

## **Summary of Counts 1 and 2 ~ Victim: Sandra Cantu**

A surveillance tape shows Sandra Cantu (age 8) happily skipping homeward on March 27, 2009 at 3:54 p.m. when something catches her eye, and she looks over in the direction of Melissa Huckaby's residence. Then she drops off the face of the earth. Eight minutes later, the tape shows Melissa Huckaby driving her SUV out of the trailer park and turning in the direction of her grandfather's church down the road (Clover Road Baptist Church). About this time, Melissa telephones the trailer park manager to report her black Eddie Bauer suitcase was stolen from in front of her trailer. Eighty-five minutes later, the tape shows Melissa driving away from the church. She is gone for about 30 minutes before returning to the church. It is during that 30 minute period that both a retired U.S. Marine and his wife see Melissa Huckaby and her SUV at an irrigation pond at Bacchetti Rd. and Whitehall Rd. in Tracy. Melissa tells them she was there to urinate. The next day (March 28) Melissa shows authorities a handwritten note that she claims she found in the trailer park that reads "Cantu locked in stolin suitcase thrown in water onn Bacchetti Rd. & Whitehall Rd witness" (misspellings in original). The handwriting, though disguised, has similarities to Melissa Huckaby's known handwriting. On April 6, 2009 at 10:15 a.m. a farmer locates a black Eddie Bauer suitcase in an irrigation pond – the very pond (out of three) where the ex-Marine and his wife saw Melissa Huckaby on March 27, 2009. Later on April 6, Tracy Police and FBI searched the church per search warrants and found a rolling pin. It had a bent handle and a bloody smudge on it. The blood contained Sandra Cantu's DNA. (Her family as well as church members said Sandra had never been inside that church). Also in the church, investigators found all windows had blinds. They eventually determined one blind was missing part of its draw-cord – which an FBI cordage expert determined to be consistent in every way to the cord used to tie shut the suitcase. San Joaquin County Pathologist Dr. Bennet Omalu opened the suitcase and found Sandra Cantu's body crammed inside. He determined Sandra suffered a laceration to her lower inner lip, an abrasion to the left elbow, and injuries to the external genitalia which were consistent with the diameter of the rolling pin handles. He listed the official cause of death as "Homicidal Asphyxiation". Toxicological analysis revealed Sandra's body contained Alprazolam, a second generation Benzodiazepine. He found a piece of torn cloth tied around her head. It was soiled with blood and knotted into a "noose". Prescription bottles of Alprazolam were found in Melissa Huckaby's purse and residence.

## **Summary of Counts 3 and 4 ~ Victim: Jane Doe**

Minor “Jane Doe” (then 7 years old) lived in the same trailer park as Melissa Huckaby. On January 17, 2009, the minor’s mother returned from work at 3:30 p.m. to find the minor missing. The minor’s grandmother, who lived with them, said she had last seen the minor about 1:30 p.m. The mother frantically contacted neighbors and friends at the trailer park, searching in vain for her daughter. She then called 911. At approximately 4:30/5:00 p.m. Melissa Huckaby drove into the park with the missing girl, claiming the grandmother had given her permission to be with the minor (The grandmother denies this). Shortly after the minor returned home, her mother noticed the minor slumping in her seat, slurring her words, falling over in the car seat and “acting drunk” as they prepared to drive to McDonald’s for a Happy Meal. The mother took the minor (who by this time could not walk) to Sutter Tracy Community Hospital. The minor’s urine sample tested positive for the presence of Benzodiazepines. Police searched the minor’s residence and found no drugs or bottles containing Benzodiazepines.

## **Summary of Count 5 ~ Victim: Daniel Plowman**

Daniel Plowman, the 37-year-old ex-boyfriend of Melissa Huckaby met Melissa at Clover Road Baptist Church on March 1, 2009 around 11:00 p.m. to talk. She took a Tupperware-type container from her purse and told him she wanted him to try some “cold medicine”. Daniel Plowman said “it tasted very bitter - like sucking on an aspirin.” Melissa Huckaby also gave him what she said were two Tylenols. Daniel said he does not take any medicine or drugs other than Ibuprofen. Daniel Plowman’s next memory was waking up in jail. Daniel did not recall Tracy Police arresting him around 1:00 a.m. on March 2, 2009 for DUI after they found him passed out in his vehicle in the McDonald’s drive-through line, nor did he recall taking and failing field sobriety tests. The California Department of Justice Lab found that the blood sample police took from him upon arrest showed no alcohol, only Alprazolam (brand name: Xanax) and Lorazepam (brand name: Ativan). Both drugs are Benzodiazepines.