



## COLORADO CORONERS CODE OF ETHICS

As a county coroner or coroner investigator, my fundamental duty is to serve mankind in the process of a thorough, comprehensive search for truth through medico-legal death investigation.

Honesty, integrity, competence, compassion, and fairness will be my guidelines. I will obey all laws and adhere to the regulations of my department. Confidentiality will be kept at all times unless necessary information is to be shared in the performance of duty.

Personal feelings, prejudices, or friendships will not influence my decisions.

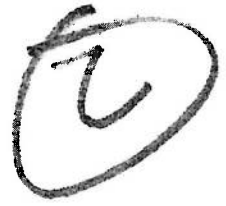
I recognize my position is a public trust and I will be true to these ethics.

I will continue to study, train, and work to advance scientific knowledge in my chosen field. I will readily seek consultation and use the talents and knowledge of others.

I will constantly strive to achieve these objectives and ideals dedicating myself to justice.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



Jen Vien  
CCA Executive Secretary  
Conference Coordinator  
7390 Julynn Road  
Colorado Springs, Colorado 80919  
(970) 628.5151 Phone  
(719) 309.6625 Fax

On Thu, Apr 13, 2017 at 6:01 PM, Tom Murphy <mmfhmurphy@comcast.net> wrote:

Jenny Vein

I am requesting copies of the Colorado Coroners Code of Ethics signed by Las Animas County Coroner Dominic Verquer, CCDI#324 and deputy county coroner Margaret Maria, CCDI#358. You can email copies to this email address. I will call tomorrow and follow up. Thank you

Thomas Murphy

Mullare-Murphy Funeral Home

Trinidad, Colorado

Subject: Re: Request for CO Coroners Code of Ethics on Las Animas County Coroner and de

Date: Friday, April 14, 2017 at 10:14 AM

From: Colorado Coroners Association <coloradocoroners@gmail.com>

To: Tom Murphy <mmfmmurphy@comcast.net>

Cc: Dominic Verquer <lasanimascountycoroner@yahoo.com>

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Mr. Murphy

The purpose of the Colorado Coroners Association (CCA) is to provide education and training opportunities to our Members. Membership is voluntary.

We exist to support the Coroners in Colorado – and their deputies - in their required continuing education, and to assist in keeping their training up to date, as well as to advocate for them in legislation. There are several ways in which coroners and their deputies may become Certified Death Investigators, and our system is just one of those.

The Code of Ethics document is part of the Colorado Coroners Association application for Certified Death Investigator. It is not legal, binding or an oath; rather, it is simply a statement by which we hope our members will abide and conduct themselves. As with any Association, we are not obligated to release documents that are voluntarily signed by our Members. Therefore, we will not be sending you copies of the documents you are requesting.

If you would like to submit a formal complaint to the CCA, our Peer Review Committee will contact Dominic Verquer and Margaret Maria and offer them the opportunity to seek counsel and advice from their peers. Outside of that, we have no authority over them.

Sincerely

Brenda Bock, President

Colorado Coroners Association

COPY + plus signature

x Barbara Lake

DATE 5/22/17

Time 3:21 pm

THOMAS MURPHY

335 East Main Street  
Trinidad, Colorado 81082  
Fax (719) 846-4727  
719-846-2281  
mmfhumurphy@comcast.net

May 22, 2017

(A)

TO: Dominic Verquer  
Las Animas County Coroner

FROM: Thomas Murphy  
335 East Main Street  
Trinidad, Colorado 81082  
mmfhumurphy@comcast.net

Office (719) 846-2281 CELL: (719) 680-1843

RE: Freedom of Information Request

I would like to receive a copy of the following:

1. Dates you served as a deputy coroner and the Coroner's name and or names of Coroners you served under.
2. Documentation showing that you were informed of Las Animas County Coroner policies and procedures while serving as a deputy coroner.
3. All deputy coroners and the time periods that they served from 1986 to present day. Repeat: This request was not replied to in the April 10, 2017, Freedom of Information Request.
4. Documentation showing that deputy coroners were informed of Las Animas County Coroner policies and procedures while you have been the elected Las Animas County.
5. A signed copy of your Colorado Coroners Code of Ethics and a copy/copies of all deputy coroners signed Colorado Coroners Code of Ethics.

→  
I promise to pay appropriate copying charges as allowed by state law if necessary. If that is required, please inform me of the charges. However, I ask that the requested documents be sent to me via e-mail if possible at the e-mail address listed above.

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May 25, 2017

Request from Mr. Thomas Murphy dated May 22, 2017 at 1421 Hours

1. **Dates you served as a deputy coroner and Coroner's name and or names of Coroners you served under.**

Response: 2008 and 2009 were the years I served as Deputy Coroner. Mr. Robert Bukovac was the only Coroner I served under. Deputy Coroners were Jody Stodghill and Dave Bacharach.

2. **Documentation showing that you were informed of Las Animas County Coroner policies and procedures while serving as a deputy coroner.**

Response: The documentation that you requested could not be located.

3. **All deputy coroners and the time periods that they served from 1986 to present day. Repeat: This request was not replied to in the April 10, 2017, Freedom of Information Request.**

Response: I have no idea who served as Deputy Coroner(s) from 1986 to 2007. From 2010 to present Jason Stodghill, Dave Bacharach, Darren Kolakowski, Margaret Maria, Troy Maes, Randi Ortiz. All are on an as needed basis.

4. **Documentation showing that deputy coroners were informed of Las Animas County Coroner policies and procedures while you have been the elected Las Animas County. Coroner to complete the sentence correctly, the word Coroner was omitted in the original typed request.**

Response: All deputies were informed of the Las Animas County policies and procedures under the direct supervision of the elected Las Animas County Coroner.

5. **A signed copy of your Colorado Coroners Code of Ethics and a copy / copies of all deputy coroners signed Colorado Coroners Code of Ethics.**

Response: As you are well aware from an E mail from Brenda Bock, dated April 14, 2017 at 10:14 AM, president of the CCA, and I quote: "As with any association we are not obligated to release documents that are voluntarily signed by our members. Therefore, we will not be sending you copies of the document you are requesting". This document is part of the CCA file for each Coroner in the State of Colorado that is a member of the CCA.



# MISSING

**David George Shier**



Last seen in Trinidad, Colorado  
Friday, February 11th, 2022.

**Height: 6 ft, Weight: 162 lb**

If you have seen or heard from David  
please contact

**Las Animas County Sheriff's Office**

**719-846-4441**



# Ambulance board to investigate body 'pick-ups'

By **KEN REAMY**

Staff writer, *The Times Independent*

The Trinidad Ambulance District board of directors last week voted unanimously to investigate the accuracy of figures that show that ambulance crews were used to pick up bodies for the Comi Funeral Home.

The action was taken during a Jan. 26 meeting, during which Mullare-Murphy Funeral Home owner Tom Murphy questioned the number of pick-ups reported by interim Director Brandon Chambers. Murphy is also producer of Trinidad Times Television and husband of The Trinidad Times Independent publisher Paula Murphy.

Chambers told the board that his research for 2005 indicated there were 53 bodies picked up for Comi Funeral Home by Trinidad Ambulance District crews. He said the district was paid a total of \$4,075 for the service.

Murphy told the board that he

kept meticulous records of deaths in the area, and believed there were more bodies picked up by ambulance crews for his competitor. During the public comment portion of the meeting, Murphy played a tape from a board meeting last fall in which then-Director Bobby Garduno, under questioning from Murphy, disclosed that the ambulances provided body pick-up service for Comi's "100 percent of the time."

At that meeting last fall, Murphy questioned the propriety of utilizing a tax-supported entity to subsidize a private business. Garduno responded, "We're subsidizing our own budget too."

During a discussion of how many body pick-ups were done for Comi's, district board member Jennie Garduno said that during a 15-year period, the ambulance district had brought in an additional \$60,000 from the pick-ups.

"I believe we were providing a service to the community," Garduno said.

Murphy countered, "I think

your priority is to save lives. If you want to improve on service, it comes down to time." Murphy raised concerns about the potential for an emergency call coming in at the same time the ambulance crew was transporting a body to Comi's funeral home.

"It's not a complaint, it's a concern," Murphy said. Garduno responded, "I doubt there was a bad result as a result of this service."

"I think you're throwing the dice," Murphy said.

Board member Michelle Minion echoed Murphy's comments by acknowledging, "The golden hour and platinum 10 minutes in the largest county in Colorado. It's between the body you're trying to show dignity for and the lives you're trying to save."

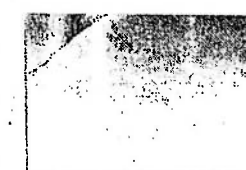
Murphy said that by his count, there were more deaths reported in local newspapers than were revealed in ambulance district records, and asked the board to investigate the pick-ups and ver-

*Continued on page 3*

We're not putting a they're calling themself Glorioso said. "They we're not calling them to say you're a gang m to identify you as such Glorioso made his cr of a series of posts Trinidadco.com websi ject of gang problems



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# Convicted kidnapper sentenced

By **KEN REAMY**

Staff writer, *The Times Independent*

Convicted kidnapper Brad Edward Johnson last week was sentenced to 30 years in prison for the December 2002 kidnapping and carjacking of Florence Barajas and her "Your Ride Taxi" cab.

Johnson, 22, was also ordered to pay \$27,461 in restitution to Barajas, and \$19,602 to the Victim's Compensation fund. With the hefty prison sentence being imposed, District Attorney Lee Hawke told the court he will soon file motions to dismiss felony assault charges against Johnson. Those charges relate to Johnson attacking detention officers and police at the county jail.

Johnson's attorney, Michael Emmons, asked the court to confine his client for 16 years, but the court, ruling that the crime to which Johnson pleaded guilty to two years ago was a "crime of violence," imposed the maximum sentence recommended by the probation department.

During the sentencing hearing, Johnson spoke in court for the first time since being arrested more than three years ago. He told District Judge George Newnam, "I wanted to say something to Mrs. Barajas, but she's not here today." Otherwise he sat motionless at the defense table.

In arguing for the hefty prison term Hawke said that the defendant's troubles all began with methamphetamine use when he was 16 years old. Both

Johnson's parents h Children of peop in prison themselves said. "There was ea Mr. Johnson starte drugs such as meth tence. This is tragi M. Johnson."

Emmons echoed methamphetamine Johnson used to k

Although it c could not cause Emmons said. I extent of the inju

ndays and

h Tuesdays

nesday each  
Information:

month at 7:30

m., at Mt. San  
Greg 941-9997.

Continued from page 1

# Ambulance board to investigate body murder

always comes." Chambers told the board that the ambulance will often transport bodies from accident scenes to a funeral home of the family's choice when the victims are dead on arrival and the coroner has released the body. Murphy maintains that any other circumstances represent a tax-supported district

by the revenue received. They "Check the numbers. They don't add up," Murphy said, informing the board that during a recent visit to a hospital to pick up a body for his funeral home, a staff member there spontaneously told him, "The ambulance

substantiating a private business. In voting in favor of the investigation, board member Alex Abeyta said "We need to hire somebody to do it." The ambulance district has been operating largely under the scrutiny by representatives of the Colorado Department of Public Health and

Environment after investigations last year revealed problems of their certification. A system-wide review of the district is pending as interim director of the district after Bobby Garduno was terminated last fall.

# Kidnapper sentenced to 30 years in prison

Continued from page 1

tolerate violence in his courtroom and she posed a threat to anyone but ; shouted, "I'm not a threat in the in." Barajas was not charged with n. Barajas was ordered to undergo an evaluation by mental health clinicians. Johnson was given credit for 1,022 days heady served in jail. It was a cold afternoon Dec. 3, 2002, when Johnson called Barajas' company for a ride from the Wal-Mart parking lot. Johnson and his girlfriend, who was not considered a suspect, had apparently been observing a witness earlier in the day attempting to break

into a car near downtown Trinidad. They were later seen by the same witness at Wal-Mart, and authorities were called. Police arrived at the parking lot at the same time Johnson and his girlfriend were climbing into Barajas' Your Ride Taxi. When Police Chief Charles Glorioso stood in front of Barajas' van and attempted to stop it, Johnson pushed the authentic-looking pellet gun around Barajas' head and ordered her to drive around the police barricade. He shouted, "Drive or I'll kill you." Thus commenced a high-speed 63-mile per hour chase, suit involving multiple police agencies in freezing-rain conditions. During the chase, Johnson was in cell-phone contact with law

enforcement agencies and repeatedly ordered his pursuers to back off or he would shoot his hostages. The chase ended in Colorado City when state patrol troopers deployed road flares to flatten the van's tires. As the van slowed, Barajas jumped from the vehicle. Johnson fled on foot and was apprehended multiple later by authorities. Barajas sustained multiple injuries from the ordeal. During his three-year confinement, Johnson has undergone three separate mental health evaluations. During the sentencing hearing, Hawke told the court that Johnson has outstanding cases for Weld County that he must still answer for.

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## All That Is

### Op! Endeavor

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Last a Lifetime



# LOCAL NEWS

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### for Comi Funeral Home responds to recent article

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elp re

y that thank



Comi Funeral Home is disappointed about the article which appeared in the *Trinidad Times Independent* on Jan. 31, 2006 regarding the Trinidad Ambulance District.

Comi Funeral Home has done nothing improper when receiving services offered by the Trinidad Ambulance District.

We strive to maintain the dignity of the families we serve. To that end, we have accepted local ambulance services made available to us for the transportation of the deceased to Comi Funeral Home.

We are disheartened that Tom Murphy, the owner of Mullare-Murphy Funeral Home, and our competitor, has suggested to the Trinidad Ambulance District Board of Directors that improper ambulance services have been provided. The ambulance services used by Comi Funeral Home were also available to Mullare-Murphy Funeral Home and have been used by it in the past by both Trinidad funeral homes.

The *Trinidad Times Independent* accurately reported 53 transports by the Trinidad Ambulance District to

Comi Funeral Home in 2005. The Trinidad Ambulance District charged and was paid for these services. Comi Funeral Home handled many other families in 2005 which were not transported by the Trinidad Ambulance District.

We had no intention of asking the Trinidad Ambulance District to do anything beyond its purpose of provided efficient and reliable emergency medical and trauma services for the general health, safety and welfare of our residents.

It is unfortunate that Tom Murphy of Mullare-Murphy Funeral Home, who is also the husband of the publisher of the *Trinidad Times Independent*, has cause negative publicity concerning this issue. In our view, this is a baseless attempt to unfairly accuse and criticize our funeral home.

Comi Funeral Home's mission is to provide quality, dignified and professional services. We have done nothing regarding our relationship with the Trinidad Ambulance District to jeopardize our reputation in this regard.

Mary "Kitsy" Winter  
Comi Funeral Home

### City of Trinidad Tourism 2006 Marketing plan announced

TRINIDAD - The City of Trinidad Tourism Board (CTTB) held a pre-announced public forum, which was sparsely attended, to gather information from the community about tourism in the area on Sept. 26, 2005.

The CTTB submitted a draft budget for 2006 tourism promotions to City Council on Sept. 27. In early November, CTTB requested HessArts develop a marketing plan based on the draft budget. The budget was approved through a second reading by the City Council on Dec. 20. The 2006 Tourism Marketing Plan was reviewed and approved by CTTB on Dec. 22, 2005.

Since the inception of CTTB, the following projects have been completed: the state-of-the-art skatepark, the riverwalk, the Los Ninos Soccer park, Convent-Cedar-Modica-Plum brick streets, the Hwy 12 bridge and the brick street project on Main and Commercial streets. Projects still to come include: the I-25 rebuild, the downtown park, the new sewer line on Santa Fe Trail and the Elm Street realignment.

The following information was taken from CTTB's 2006 Tourism Marketing Plan.

A total of \$33,367 has been budgeted for HessArts, \$12,619 for other contractors and \$79,265 for expenses. The total budget of \$125,251 is \$349 below total funding for 2006 and does not leave a sufficient amount

be an "editor will help es ships with e zines and new authors and books. The "e will provide tributed by hopefully pro features on T in their publi The CTTB budget of \$80 the official site. Recomm include add trips and eve correspond tions. Hess this inform a builer.

The billbo budget of 2 CTTB leased 0 in New Mex Colorado. Ne planned for exit 13A, and draw travelers

Other fundi grams/project between adve \$9,277) for a Colorado T Official State covered part (budget: \$600) a keting plan ( which HessArt the last quarter New progr

Name [Signature]  
Date July 25, 2017  
Time 3:30pm

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THOMAS MURPHY

335 East Main Street  
Trinidad, Colorado 81082  
Fax: (719) 846-4727  
719-846-2281  
mmfmmurphy@comcast.net

July 25, 2017

*upon attorney  
appeal*

TO: Dominic Verquer  
Las Animas County Coroner


FROM: Thomas Murphy  
335 East Main Street  
Trinidad, Colorado 81082  
mmfmmurphy@comcast.net

LAC  
Coroner  
#5

Office (719) 846-2281 CELL: (719) 680-1843

RE: Freedom of Information Request

I would like to receive a copy of the following:

1. According to 30-10-619. Conflicts of interest of county coroners. Do you as the Las Animas County Coroner or any of your deputies own, operate, are employed by or otherwise have an interest in a funeral home, mortuary service or mortuary transportation service? Your answer to the #2, July 19, 2017, open records request is imcomplete to the questions asked. Again I will be more specific as I have had to in the past. (A) "Do you" (Dominic Verquer, Las Animas County Coroner) receive any sort of compensation (salary, contract labor compensation, cash and etc.) from any funeral home for any type of work or services performed for said funeral home now or in the past since you were first elected?..... (B) "or any of your deputies" In repsonse to my May 22, 2017, open records request you named Jason Stodghill, Dave Bacharach, Darren Kolawkowski, Margaret Maria, Troy Maes, Randi Ortiz as current Deputy Coroners. Do the named Deputy Coroners just named receive any sort of compensation (salary, contract labor compensation, cash and etc.) from any funeral home for any type of work or services performed for said funeral home now or in the past since you were first elected? (C) "or any of your deputies" named above own, operate or otherwise have an interest in a funeral home, mortuary service or mortuary transport service? 
2. Do you charge money for allowing mortuaries to store deceased bodies in the Las Animas County morgue located at the justice center for extended periods of time.

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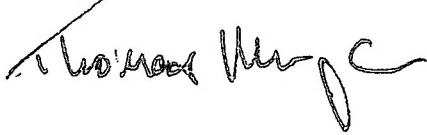
3. Do you maintain a log of the time and date of when bodies are placed into your custody and when they are removed?

I promise to pay appropriate copying charges as allowed by state law if necessary. If that is required, please inform me of the charges. However, I ask that the requested documents be sent to me via e-mail if possible at the e-mail address listed above.

If there are documents that cannot be e-mailed, I ask that they be faxed to me at (719) 846-4727 or mailed to me at the above address.

Thank you for your attention to this matter,

Thomas Murphy



Trinidad Ambulance District  
P.O. Box 130  
Trinidad, CO 81082

**RECEIPT**

DATE 7-25-17 No. 899493

RECEIVED FROM Tom Murphy \$ 1.00

one dollar 100/100 DOLLARS

FOR RENT  
 FOR service

ACCOUNT		<input checked="" type="radio"/> CASH
PAYMENT		<input type="radio"/> MONEY ORDER
BAL DUE		<input type="radio"/> CHECK
		<input type="radio"/> CREDIT CARD

FROM [Signature] TO \_\_\_\_\_

BY \_\_\_\_\_

© 1998

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RESPONSE  
LAC  
CORONER  
# 5

# FAX COVER SHEET

LAS ANIMAS COUNTY CORONER'S OFFICE  
P O BOX 134  
2309 EAST MAIN STREET SUITE C  
TRINIDAD, CO 81082  
719-845-9716 OFFICE  
719-845-7711 CELL  
719-846-0171 FAX

FAX TO: 719-846-4727

FAX FROM: 719-846-0171

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

# OF PAGES: 2

DATE: 7/31/17

RE: Your request

COMMENTS:

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RESPONSE TO OPEN RECORDS ACT REQUEST DATED JULY 25, 2017

NOTE: all removals made by individuals listed below are either directly from MSRH, Trinidad Inn Nursing Home or Hospice cases.

1A. Yes, contract labor when need arises.



1B. Yes, Jason Stodghill contract labor when need arises

Yes, Dave Bacharach contract labor when need arises.

Yes, Darren Kolakowski contract labor when need arises

Yes, Margaret Maria contract labor when need arises

Yes, Troy Maes contract labor when need arises

No, Randi Ortiz

1C. Yes, Gabriel Martinez contract labor when need arises

No, Angelina Zamora

2. No, I do not charge mortuaries to store deceased bodies in the Las Animas County morgue. It is a professional courtesy to all mortuaries.

3. No, a log has never been implemented presently or in the past by any of the Las Animas County Coroners.

RESPONSE  
LAC  
CORONER  
#5

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Mr. Solano

Sorry for the delay in sending this letter. While I appreciate that you are the chief law enforcement for Las Animas County, I am not done with my gathering of the facts. The open records issue is only one piece of a much larger puzzle. This whole issue will eventually be presented to you. However, the conflicts of interest with this issue and your office will have to be addressed first. While I am not a lawyer, I also believe that the appropriate venue for whether or not the CORA requests are legal would be a court of law and will pursue that course of action.

----- Forwarded Message

**From:** Tom Murphy <[mmf@comcast.net](mailto:mmf@comcast.net)>

**Date:** Mon, 11 Sep 2017 17:02:48 -0600

**To:** Henry Solano <[hsolano@3rdjudicial.org](mailto:hsolano@3rdjudicial.org)>

**Conversation:** CORA request

**Subject:** Re: CORA request

Mr. Solano

Thank you for your email I will be responding via Certified Mail.

Sincerely

Thomas Murphy

On 9/10/17, 9:54 PM, "Henry Solano" <[hsolano@3rdjudicial.org](mailto:hsolano@3rdjudicial.org)> wrote:

Mr. Murphy

I am in receipt of your communication to Mr. Vernier, the County Coroner ("Coroner"). He has requested that I provide an opinion regarding CORA requests to him. In order to properly review and provide an opinion on this matter I require your original request and all communication related to that request. I will also obtain the County policy regarding CORA requests which applies to all county entities in the absence of a different policy by that entity (here the Coroner).

This matter is important but as you are probably aware the 3rd Judicial District Attorney's office has been underfunded and hence understaffed for some time. That has not changed since my assumption of responsibilities on January 9th <x-apple-data-detectors://0> of this year. I will respond and provide the Coroner and you with my analysis as soon as practicable.

Respectfully yours

Henry L. Solano

District Attorney

Sent from my iPhone

----- End of Forwarded Message

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To: Henry Solano <hsolano@3rdjudicial.org>  
Subject: Open records request from Thomas Murphy

November 24, 2023

Email: [mmfmmurphy@comcast.net](mailto:mmfmmurphy@comcast.net)

To:  
~~Henry Solano~~  
LAC District Attorney  
200 East First Street  
Trinidad, Colorado 81082

From:  
Thomas Murphy  
335 East Main Street  
Trinidad, Colorado 81082  
719-680-1843

RE: Freedom of Information Request/Colorado Open Records Request

1. I would like a copy of all communications (emails, texts, voice mail, USPS mail, phone logs and any other communication I might not be aware of) with Frederick Marshall, the funeral director from Denver who exhumed Fredrick Jack Huff on September 6, 2023, from the Starkville Cemetery, and yourself and anyone in your staff. The cell phone record from Margaret Maria, with calls to Frederick Marshall's phone number which is (303) 304-8546, from January 2023 to September 6, 2023.

I promise to pay appropriate charges as allowed by state law. I would like to have the request emailed to the above address. Please give me an estimate before you begin.

**Tom Murphy**

---

**From:** Henry Solano <hsolano@3rdjudicial.org>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 27, 2023 8:57 PM  
**To:** Tom Murphy  
**Cc:** Kristin Reynolds  
**Subject:** RE: Colorado Open Records Act request from Thomas Murphy

Dear Mr. Murphy  
There are no materials responsive to your request.

This office does not independently investigate criminal matters. To the extent that this office gets involved in criminal matters, it is with, through and at the request of a local law enforcement agency. Those who believe a crime is committed are always directed to provide the information they have to the appropriate local law enforcement agencies. That agency then makes the determination concerning the manner in which to proceed if at all with any criminal investigation. In Las Animas it involves the Las Animas County Sheriff's Office, the Trinidad Police Department or as applicable the Colorado State Patrol. The Colorado Bureau of Investigations by policy becomes involved when a local law enforcement agency requests their participation. When this office believes it to be appropriate for the CBI to become involved the request is made through the local law enforcement agency or with the local law enforcement agencies approval by this office noting their agreement to such action in the communication with the CBI. During any investigation, this office may be consulted by the local law enforcement agency and if appropriate and requested by them, the investigator in this office may become involved prior to any referral to this office for a law enforcement agency arrest warrant to present to a Judge. This has not happened except in a limited circumstance. Because she is certified as a fire investigator at law enforcement's request she may appear on scene and assist in the investigation, whether in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Judicial District or as she has done in other jurisdictions.

This office has not been advised by any law enforcement agency of a criminal investigation regarding the matter you reference and therefore we have not had any communication such as you have sought information on. Finally, with the assistance of law enforcement and their request if it will assist their investigation of a criminal matter this office may request that a grand jury be convened, which grand jury assists the prosecutors and applicable law enforcement agency involved in further pursuing matters where sufficient information related to an identified criminal act or acts have been first reported to the law enforcement agency and after their initial investigatory work such action is jointly viewed as needed. I have used the grand jury, which is the first to the knowledge of local law enforcement and the Judges for over several decades. This involved the homicide for which Ms. Gina Real was indicted and a homicide plea was obtained.

Therefore, if you have any information that relates to a crime occurring in Las Animas County or Trinidad, please refer that information to the applicable local law enforcement agency. If they believe assistance is needed at the state level as identified above, they can make such request based on their determination of the information provided to them.

HLS  
Henry E. Solano  
District Attorney



**From:** Tom Murphy <tom@thechappellhouse.org>  
**Sent:** Friday, November 24, 2023 1:05 PM

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FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

JON WAYNE CRONAN  
SPECIAL AGENT

111 S. TEJON STREET, SUITE 600  
COLORADO SPRINGS, CO 80903

PHONE: (719) 633-3852  
FAX: (719) 329-7330

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DEATH CERTIFICATE WORKSHEET

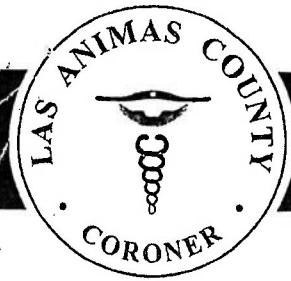
This is not a legal document.To be used for administrative registration purposes only.

06/29/2023 11:07:27

STATE FILE NUMBER

1052019040154

DECEDENT'S LEGAL NAME(Include AKA's if any) (First, Middle,Last) FREDRICK JACK HUFF						DATE OF DEATH FOUND ON 09/15/2019		
SEX MALE	SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER 448-42-6706	AGE-Last Birthday (Years) 75	UNDER 1 YEAR Months	UNDER 1 DAY Days	DATE OF BIRTH (MO/Day/Yr) 03/26/1944	BIRTHPLACE (State or Foreign Country) OKLAHOMA		
IF DEATH OCCURRED IN HOSPITAL: <input type="checkbox"/> Inpatient <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency Room/Outpatient <input type="checkbox"/> Dead on arrival			IF DEATH OCCURRED SOMEWHERE OTHER THAN A HOSPITAL: <input type="checkbox"/> Hospice Facility <input type="checkbox"/> Nursing Home/Long term care facility <input type="checkbox"/> Decedent's home <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (specify): DILAPIDATED SHED					
Facility Name (If not institution give Street & number) N 37.18111 W -1104.5014				CITY,TOWN OR LOCATION OF DEATH TRINIDAD		COUNTY OF DEATH LAS ANIMAS		
RESIDENCE - STREET AND NUMBER						APT. NO.	ZIPCODE	
RESIDENCE -STATE						CITY OR TOWN		
DECEDENT'S USUAL OCCUPATION (Give kind of work done during most of working life. Do not use retired) OCC. MACHINIST				KIND OF BUSINESS/INDUSTRY IND. INDUSTRIAL MANUFACTURING		DECEDENT'S EDUCATION SOME COLLEGE CREDIT, BUT NO DEGREE		
DECEDENT OF HISPANIC ORIGIN? NO, NOT SPANISH/HISPANIC/LATINO				DECEDENT'S RACE WHITE		DEGREE		
EVER IN US ARMED FORCES? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		MARITAL STATUS AT TIME OF DEATH <input type="checkbox"/> Married <input type="checkbox"/> Married but Separated <input type="checkbox"/> Widowed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Divorced <input type="checkbox"/> Never married <input type="checkbox"/> Civil Union <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown		SPOUSE/PARTNER NAME (if wife give name prior to first marriage)				
FATHER'S NAME PRIOR TO FIRST MARRIAGE FREDRICK NOEL HUFF				MOTHER'S NAME PRIOR TO FIRST MARRIAGE LINNIE MAE MCKAY				
INFORMANT NAME SHERI ELLIS				RELATIONSHIP TO DECEDENT CHILD				
NAME OF FUNERAL HOME LAS ANIMAS COUNTY CORONER				CITY AND STATE OF FUNERAL HOME TRINIDAD COLORADO		WAS CORONER NOTIFIED? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
SIGNATURE OF FUNERAL DIRECTOR				DATE OF FUNERAL DIRECTOR SIGNATURE				
METHOD OF DISPOSITION <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Burial -Cemetery <input type="checkbox"/> Burial-Private Land <input type="checkbox"/> Cremation <input type="checkbox"/> Donation <input type="checkbox"/> Entombment <input type="checkbox"/> Alkaline Hydrolysis <input type="checkbox"/> Removal from State <input type="checkbox"/> Hospital Disposition <input type="checkbox"/> Natural Reduction <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify):				PLACE OF DISPOSITION(Name of cemetery,crematory or other place) STARKVILLE		LOCATION - CITY,COUNTY, STATE STARKVILLE, LAS ANIMAS, COLORADO		
INJURY AT WORK <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		IF TRANSPORTATION INJURY SPECIFY: <input type="checkbox"/> Driver/Operator <input type="checkbox"/> Passenger <input type="checkbox"/> Pedestrian <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify):				DATE OF INJURY		
TIME OF INJURY		PLACE OF INJURY						
LOCATION OF INJURY(Street & Number, Apt. No., City or Town,County, State,Zip Code)								
DESCRIBE HOW INJURY OCCURRED:								
WAS DECEDENT UNDER HOSPICE CARE? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No		ACTUAL OR PRESUMED TIME OF DEATH UNKNOWN TIME OF DEATH		DATE PRONOUNCED DEAD (MO/DAY/YR) 09/15/2019		TIME PRONOUNCED DEAD 20:25 MILITARY		
MANNER OF DEATH <input type="checkbox"/> Natural <input type="checkbox"/> Accident <input type="checkbox"/> Suicide <input type="checkbox"/> Homicide <input type="checkbox"/> Pending Investigation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Could not be determined			WAS AN AUTOPSY PERFORMED: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		WERE AUTOPSY FINDINGS CONSIDERED IN DETERMINING THE CAUSE OF DEATH? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No			
DID TOBACCO USE CONTRIBUTE TO DEATH? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Probably <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unknown		IF FEMALE: <input type="checkbox"/> Not pregnant within past year <input type="checkbox"/> Pregnant at time of death <input type="checkbox"/> Not pregnant,but pregnant within 42 days of death <input type="checkbox"/> Not pregnant,but pregnant 43 days to 1 year before death <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown						
CAUSE OF DEATH								
Part 1. IMMEDIATE Cause (Final disease or condition resulting in death)		Enter the chain of events-diseases,injuries or complication- that directly caused the death					Approximate Interval:Onset to death	
Sequentially list conditions, if any leading to the cause listed on line a. Enter the UNDERLYING CAUSE (disease or injury that initiated the events resulting in death)		a. COULD NOT BE DETERMINED					UNKNOWN	
		b.						
		c.						
		d.						
PARTII. Enter other significant conditions contributed to death but not resulting in the underlying cause given in Part1								
TITLE, NAME, ADDRESS, AND ZIP CODE OF PHYSICIAN								
SIGNATURE OF PHYSICIAN						DATE SIGNED		
TITLE, NAME, ADDRESS, AND ZIP CODE OF CORONER COUNTY CORONER DOMINIC A VERQUER PO BOX 134 TRINIDAD COLORADO 81082								
SIGNATURE OF CORONER COUNTY CORONER DOMINIC A VERQUER						DATE SIGNED 03/27/2020		
SIGNATURE OF LOCAL REGISTRAR						DATE SIGNED		



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## OFFICE OF THE LAS ANIMAS COUNTY CORONER

1. On September 6, 2023, Mr. Verquer you were present and I have you recorded on video and photos when Fred Marshall, a funeral director from Denver exhumed the body of Fredrick Jack Huff. You informed Carl Mestas that day that you would get him the information of who the other bodies in the graves where. According to Mr. Mestas you have never contacted him and offered that information. When do you intend to officially contact Carl Mestas and inform him of the identities of the accurate number and location of the bodies? Why did you not contact Mr. Mestas?

*Mr. Mestas is eligible to request the permits via email or mail, as he has a tangible interest in them. I am pleased to provide him with assistance. My delayed response was due to not receiving a letter or email from Mr. Mestas to make the request official and to maintain a record of the transaction.*

2. What are the names, dates of death, dates of burial, exact location of bodies, who did you have dig each individual or common grave of the deceased located within the Starkville Cemetery, St Anthony's Cemetery and any other cemeteries you have used?

*The table below lists names and dates of death. For the exact location contact the cemetery owner. The owner is responsible for keeping track of the exact location of the bodies and dates of burial under CRS 25-2-111 (7) (a). Las Animas County Road and Bridge workers dug the graves at Starkville Cemetery and St. Anthony's Cemetery at the cemeteries for NO COST.*

3. We would like to have copies of the death certificates, the burial permits, contact information for family members of each the bodies you have buried in Starkville Cemetery, St. Anthony's Catholic Cemetery and any other cemeteries where you were acting as the funeral home and/or where you contracted a funeral home or an individual to act as a funeral director since you were first elected as the Las Animas County Coroner.

*We are not the custodian of permits. You must contact the State of Colorado Vital Records Office for such permits. You can reach them at 303-692-2200 or [vital.records@state.co.us](mailto:vital.records@state.co.us). It is important to note that everyone buried in Starkville Cemetery and St. Anthony's Catholic Cemetery are unclaimed bodies, as no family members were ever located at the time of burial.*

4. Who did you arrange to dig each of the above graves and how were they paid?

*Las Animas County Road and Bridge workers dug the graves at Starkville Cemetery and St. Anthony's Cemetery at the cemeteries for NO COST.*

5. Where you paid by any family members of those you buried, government agency or private business (for example Las Animas County Government, LAC Department of Human Services, Comi Funeral Home?

*The Las Animas County Coroner's office does not receive payment from anyone.*

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**DOMINIC A. VERQUER**

OFFICE: 719-845-9716 | CELL: 719-845-7711 | FAX: 719-345-5949 | EMAIL: [lasanimascountycoroner@yahoo.com](mailto:lasanimascountycoroner@yahoo.com)

LAS ANIMAS COUNTY, COLORADO, P.O. BOX 111, 5000 E. MAIN STREET, GUYTON, COLORADO 81032



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## OFFICE OF THE LAS ANIMAS COUNTY CORONER

6. How did you determine who was the owner of the Starkville Cemetery? You told Carl Mestas on September 6, 2023, that you did not have burial permits for the bodies you buried in Starkville Cemetery, why did you not bother to comply with state law and contact the true owner of the cemetery and hand over burial permits as required by law?

*At the time, I understood Leroy Valdez to be the owner of the Starkville Cemetery. I informed Mr. Mestas that I possessed all the necessary permits required by law, which he could obtain by submitting a request via mail or email.*

7. You shared with Chronicle News that you also cremated a body in 2012 at the Trinidad Masonic Crematory. What authorization did you had to cremate that body and what was the persons name, date of birth, date of death and family contact information.

*The names are highlighted in green in the attached table. Although a death certificate was produced, we were unable to locate a disposition authorization for Kettle, Jerry Allen. However, a death certificate was produced.*

*This occurred before the launch of the Electronic Death Registration system, and even at that time, permits were only kept for a period of 2 years.*

*Our authorization came from CRS CO Rev Stat § 15-19-106 (H) & (6). Unfortunately, we were unable to find any contact information for the deceased, whose remains are still unclaimed.*

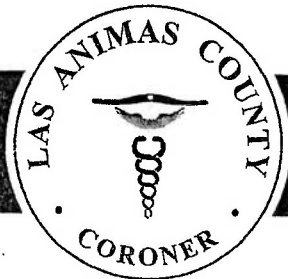
*However, the other two cremated Doss, Barbee L. & Gardner, Jerry Paul do have a disposition authorization.*

*Per (24-72-202(6)(a)(II) family contact information is considered as CONFIDENTIAL DATA.*

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**DOMINIC A. VERQUER**

OFFICE: 719-845-9716 | CELL: 719-845-7711 | FAX: 719-345-5949 | EMAIL: lasanimascountycoroner@yahoo.com



# OFFICE OF THE LAS ANIMAS COUNTY CORONER

Name:	Date Of Birth	Date Of Death	Place Of Disposition	Funeral Home
Kettle, Jerry Allen	12/11/1959	10/23/2012	Masonic Crematorium	Las Animas County Coroner
Briggs, James Darrell	08/08/1956	08/07/2014	Saint Anthony Cemetery Aguilar	Other
Doss, Barbee L.	03/26/1941	07/29/2016	Masonic Crematorium	Comi Funeral Home, Inc.
Gardner, Jerry Paul	11/06/1945	10/22/2016	Masonic Crematorium	Comi Funeral Home, Inc.
Dufour, Michael James	06/25/1972	02/13/2018	Saint Anthony Cemetery Aguilar	Mullare-Murphy Funeral Home
Maxwell, L Porter	08/30/1948	02/13/2019	Starkville Cemetery	Comi Funeral Home, Inc.
Brown, William Christopher	11/18/1957	06/01/2019	Starkville Cemetery	Las Animas County Coroner
Radford, Timothy Don	02/20/1977	07/10/2019	Starkville Cemetery	Las Animas County Coroner
Fredrick Jack Huff	03/26/1944	07/15/2019	Starkville Cemetery	Las Animas County Coroner
Harrell, Thomas Francis	03/25/1943	10/06/2019	Starkville Cemetery	Las Animas County Coroner
Hamer, Stephen Daniel	11/01/1949	02/11/2022	Saint Anthony Cemetery Aguilar	Mullare-Murphy Funeral Home
Wright, Robert Archie	02/11/1962	06/11/2022	Saint Anthony Cemetery Aguilar	Mullare-Murphy Funeral Home
Duran, John G	08/11/1956	08/01/2022	Saint Anthony Cemetery Aguilar	Comi Funeral Home, Inc.

*Dominic A. Verquer*  
Coroner Verquer

11/7/23  
Date

**DOMINIC A. VERQUER**

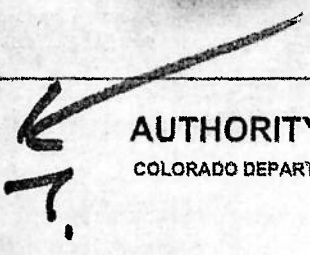
OFFICE: 719-845-9716 | CELL: 719-845-7711 | FAX: 719-345-5949 | EMAIL: lasanimascountycoroner@yahoo.com

LAS ANIMAS COUNTY, COLORADO, P.O. BOX 155000, P. MAIN STREET, SUITE 300, SAN ANTONIO, COLORADO 78215

ST. MARY, O.L.S.  
ST. MARY, O.L.S.  
ST. MARY, O.L.S.

Kathy B...  
Fish Office Admin...  
& Finance Coun...  
ident

Thursday  
-14-2023  
Phil



### AUTHORITY FOR FINAL DISPOSITION

COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT

It is unlawful for any person in charge of a burial place or crematory to permit burial or other disposition of a dead human body or fetus if a final disposition permit has been issued.

A final disposition permit may be issued only upon registration of a completed death certificate.

A final disposition permit is required for any type of disposition of a dead human body or fetus.

This permit may be used for transporting by common carrier.

This permit meets all the requirements of C.R.S. 12-54-307(2)(a)(IX).

This permit does not supercede other legal requirements for burial and/or cremation on private property (meaning not an established cemetery or crematory), such as city/county ordinance, land use regulations, covenants, etc. The landowner and/or funeral director is responsible for determining if such requirements or restrictions exist, prior to final disposition.

This final disposition permit, when completed and bearing the required signature, constitutes authority for burial, interment, cremation, removal from the state, or other authorized disposition of the deceased named below, in accordance with Section 25-2-111 C.R.S. This permit must accompany the remains to their destination.

Name Of Decedent \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Death 04/20/2023

Sex MALE Age 70 YEARS Date of Birth 03/15/1953 Place Of Death TRINIDAD LAS ANIMAS

City County

Name of Funeral Establishment LAS ANIMAS COUNTY CORONER

Address of Funeral Establishment 2309 E MAIN C TRINIDAD COLORADO 81082

Type of Disposition BURIAL-CEMETERY

Place/ Cemetery/ Crematory SAINT ANTHONY CEMETERY AGUILAR

City AGUILAR State COLORADO

Additional information regarding transport and/or disposition (if needed):

I have examined the completed death certificate for the decedent named above, and authorize final disposition of the remains to be signed by the office designated or established pursuant to section 25-2-103 C.R.S. 1982 in the county where death occurred.



Signature \_\_\_\_\_ State Registrar \_\_\_\_\_

4300 Cherry Creek Drive South, Denver, CO 80246 \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

ber  
T F  
5 6  
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19 20  
26 27

28



### AUTHORITY FOR FINAL DISPOSITION

COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT

Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment

- It is unlawful for any person in charge of a burial place or crematory to permit burial or other disposition of a dead human body or fetus until a final disposition permit has been issued.
- A final disposition permit may be issued only upon registration of a completed death certificate.
- A final disposition permit is required for any type of disposition of a dead human body or fetus.
- This permit may be used for transporting by common carrier.
- This permit meets all the requirements of C.R.S. 12-54-307(2)(a)(IX).
- This permit does not supercede other legal requirements for burial and/or cremation on private property (meaning not an established cemetery or crematory), such as city/county ordinance, land use regulations, covenants, etc. The landowner and/or funeral director is responsible for determining if such requirements or restrictions exist, prior to final disposition.

This final disposition permit, when completed and bearing the required signature, constitutes authority for burial, interment, cremation, removal from the state, or other authorized disposition of the deceased named below, in accordance with Section 25-2-111 C.R.S. 1982. This permit must accompany the remains to their destination.

Name Of Decedent \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Death \_\_\_\_\_  
 Sex FEMALE Age 90 YEARS Date of Biru. \_\_\_\_\_ Place Of Death PUEBLO PUEBLO  
 City County

Name of Funeral Establishment MULLARE-MURPHY FUNERAL HOME  
 Address of Funeral Establishment 335 E MAIN STREET TRINIDAD COLORADO 81082  
 Type of Disposition BURIAL-CEMETERY  
 Place/ Cemetery/ Crematory TRINIDAD CATHOLIC CEMETERY  
 City TRINIDAD State COLORADO

Additional information regarding transport and/or disposition (if needed):

I have examined the completed death certificate for the decedent named above, and authorize final disposition of the remains. (To be signed by the office designated or established pursuant to section 25-2-103 C.R.S. 1982 in the county where death occurred.)

*A. Alex Carter*

Signature

State Registrar

Title

4300 Cherry Creek Drive South, Denver, CO 80246

Address

11/17/2023

Date

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**RE: grave digging costs**

Phil Dorenkamp <phil.dorenkamp@lasanimascounty.org>

Mon 11/27/2023 6:42 PM

To: Brandi Bowman <brandi.bowman@lasanimascounty.org>

If you've not done it to date, don't worry about it.

Thanks



**From:** Brandi Bowman <brandi.bowman@lasanimascounty.org>

**Sent:** Monday, November 27, 2023 5:14 PM

**To:** Phil Dorenkamp <phil.dorenkamp@lasanimascounty.org>

**Subject:** Re: grave digging costs



No I have not. Skeeters crew dug a grave a few weeks ago. I have not entered the information yet. I will get it entered tomorrow and send you the report.



Sent from my iPhone



On Nov 27, 2023, at 4:43 PM, Phil Dorenkamp <phil.dorenkamp@lasanimascounty.org> wrote:

Do you track (Cititech) when and where R&B digs graves?



Board of County Commissioners

Kenneth M. Torres  
Chairman Pro-Tem

Robert L. Valdez  
Chairman

Jim D. Montoya  
County Commissioner

March 6, 2003

[Redacted]

Mullare Murphy Funeral Home  
335 E. Main Street  
Trinidad, CO 81082

Dear Mr. Tom Murphy,

It has been the practice of this County for the last several years, to excavate gravesites as an accommodation for families of deceased persons to be buried in rural cemeteries within the County. Las Animas County plans to continue this practice.

To be able to continue this accommodation, it is necessary that this County be provided no less than two working days (working days being Monday through Friday), of advance notice of the need for gravesite excavation.

Without a minimum of two working days, Las Animas County may not be able to schedule the excavation and therefore a private excavator will have to be utilized.

Please make arrangements for gravesite excavations with the Las Animas County Road & Bridge Department at 846-2931.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

William Cordova  
County Administrator

cc: Board of County Commissioners  
Mr. Phil Dorenkamp, Road & Bridge Supervisor

[Redacted]