randy Taylor's camper. The blue T-shirt that Randy Taylor was seen wearing at the Liberty gas station on August 3rd when he was seen talking with Alexis Murphy, was found under Randy Taylor's sofa inside his camper. That shirt contained Alexis Murphy's blood and had hair extensions and false eyelashes that had Alexis Murphy's DNA and Randy Taylor's DNA balled up inside the shirt.

Randy Taylor was then seen at Applebee's Restaurant around 10:00 p.m. August 4th approximately 15 minutes after Alexis Murphy's vehicle was seen pulling in the Carmike parking lot within walking distance of Applebee's. Taylor then got a cab ride back to Nelson County, and refused to give authorities the name of the person who drove him down to Charlottesville that evening. The cab driver's name was John Sapp who testified at trial.

Randy Taylor denied ever going to Liberty gas station on August 3rd and denied ever seeing Alexis Murphy. Only after authorities found forensic evidence, putting Alexis Murphy inside his camper, did Randy Taylor admit that Alexis Murphy was in his camper but was with a third person. According to Randy Taylor, the "black guy with cornrows" and Alexis Murphy left in separate vehicles and everything was fine.

Within days after Randy Taylor's arrest for abduction of Alexis Murphy, Randy Taylor and Mr. Hallahan, his attorney, were 100% certain that the black male that Alexis Murphy left with was Dameon Bradley, a thin light-skinned black male, who drove a maroon Chevy caprice. Mr. Hallahan provided law enforcement with a photo of Dameon Bradley who looks absolutely nothing like Jesse Leroy Matthew, Jr. Dameon Bradley testified at Taylor's trial that he did know Alexis Murphy and they were only friends and he worked at the McDonalds at the Liberty gas station which is a place that Randy Taylor frequented on a daily basis.

At no time did the name Jesse Leroy Matthew, Jr. ever come up by Randy Taylor or Mr. Hallahan until Mathew's arrest in Hannah Graham several days ago.

Nelson County authorities have not received any information from investigators in the Jesse Leroy Matthew, Jr. case that links him in any way to the abduction and murder of Alexis Murphy. Some of the same investigators who worked the Alexis Murphy case are working with authorities in the Hannah Graham and Morgan Harrington cases.

However, in order to dispel any further speculation, I will be meeting in the coming days with investigators in the Murphy case to address the concerns outlined in Mr. Hallahan's recent letter. Even though the evidence on Randy Taylor and Randy Taylor alone in the Alexis Murphy case is clear, the Commonwealth will make sure that scientific testing is done in order to bring closure to the speculation.