

UNDISCLOSED, The State v. Greg Lance
Episode 3 - The Heron Farm
September 24th, 2019

[02:22] Rabia Chaudry: Around 10:30 am in the morning of Sunday, August 2nd 1998, in Rickman Tennessee, about 15 miles north of both the Kolesnikow property and the Ford Mobile Home Park, a woman named Judy Wells and her partner Joel Brown heard gunshots coming from their neighbor's property. It sounded like someone doing some target practice in one of the numerous buildings next door, on a farm that belonged to a man named Mike Heron.

At the time, Heron didn't live at the farm, in fact it was up for sale, and he lived in southern California. His neighbors apparently kept an eye on his place though, which was the neighborly thing to do, and he let them graze their cows on his property, also the neighborly thing to do.

Heron's farm had a few structures on it, including a main house, a barn about 50 yards behind it, a toolshed and a garage. Mack Phy Lane ran on the left side of the property, and if you followed the gravel lane back about 250 yards to where it ended, you would arrive at Judy Wells and Joel Browns home.

A tract of land separated the two properties, land that dipped behind the barn and then rose back up towards Judy and Joel's house, with lines of trees between the two, creating privacy.

But not enough privacy or distance that they couldn't hear the guns going off that Sunday morning. Someone was trespassing on Mike Heron's farm, as well as interrupting their quiet weekend morning. And that was just the start of what was going to be a very strange week, in fact a very strange month, with all kinds of odd comings and goings at the Heron farm. But when they learned about the fire at the Kolesnikows, which took place three days after they heard that Sunday morning gunfire, it all started to make sense.

[04:09] Rabia Chaudry: Hi and welcome to Undisclosed, this is the third episode in our series on the State v. Greg Lance: The Heron Farm. My name is Rabia Chaudry, I'm an attorney and author of the New York Times Bestseller, [Adnan's Story](#), and I'm here with my colleagues, Susan Simpson and Colin Miller.

Susan Simpson: Hi, this is Susan Simpson. I'm an attorney in Washington, D.C., and I blog @TheViewFromLL2.

Colin Miller: Hi, this is Colin Miller. I'm an Associate Dean and Professor and the University of South Carolina School of Law, and I blog @EvidenceProfBlog.

[04:52] Susan Simpson: A police dispatch log for August 2, 1998 shows that around 2:30 Judy Wells called the cops to report gunfire. She wanted the police to come out and take a look at what was going on.

When the police arrived, her husband Joel, who went by 'Joe,' told the police he had been checking his electrical fence when he heard gunfire that morning. He said it sounded like different caliber weapons, two or three different kinds, he wasn't sure. From where he'd been at checking the fence, he couldn't see anyone so he walked into a small grove of trees in the hollow between the two properties. He would have been peering up towards the back of the Heron barn from about 100 yards away, but even though he had moved closer, he still couldn't see who was doing the shooting.

He decided to get a closer look, so according to both his initial statements in 1998 to the TBI and at trial two years later, he got in his pickup and drove up the road towards the shooting where he noticed a squat, red car with a hardtop that was pulled up behind the garage, largely hidden from view.

At trial Joe noted that he pulled into the circular gravel driveway behind the Heron house to get a better look, but because he only had one good eye, he couldn't make out the plates of the car. But he did note that the car had Humphrey County plates, which was a county about 160 miles west from where they lived.

As he stood in the driveway, the shooting began again and he drove away to return home. He didn't want any trouble. Shortly thereafter his "old lady" (in his words) left to fetch her newspaper from the store, which was sometime between 12:30 and 1pm. After getting her paper, Judy went over to a friend's house to have some coffee and she told her friends about the shooting. She was told to call the police, so she did. That's that 2:36pm call that she placed while still at her friend's house.

By the time the police arrived nearly an hour later, the shooting was long over and no one was there on the Heron property. They didn't even bother to get out of the patrol car, just did a round of the circular driveway, saw that all was quiet, and drove on.

[07:08] Colin Miller: But Joe wasn't satisfied. He wanted to see if the shooters had left empty shells in the barn, that way he could tell how many different kinds of guns had been fired. One of the guns had been so loud he described it sounding like a cannon to TBI Agent Bob Kroffsik.

So Joe returned to the Heron barn that same evening and poked around, looking for shell casings. Inside the barn he noticed that the half-door that opened into a small room that he called the "harness room" was firmly shut closed. That struck him as odd, because all summer that door had remained open - he should know, he was up on the property multiple times a week. He knew that just inside the half door was a short flight of stairs that led into the loft of the barn, so he thought since there weren't any shell casings in the main level of the barn, maybe the shooters had been firing the guns up on the loft.

Joe opened up the door into the harness room and stopped in his tracks. In front of him sat two large, dark 5 gallon gas containers, military style, blocky, with flat bottoms. He prodded the cans with his cane. They were definitely full. He unscrewed the lid from one of them and took a sniff. It was gasoline.

A week earlier he had done the rounds with another neighbor, Steve Powell, who lived on the other side of the Heron farm. At trial he testified there were no gas cans there the last time he had been there.

The shootings and the appearance of these mysterious gas cans alarmed Joe so he told Kroffsik that he “got the hell out of there”. Joe thought that, given the quantity of the gas, maybe someone was planning on burning down the barn.

Joe checked on the barn the next day, on Monday, and there were the gas cans again, still full, still right inside the half-door. That was when he gave Steve Powell a call, asking him to come take a look at something.

In his police statement Powell confirmed Joe’s account - he had gotten a call from him after work that Monday and gone to take a look at what Joe had found in the Heron barn.

He saw the two plastic gas cans, wider than they were tall as he described them, about 5 gallon cans in his estimation. He checked the liquid levels in both cans and saw they were full. Powell’s statement said, at that point, “After we saw the cans we left because that’s all the prying I wanted to do”.

Interestingly enough, while both neighbors were supposed to be keeping an eye on the farm, neither of them reached out to Mike Heron, the owner of the property, to tell him anything about the gunfire or the gas cans.

Anyhow, Joe kept checking the barn to see if the gas cans were still there. They were there Monday evening, as Powell confirmed, which was August 3rd. They were there Tuesday evening, August 4th. But come Wednesday morning, the morning of August 5th, the morning the Kolesnikows were murdered, the gas cans were gone.

[11:50] Rabia Chaudry: The August 2nd shooting wasn’t the only funny business that happened at the Heron farm that week. Woven throughout Judy and Joe’s rambling statement about the gunfire and gas cans was another weird story - the appearance of a group of strangers and a U-haul truck.

In the same August 20th police interview with Agent Kroffsik, Judy recounted seeing three people at the farm as she drove by to fetch her paper on August 2nd, around 1pm. A young man with dark hair, a blond haired woman and a dark haired woman. Apparently when she drove past them she saw the women sitting on a concrete slab close to the porch of the house, and it seemed like they were either high or drunk, falling over each other and on the ground, and helping each other up. There was a brown Oldsmobile looking car with a vinyl top, with the trunk open, and the red car her husband had seen earlier was still pulled to the side of the garage. As Judy drove by, she quickly glimpsed a man standing behind the open trunk of the brown car.

Judy says a couple days later, on Wednesday, or maybe Thursday, she again saw a group of people again at the Heron farm. A blond haired woman, a dark haired woman, and this time two men. She saw them get out of their car, this time a red car, walk into the barn, then come right back out and get in the car and leave.

Now, her husband doesn't mention seeing any of these people, on either day . Maybe he didn't witness them, it's hard to tell because Kroffsik doesn't even ask him. Judy doesn't mention what time of day she saw the second group of people, or how she saw them, and she doesn't even state whether or not they were the same people she had seen a few days earlier, and again Kroffsik doesn't push her. He doesn't ask her many clarifying questions.

The only additional details Judy gives are that the man standing behind the brown car on that Sunday was young and had dark, well groomed hair, and the woman with blond hair had a tattoo on the back of her shoulder. Again, were these the same people she saw a few days later with the red car? Mayyyybe??

[13:56] Susan Simpson: Then there was the U-Haul. While Joe apparently hadn't seen any of the people that Judy had, he mentioned seeing a U-Haul to Kroffsik. He said that it had been loitering around the Heron farm one evening. Although Joe's interview with Kroffsik is so incoherent in places, and his trial testimony so rambling, that it's hard to say whether he actually saw the UHaul himself, or had just heard about it from others. Because when you cut through a lot of the double talk, it seems that Joe had heard about the U-Haul from his neighbor Steve Powell rather than having seen it himself.

But there was a U-Haul, according to Powell's testimony, he had seen it one evening as he was driving past the Heron farm on his way to visit Judy and Joe. The U-Haul had been backed up to the barn and someone was inside.

Powell saw that the interior cab light was on inside the U-Haul truck. A large white male, around 180 pounds he estimated, more or less, had sat inside the cab of the vehicle. And then, about an hour later, when he drove by again, the truck was gone.

While both Steve Powell and Joe recall this happening around dusk, it's only Joe seems to be able to pinpoint the date for this. In his trial testimony, Powell says that he has no recollection of what date he saw the U-Haul on, and oddly enough, in his original police statement, the U-Haul is not mentioned at all. Only Joe, in his August 20th interview with Kroffsik, identifies the date of the U-Haul being on the

Heron property as Tuesday, August 4th. Which is an important date, because that's the night the Kolesnikows end up being murdered.

So what does all this have to do with Kolesnikow case? Why are Judy and Joe giving TBI Agent Kroffsik, the lead investigator on that case, this interview 15 days after the couple was killed?

Well, after reading about the demise of the Ukrainian couple, Judy and Joe placed a call to fire marshall Phillip Gentry because they believed they had information connected to the crime. Even though Judy and Joe hadn't actually seen anyone do any shooting on Sunday the 2nd, or recovered any shell casings, or seen any bullet holes in the barn, they had a hunch the shooting and gas cans and the strange people and the U-Haul - basically all the weirdness at the Heron farm the week of the murders - were somehow connected to the crime.

Their hunch probably didn't seem like such a leap to Kroffsik, though. Because he already knew that Greg Lance was no stranger to the Heron farm.

[16:25] Colin Miller: In the same August 20th interview, Kroffsik asked Judy and Joel if they knew Greg Lance, and what they knew about him. While they didn't know him personally, they knew Greg worked with Mike Heron on construction projects, and had seen Mike bring over Greg's tractor to his property in the past to do some "bush-hogging" with it, which is nothing like it sounds, no hogs involved - it just means clearing land with a bladed device attached to a tractor. In other words, mowing tougher vegetation than a lawn mower could handle.

Beyond that, they didn't know Greg personally. But they did know that at some point in the past year he had been on Mike Heron's farm shooting. Kroffsik apparently also knew that already as we can tell from this exchange. Referring to Greg and Mike, Kroffsik asks:

18 Q: Okay, but you heard them shooting at two different
19 places here over a year... a year or so?

20 Joel: About two years ago when they was doing the shooting
21 target practicing down there in the woods and, uh, it was
22 Sunday before that house burned up in Cookeville, they was
23 up here in that barn shooting.

24 Q: Okay.

25 Joel: But I didn't see nobody now because...

5

1 Judy: You could just hear 'em.

2 Q: Okay.

And it's true. Greg had been at the Heron farm, shooting guns, just like Joe said.

Mike Heron and Greg had known each other since about 1996, when Mike responded to an ad in the paper that Greg had placed, looking to hire a construction job superintendent.

Mike Heron:

Greg was running an ad in the paper as a contractor and I answered the ad, and we started building together. Basically, I worked with him. It was pretty much me, him, and we had some other workers. Greg had the license, and I had a huge, long construction background. When I first got with him we did some concrete work and then we started building the baseball field and stuff there in Cookeville.

We did Howard Myers, we did the baseball park for the city. We did several- a bunch of jobs together.

Mike Heron testified at trial that he and Greg didn't just work on outside projects, they spent a lot of time helping each other out on their own properties. Greg replaced Mike's roof, and Mike did a lot of work on Greg's mobile home park.

Mike Heron:

We busted our butts working out there on it all the time. Money wasn't a problem-

Rabia Chaudry:

You worked on the trailer park with him?

Mike Heron:

Oh, heck yeah, man. We put in sewer lines, we built the storage building. Oh, yeah. He worked on that place, he put money into it, he had extra money, he was buying xxx for the storage unit. We worked on the interior of that thing almost daily.

Rabia Chaudry:

Wow.

Mike Heron:

By the time I left there, that place was like a priority to him. If we weren't working on a job, he was spending his time and money at that place.

[19:19] Rabia Chaudry: They worked together, and played together too. At trial, Mike told the jury that they would gather with other friends at the farm to BBQ, and more importantly, target shoot on his 26 acres.

Mike estimated that Greg had gone shooting with him at the farm at least 3 or 4 times. Mike owned a range of guns, including high powered rifles, 45s, 9 mms, 38s, and others but when he first met Greg, all Greg owned was an old shotgun. Over the years however Greg had acquired other weapons, including one that Mike himself had gifted to Greg and Greg promptly tried out.

Greg's birthday is in November, so that gift of a gun had to have been in November 1997 or earlier, because by the following November in 1998, the Kolesnikows had been murdered and Greg certainly wasn't doing any practice shooting anywhere. If it was November 1997, it still wasn't the last time that Greg had been shooting at Mike's farm.

Mike Heron moved back to California in March of 1998, but before doing so he had a bit of a party at the farm. Greg was there, along with his girlfriend Becky, Keith was there, and a handful of others. Together they grilled, ate, drank, and they shot guns. But the day became more eventful than they could have imagined though, when Greg himself ended up getting shot.

Greg Lance:

My parents gave me a .38 for my birthday. And that was one that we were at Heron

Farm shooting at his going away party, the day I got shot- that Keith shot me in the back.

Rabia Chaudry:

Yeah. That's a crazy story.

Greg Lance:

That was a .30 that was from a really old, Civil War Officer's Revolver that wasn't in operating condition. It was a breach loader--

Rabia Chaudry:

I have no idea what that means.

Greg Lance:

... It would break in half and you'd load it like that.

Rabia Chaudry:

Oh, I've seen that in the movies. Okay.

Greg Lance:

The one Mike Heron gave me was like you see in the Westerns, where it's a revolver- the cylinder comes out the side and you load it

Rabia Chaudry:

Is that what you guys shot with?

Greg Lance:

No, Keith shot me with a .22 rifle that he'd bought from somebody there at the party. Somebody had a .22 rifle for sale and Keith bought it from 'em.

Well, I was standing there taking a leak when I got shot and I fell down to my knees with my junk still hanging out, with this terrible pain in my back. And I reached back there and touched it and there was a hole and then I looked at my hands and there was blood on my hand and it's like, oh no. I've been shot.

We was down in the woods, going around shooting stuff here and there, I was kind of down in a depression type area, I didn't even think he could see me from there. I was off to one side quite a ways. Evidently the bullet hit the - caught the edge of the tree and it bounced. It altered the trajectory enough that it hit me in the back, just to the left, about 1" to the left of my spine, right between my shoulder blades.

Rabia Chaudry:

I mean, you got lucky, though, considering it could have been a couple inches to the right.

[22:26] Rabia Chaudry: This incident, of Greg getting shot is confirmed by nearly everyone who was there. At trial Mike testified that they had tried to take the bullet out themselves in his kitchen using a knife but he realized they were in over their heads.

Greg didn't want to go to the hospital, he had no insurance and didn't want to spend the money because he was kind of frugal, but his friends were having none of it. They took him to the hospital where he got stitched up but to his surprise, the doctors found no bullet.

Greg Lance:

It made a hole and left a scar, but when I got to the hospital, they couldn't find the bullet.

Rabia Chaudry:

That's crazy. They never found the bullet?

Greg Lance:

No. Never found the bullet.

Rabia Chaudry:

Where do you think that bullet is?

Greg Lance:

It must have fell out on the way back. We had to walk quite a ways back up to Heron's house back up through the woods, across the fence and stuff. They put a probe down in there and they were like, well we can't find any bullet in there. They X-Ray'd me, couldn't find the bullet. So they just shot a little novocaine in there before they started probing. Went ahead and put a stitch across it, the bullet hole, which I don't even know why they bothered doing that, but...

[23:34] Rabia Chaudry: Because Greg had no health insurance, Keith, who was insured, signed Greg into the hospital as himself. I can't help but think Keith felt a little guilty. Anyway, whatever medical record that may exist with this incident, which could help establish the date this all happened, is in Keith's name, and Greg has no access to them. And we can't get them through Keith either, because he passed away years ago on April 25th, 2013 at the age of 49.

But back in 1998 Keith, Kay and Becky all told investigators the same thing - that was the last time they were aware Greg went shooting at the farm, nearly five months before the Kolesnikows were murdered.

[25:51] Susan Simpson: The plot kept thickening though, or at least it did for the Kolesniknow murder investigation, and the August 20th interview wouldn't be the last time they would be summoned to the Heron property. Within a week of TBI Agent Kroffsik's interview of Judy and Joe, another string of very peculiar events took place at the farm.

On August 25th, neighbor Roberta Powell, Steve Powell's wife, heard her dogs barking angrily at something next door. She went out to take a look and saw smoke coming from the Heron property. When her husband Steve Powell returned from work not long after, he noticed the same thing, that their dogs were barking out towards the Heron farm.

As Powell said in a police statement the following day, there was smoke coming from the Heron property and he tried to identify what was burning and where, but couldn't see exactly where it was coming from. All he could tell was it looked like it came from between the barn and the house. Though, his wife, in her testimony, described something slightly different.

At trial, Roberta said that when she came out to see why their dogs were barking, she looked over into the Heron property, and saw "a gentleman there tending to the fire and saw a pickup". Roberta went on to say that she saw only one man, and she wasn't sure if it was a brush fire or a trash fire, or what exactly he was burning, but she could see that the fire was on the ground and not in the barrel. She could also see a truck, or at least the cab of a truck, and it was blue. Although at trial, when Greg's attorney prodded her on what she could see, and whether she had a good view, she said no, her view was obstructed. Later in her testimony she stated she was about 50 or 60 yards away at the time, and there was brush in the way. After showing her an aerial photograph of the wooded area between where she was and where the fire and truck were, the attorney asked her, "How on earth did you see it?"

"I don't see how on earth I did," she responded. And that's probably the truth that she wasn't able to see anything from her property, but when testifying over two years later her memory was clear. Because she did definitely see a truck, just it wasn't until later in the evening, when she and her husband took drive to have coffee with their neighbors Judy and Joe, and passed by the Heron farm. And that, according to Steve Powell in his interview with the police, is likely what actually happened, and when and where she saw the truck. Because when they were done visiting the neighbors and headed back home, the truck was no longer at the Heron farm.

Now, before they had headed to Judy and Joe's that evening, the Powells had called ahead to ask them if they knew what the smoke was all about, but Judy and Joe had said they had no idea.

Once they'd been alerted though, Judy was on the case. In a police interview taken the day after the smoke incident Joe had stated, "My old lady Judy Wells said she could see a two tone pick up truck, I think a Ford. She said she seen smoke and people (two) walking around." Judy had also been interviewed and she stated, "the neighbors came over and the vehicle was still there, it was a blue and white truck" and at trial a couple of years later she stated, "we looked out and there was a blue and white Ford truck sitting there by the garage". She also testified she saw the truck move, and that two men were in the back of it.

[29:20] Rabia Chaudry: Now here's the problem. I've been out to Judy and Joe's house, which still stands in exactly the same place. They don't live there any longer, but looking out from the front of their yard, and across into the Heron property, where a new barn stands in the place the old one used to be, you can't see a damn thing.

It's true that both properties are on a bit of a rise, but it's barely a rise. And the ridges of trees between them comes up so high and so thick, you can hardly see the actual buildings on the other side. And the truck and people that they say they saw would have been on the opposite side of the barn, about two football fields away. I took a picture, which we'll post with the episode documents on our site, so take a look yourself.

Now it's possible Judy, who seemed awfully eager and excited about all the happenings, so much so she again called the fire marshall again the next day, was nosing around with binoculars and that's how she could see so far. But it still wouldn't explain how she could see through solid objects, like trees and an actual barn, and identify what was happening on the other side.

Frankly, it's not likely she could or that she did.

[30:39] Colin Miller: Anyway, speaking of calling the fire marshall, the next day Joe again did what he thought a good neighbor would do and went poking around on the Heron farm to see what had been causing the smoke the previous day. Around 11am he went to check on his cows and then check out whatever had been on fire. According to the police statement he gave the same day, he saw some burnt firewood, and something "brass looking" that was glinting and lodged in the wood. Taking his pocket knife he turned the wood over and a shell casing fell out.

That's when he had Judy give fire marshall Gentry another call.

At this point TBI investigators were already following up the August 2nd incident report about the gunfire that Judy and Joe had heard, and doing their best to connect it to the Kolesnikow murders.

On August 24th, the day before the Heron neighbors had seen the smoke on his property, TBI agent Russel Winkler gave Mike Heron a call. Mike was in Arizona at the time, overseeing a huge commercial project, remodeling Jack in the Box restaurants in several states.

Winkler's call to Heron, which was recorded, and which we have the transcript for, was cryptic, and it wasn't initially clear why, but will become clear later.

He told him an anonymous source had informed the TBI that there were some people out on his property in the past few weeks. Mike responded, "Okay."

Winkler then assured him, "So there's no reason for us to think that you're involved in this or anything." A really strange thing to say because he doesn't identify what the thing is that he isn't involved in. What

thing? Was he alluding to the Kolesnikow murder, which he hadn't mentioned to Mike? And if so, did he just assume Mike knew about it and knew about some connection to his farm?

Well, clearly Mike didn't. He asked, "What's...what's going on?"

Winkler told him he couldn't elaborate any further and that neighbors had seen activity they were concerned about - so much for the anonymous source, but Mike may not have caught it because he was more concerned about what was going on at his property. He had it listed for sale and didn't want any damage to the place.

Winkler asked if the TBI had Mike's permission to search the property, without any specifics about what they were looking for.

Now this was rather disingenuous because they had already made a sweep of the entire barn on August 21st, the day after interviewing Judy and Joe about the gunfire they had heard. They had found nothing, no shell casings, no bullets, not even any fragments. They told Judy and Joe they would be back the following week to conduct a more thorough search. We know this first search took place because Judy and Joe witnessed it, and told defense investigators about it.

Of course, Winkler didn't mention any of this to Mike, and at trial he said he had no recollection of any search taking place before Mike had given them permission. Anyhow Mike gave his permission on two conditions. First, that they keep him updated with whatever they found, and second, that they didn't damage his property by tearing it up for their investigation.

Winkler also asked Mike who, specifically, had permission to be on the property in his absence.

The real estate agent, of course, and also this guy who was helping him work on it, worked on his roof specifically. His name? Greg Lance.

[33:45] Rabia Chaudry: There are two fairly comprehensive reports in the case files written by Fire Marshall Phillip Gentry at different points in the investigation. In the first report, he actually does in fact state that a search was done on August 21st. But in his second report, he nixes that altogether and moves that preliminary search to the 24th, after Winkler got permission from Mike Heron, fudging the paperwork, it seems, to cover their rear ends.

Regardless, according to the reports, nothing suspicious was found during the preliminary search, whenever it actually took place.

But on August 26th nine members of the TBI, ATF, State Fire Marshal's Office, and Putnam County Sheriff's Office descended on the Heron Farm and conducted a thorough two day search.

Now remember, it was the late afternoon of August 25th, the day before, when the Powells had seen the smoke and the blue truck at the farm, and they alerted Judy and Joe, who then called fire marshall Phillip Gentry.

So when the authorities began searching the farm in that thorough two day search, they already knew about the burned up wood with one bullet lodged in it, the one Joe found the evening before, and they came prepared to find more with sifters and an ATF K-9 unit. You could say they hit gold. They found 4 casings and 24 projectiles of different calibers, including 9mm bullets like the ones involved in the Kolesnikow murders.

Whether they were indeed fired from the same weapon as the one that killed Victor and Alla remained to be seen after crime lab examined them.

Now you have to ask yourself this: How did dozens of bullets and casings show up at the Heron farm on the 26th, when two days prior, on the 24th, Gentry's report says that there was nothing there. Even if that preliminary search was done on the 21st and not the 24th, that is a lot of bullets to appear out of nowhere in a matter of days. That would seem to indicate either they did a piss-poor job looking during the preliminary search, or sometime in the days in between, there was a ton of gunfire going off. But if that had been the case, it wouldn't have gotten past Heron's neighbors who were clearly keeping an eye on everything happening there, especially in those days.

[36:02] Susan Simpson: There are reasons to be skeptical of both scenarios, and next week we'll get deeper into the evidence there. But for now this was just one more step to closing in on Greg, and it just so happened that while they were out on the farm on August 27th still searching for evidence, a blue and white truck rolled past the farm and all the way down to Judy and Joe's.

There were two men were in the truck and one of them came out to speak to Joe, who was outside of his house. The men in the truck said they were looking to buy rabbits, but Joe didn't have any to sell. He did have an old rabbit cage though, and he agreed to sell them that, and as this negotiation was taking place, TBI agents pulled up behind the truck to see who the men were.

According to a defense interview with Joe, Agent Kroffsik, who Joe described as 'having a forehead so long he could have had two faces,' approached the truck and asked the men to identify themselves. One of the men responded that he didn't have to provide a name, at which point Kroffsik put his hand on his weapon and stated that he was going to give him his name, and he did. Kroffsik wrote down their contact information and car tags, because he was not about to let them walk away.

But we'll get back to these men later in the season, because they both end up being rather important. In fact, both of them end up testifying at the trial, for the State, against Greg.

Now, all of these random happenings at the Heron farm in the month of August may seem... well, random. But the authorities didn't see it that way. Their grand unified theory of this case, is that on the morning of August 2, three days before the murder, Greg had been target practicing at the Heron Farm, and that's where he was spotted by Judy, at about 1 pm, where, according to Judy, she'd seen him standing there by the open trunk of a brown car with a vinyl roof and he was there with two women at the time. And Greg wasn't only practicing his shot, he was also there to quietly deposit two full containers of gas which he planned on using later to burn down the Kolesnikows' house after the murder.

After Mike Heron alerted Greg that there were TBI Agents crawling all over the farm, Greg returned to burn evidence, and that was the source of the smoke and fire seen by the Powells and Joe and Judy around 4pm that day.

It's not clear why this plan would require target practice in advance, or why a suspect would return to a scene after being informed it was crawling with TBI Agents who were investigating, but anyway- at the end of two days of searching, Agent Russell Winkler called Mike Heron on August 27th and told him they were done investigating. He said that they'd cut a section from a tree that had projectiles lodged inside of it, and that they were going to go test them.

Winkler advised Heron that this was an ongoing criminal investigation in the Kolesnikow matter and asked if he had informed anyone that they were going to be searching the property. Yes, said Mike. He had told Greg about it. He had been worried that the police were going to damage his place and when he hadn't heard from Winkler earlier, Heron had called Greg to ask him to go by and check on the property.

[39:03] At that point Mike Heron had no idea Greg was a suspect because Greg hadn't said anything to him about it. In fact he didn't find out that Greg was a suspect until a couple of weeks later, after Greg had joined him in Arizona to help with that big Jack in the Box project. And when Heron called Greg to check on the property there was nothing about Greg's reaction that Heron noticed that indicated he was alarmed by the request or by the presence of the cops there. Then again, Greg's lack of a reaction might also have been because there was no reason for Greg to have suspected that search of the Heron Farm had anything to do with the Kolesnikow's murder. And Greg didn't ask Heron ask about the police down at the farm, or if they had found anything. As Mike put it, Greg was "nonchalant" about it all.

[39:55] Colin Miller: It's not clear at what point Mike Heron learned that the authorities believed all the random activities at his farm were connected to the Kolesnikow murders and thereby connected to Greg, but at trial he was pretty clearly incredulous. He testified that it wasn't unusual for any of his friends to come by to go shooting, even when Mike was no longer living there. He was asked if his neighbors knew that his friends went shooting on his property, had he told them specifically about it?

Mike responded no, and said that he had "cut off communications" with Judy Wells and Joe Brown early in 1998. Which is not only why Judy and Joe had no idea that Mike's friends had permission to come by

and shoot there, but also why they had no idea that Mike actually had tenants on the property who rented out the house, meaning that of course there would be people and cars on and off the land.

Mike Heron:

I had renters that were on that property at that time also. That place ended up burning down from the renters out there. They had lit a fire in an outside fireplace on the porch and burnt the house up.

Colin Miller: And it's a fair guess that's why Joe and Judy never contacted Mike directly when they heard gunfire or saw smoke, and also explains why when Winkler first contacted Mike he told him the TBI got information from an anonymous source instead of naming Joe and Judy directly. If Mike had cut off communications with them, maybe they weren't really allowed to be on his property to begin with. In fact, at trial, Mike testified that he had specifically, and only, asked Greg to keep an eye on the property. He only called Greg to take a look when he learned of the police investigation. He never even bothered to reach out to his neighbors, and that certainly says something.

Back to August of 1998, if there was anyone as eager to connect the events at the Heron farm to the Kolesnikow murders as the investigators, it seemed like it was Judy and Joe. An interesting coincidence is that the first time they contacted authorities also happened to be the exact same day the Governor of Tennessee announced a \$5000 reward in the case. They called the police on August 20th, even though they heard the gunfire weeks earlier on August 2nd. That reward was announced in the local and state newspapers, and we know Judy liked to go pick up her paper.

Anyway, by the end of August authorities began crafting a narrative piecing together all that had happened at the Heron farm that month with Greg and the murders, they had also started making traction in getting witnesses who knew Greg to start coming forward. Their case was slowly coming together.

The only missing piece, a very big piece, was the murder weapon itself. But then, a couple of weeks later, they got the call they had been waiting for.

[42:29] Rabia Chaudry: At around 7pm on the evening of September 17, 1998 Detective Gary Roach of the Putnam County Sheriff's Office took a call from a Mr. James Bohannon, a neighbor of Victor and Alla who lived about a mile down the road from the Kolesnikow property.

He had discovered something rather strange on his property- a firearm he found while repairing his electrical fence that ran along Poplar Grove Road. Over a month had passed since his neighbors had been murdered, and Bohannon thought that maybe this gun had some connection to the crime.

Bohannon told Detective Roach he routinely walked the land where he kept horses, inspecting and fixing his fences, cleaning up, and keeping an eye out for things that might not belong. Because Poplar Grove Road ran next to his property, he had a number of large commercial billboards on it. There was actually both an external and internal fence that ran between the road and his property and between the two fences there was a path overgrown with weeds.

That's where he found the gun- on that path between the two fences, under a Subway sandwich shop billboard. He was wearing work gloves, and he gingerly pinched the gun between two fingers to find that the weapon was attached to a green cord fashioned into a sling, and had a small black flashlight duct taped to the barrel. The gun looked rusty and Bohannon's impression was that someone must have thrown it onto his property from a passing car.

He walked the weapon back towards his house and tied it- using that same cord that was attached to it- to part of a fence that ran in front of his front door. Then he went inside and told his wife what he had found.

By 9pm Detective Roach and Fire Marshall Phillip Gentry arrived to inspect the gun, and Bohannon showed them where he found it, just inside the fence that ran along the passenger side of Poplar Grove. Now, the road didn't run flush with his land. There were embankments that ran on both sides of the road in steep slopes, and from where Bohannon found the gun, he could look down onto the road from a good 6 to 8 feet high. So, either someone had climbed up the bank and ditched the gun there, or they had flung it out of a car from the road and it landed there.

The gun was a Tec 9, a heavy semi-automatic pistol weapon that fired 9mm bullets. Just like the ones that had killed Victor and Alla Kolesnikow.

Detective Roach noticed a partially chambered round and removed it and the magazine which had a few more rounds in it, just to be safe, and then he bagged the gun. And then, on the same day he turned the gun over, along with the green cord and the flashlight still attached, to TBI Agent Bob Kroffsik.

Given the proximity of the weapon to the scene of the Kolesnikow murders, and the fact that the weapon had the same ammunition used to kill them, it seemed like a strong possibility to Kroffsik that this could be the murder weapon they had been searching for.

After all, if someone had been traveling from the victims house towards town, they would have passed Bohannon's property on the right side. But it was strange that in in such a deeply wooded region, with creeks and bridges and forests and fields, why the perp would dispose of the gun, if it was indeed the murder weapon, so close to the crime scene when they could have hidden it in so many other places.

Anyway, gent Kroffsik already had results back from the bullets and bullet casings recovered from the Kolesnikow house, that had only taken six days from the day he had submitted the evidence. There was only way now to find out if those bullets came from the weapon found on Bohannon's property, if indeed this was the murder weapon they had been looking for for over a month. So, Agent Kroffsik sent

the Tec 9, complete with flashlight and the cord still attached, to the TBI crime lab and hoped for the best.

Next time, on Undisclosed.

[46:40] Rabia Chaudry: Greg Lance has been in prison since 1999. If you'd like to drop him a note of support or a card or anything to let him know that you're following his story, and thinking about him, address your letters to:

Gregory Paul Lance
ID 00325463
The Bledsoe County Correctional Complex
1045 Horsehead Road
Pikeville, TN 37367

Now. Lots of thank you's... A big thank you to all of our sponsors who helped make this episode, and this series, and really all of our work possible. We could not continue to investigate wrongful convictions and try to help those wrongfully convicted if we didn't have our sponsors. So. If you want to support our work, if you want to support the folks that we are trying to help in our series, please support our sponsors. They make the production possible.

Thank you to our Wizard of Oz who keeps everything running like clockwork behind the scenes- our Executive Producer, Mital Telhan. Thank you to our audio producer extraordinaire, Rebecca LaVoie, the host of one of my favorite podcasts, "Crime Writers On." Thank you to Baluki for our logo, Patrick Cortez for our theme song. Thank you to Linda Bozeman and the family of Greg Lance for working with us in order for us to do an investigation into this case. And a huge thank you to my legal intern for this entire series, Usrah Qureshi, who has just put in days and days and weeks and weeks going through documents and organizing things and just making my life easier. And, finally, thank you, all of our listeners, for staying with us case after case, year after year.

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