

Centurion Ministries

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Press Release from James C. McCloskey, Executive Director of Centurion Ministries, Inc. on the Roger

Coleman DNA Testing Results

With Governor Warner's announcement, it has been established once and for all, with absolute scientific certainty through unimpeachable DNA testing, that the semen found in Wanda McCoy belongs to Roger Coleman. This means that Roger Coleman is the killer of Wanda McCoy. We now know that Roger's proclamations of innocence, even as he sat strapped in the electric chair moments before his death, were false.

We, who seek the truth, must live or die by the sword of DNA. Through my efforts, spanning from 1988 until the day of Roger's execution on May 20 1992, Centurion Ministries conducted an exhaustive reinvestigation of Roger's conviction. Up until the Centre of Forensic Sciences issued the most recent DNA results, I had always believed in Roger's complete innocence. In my view, he had no motive, means, or opportunity to do this crime. I now know that I was wrong. Indeed, this is a bitter pill to swallow.

Those of us who seek the truth in criminal justice cases must never be afraid of finding it. If there is a means to discover the truth, we must never shrink or shy away from using it in our search. We must never stop the hard effort to touch the factual bottom of any case. The Truth can be very elusive, and even illusory. Our search for facts can delude us into thinking that what we have found is gold, only to discover that it is in fact fool's gold. But once the gold of absolute truth is revealed, we must embrace it, and be thankful that we have finally uncovered it.

Believing in Roger's innocence and even promising him on the night of his execution that I would do all in my power to one day prove his innocence, I have spent the last six years persistently pushing for the post execution DNA testing that was just completed. Even though the results are far different that I expected, and even though this particular truth feels like a kick in the stomach, I do not regret that this effort has at last brought finality to all who have had an interest in this matter. In Socrates' Apology, he said that, "in doing anything, we ought only consider if, in our doing, we are doing right or wrong." This arduous journey was an honest and diligent search for the truth that I believe has served the public interest.

The search for the truth in establishing Roger Coleman's innocence or guilt is finally over. The controversy that has surrounded the Coleman case for the last 25 years has now been put to rest, at least as far as I am concerned. I'd like to thank Virginia Governor Mark Warner for authorizing the DNA testing to proceed. Without his intervention, the complete truth would never have been revealed.

I also want to thank Paul Enzinna, Esq. of the law firm Baker Botts in Washington, DC for partnering with me in our six-year effort to get the DNA testing done.

I trust that all those with the power and authority to do so throughout the nation will follow in Governor Warner's footsteps to have the courage and vision to preserve all the biological evidence and allow post conviction and even post execution DNA and other forensic testing to go forward so that the absolute truth may be known to all. No one should fear the truth. As Governor Warner did, let the DNA chips fall where they may. Only then, can real justice be done.

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