

# New evidence found in deaths

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A spokesman for the McLennan County district attorney's office said Monday that investigators have uncovered "several new areas of evidence" in the investigation into the 1982 stabbing deaths of three teen-agers whose bodies were found near Lake Waco.

John Ben Sutter, administrative assistant to District Attorney Vic Feazell, said the new information has led investigators to "redirect the flow of some aspects of the investigation into other areas," but declined to give specifics.

Two investigators from the Waco Police Department, a deputy with the McLennan County Sheriff's Department and a prosecutor from Feazell's office are working exclusively on the investigation into the July 1982 deaths of Jill Montgomery, Raylene Rice and Kenneth Franks.

Feazell described the investigation as "fitting together the pieces of a puzzle where someone is trying to hide some of the key pieces."

"I can say that the new elements discovered in the investigation have opened new areas of the puzzle which must be connected before we can go to the grand jury with an indictment or indictments," he added.

Officials said in June they would wait until the completion of the David Darnell Drakeford murder trial before seeking an indictment in the triple homicide case. Drakeford pleaded guilty July 13 to the April 1982 beating death of Genevieve Crawford, a clerk at the Waco Hilton.

Attorneys had anticipated that the trial would last six weeks.

But while officials refused to name suspects in the case, they did say that James Russell Bishop, a former groundskeeper at McLennan Community College, is no longer a primary suspect.

"Although Bishop has not been officially eliminated as a suspect, those investigating the case have concluded that it appears that (he) probably was not involved in the triple murders," Sutter said.

Bishop is serving a 79-year prison term in Chino, Calif., after pleading guilty to the Feb. 21 assault of two high school girls. Investigators twice flew to California to investigate a possible link between Bishop and the case.

Sutter has said that suspects in the case "are not going anywhere, and we are certain that the public is protected from them at this time."