



ISP Forensic Services Impact Report

2020 Annual Report

This publication is intended to convey the essential value and impact the Idaho State Police Forensic Services Laboratories brings to the criminal justice system in Idaho. All the cases highlighted in this newsletter are cases where ISPFS played a critical role by performing forensic analysis used in the criminal proceedings. Some analysis performed helped to convict individuals. Other forensic findings helped lead to exonerations.

While the cases highlighted here were all published in major news media outlets, the majority of the cases worked on a daily basis are not published or publicized.

In 2020 alone, ISPFS labs:

- Worked over **14,000** cases and analyzed over **23,000** items in support of local and state criminal justice agencies.
- Performed more than **1705** DNA comparisons
- Completed controlled substance analysis on over **13,000** samples

Timely forensic science analysis is vital to the success of the Idaho judicial system. Support from Idaho policymakers has been essential in the successes of the state laboratory system. The lab system employees will continue to work for Idaho citizens and other criminal justice stakeholders. Many new and ongoing forensic science initiatives will keep our Idaho lab system leading the country with innovative ideas. We expect 2021 to be a very dynamic year!





ISP Forensic News

VOL. I...NO.1

NEWS FOR TODAY!

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Ada County



Siyad Matan

Boise man charged in rape, kidnapping case

A Boise man is in custody, five months after police say he sexually assaulted a woman.

Siyad Matan, 21, has been charged with felony rape and kidnapping in connection with the December 27, 2019 incident. Police say Matan, who was known to the victim, raped her inside a parked car in Boise. The suspect is also accused of not letting the woman leave the car during the assault.

Boise Police detectives sent their case on to the Ada County Prosecutor's Office, who then issued a warrant for Matan. He was arrested on the charges and booked into the Ada County

Jail, held on a \$50,000 bond. If convicted, Matan faces up to life in prison.

Biology screening and DNA analysis was performed by Idaho State Police Forensic Services.

California man gets 30-to-life in Boise rape case



Reginald Burley

A California man who raped a woman in her Boise home in 2014 was sentenced to life in prison.

Reginald Burley, 58, will have to serve at least 30 years before he can become eligible for

parole.

Burley was indicted for rape and first-degree kidnapping after the attack, but fled Idaho before police were able to arrest him. Two months after he fled, he was arrested in his home state of California for kidnapping a child.

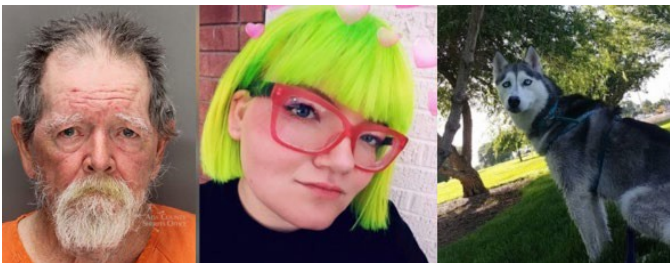
After he was sentenced in that case, he was extradited back to Ada County to face the rape charge. He was convicted in January 2020.

In addition to the prison sentence, Burley was ordered to have no contact with the victim until at least 2050.

Burley has an extensive criminal history, including convictions for sexual assault, kidnapping, robbery, and drug offenses in California.

Biology screening and DNA analysis was performed by Idaho State Police Forensic Services.

Driver convicted of DUI injury crash, sentenced to 15 years



Joseph Jeffries, Sunshine Bryden, and Harley

A 70-year-old man who struck a teenage girl walking her dog in Kuna in 2019 has been convicted of aggravated DUI. He was sentenced to 15 years in prison and must serve at least ten years before he can become eligible for parole.

Investigators say Jeffries' blood-alcohol content was .096 when he struck 16-year-old Sunshine Bryden of Kuna at West Avalon Street and North School Avenue on September 2, 2019. Both Bryden and her Siberian Husky named Harley were in a marked crosswalk at the time.

The impact flung Bryden 70 feet, breaking her neck and her leg and leaving her covered in road rash and bruises. She was rushed to the hospital and taken into surgery, but is expected to fully recover. Harley was also injured in the collision but survived.

Toxicology and Breath Alcohol testing was performed by Idaho State Police Forensic Services.

Boise woman sentenced for DUI crash that killed 3-year-old



Anna Mihelich and Odalys Martinez

A Boise woman who was under the influence of drugs when she crashed into a van, killing a 3-year-old girl, is headed to prison. Anna Mihelich, 54, was sentenced to 30 years in prison, with seven years served before she can be eligible for parole.

The crash happened July 2, 2019 on Orchard Street in Boise. Mihelich was driving south when her SUV hit an oncoming van head-on. The occupants of the van – an adult and three children – were rushed to a local hospital for treatment. One of the children, 3-year-old Odalys Martinez, died from her injuries a week after the crash.

Mihelich was charged with four counts of aggravated driving under the influence of drugs, and pled guilty to two of the charges in July 2020. In addition to the prison sentence, her license will be suspended for a decade.

Toxicology and Breath Alcohol testing was performed by Idaho State Police Forensic Services.

Eagle man sentenced to prison for concealing death of mother, stealing pension funds



William Rhoton

An Eagle man was sentenced to seven years in prison for concealing evidence in the death of his mother and stealing her pension funds.

William Rhoton, 66, will not be eligible for parole and must serve the full seven-year sentence.

Family members contacted the Ada County Sheriff's Office after they had not heard from Barbara Rhoton. The investigation led to the discovery of her body in an abandoned SUV less than two miles away from her home.

Her son, William "Randy" Rhoton, pleaded guilty to felony concealment or alteration of evidence and grand theft by deception. He admitted to concealing his mother's death since May 2018 and during that time had been collecting her pension funds and social security checks. As part of the plea deal, Rhoton will pay more than \$47,000 in restitution. He will also have to pay \$15,000 in fines.

Rhoton, a retired therapist, said at his plea hearing that before law enforcement closed in, he had intended to bury his mother's remains in a meteor crater near Flagstaff, Arizona, per her wishes. He told the judge he dressed his mother's body in religious garments, wrapped it in heavy clear plastic sheeting and moved it into a bathroom in the garage of his home.

Rhoton initially told the investigators that his mother was visiting friends in another state, but refused to put them in touch with those people. Shortly after that visit, Rhoton admitted he moved his mother's body out of the garage bathroom, placing it in a body bag inside an SUV that he parked on a neighbor's property.

Biology screening and DNA analysis was performed by Idaho State Police Forensic Services.

Garden City stabbing suspect's murder case moved to district court



Emerson Clyde Buck

The case against a man accused of stabbing his uncle to death inside a Garden City mobile home in early 2020 is moving forward.

Ada County Magistrate Judge Adam Kimball ruled that there was enough probable cause against Emerson Buck to bind the case over to district court.

Buck, 30, is charged with first-degree murder and use of a deadly weapon in the commission of a felony. He is accused of attacking 55-year-old James Buck, slashing and stabbing his relative with such force that one of the wounds penetrated the victim's heart.

Prosecutors have said that the suspect and the victim had a tense relationship, but have not released a motive for the slaying. Buck left the mobile home on 40th Street in Garden City after the stabbing. Police were able to take Buck into custody later that day and officers noticed blood on his clothing and hands.

Buck's criminal history includes a conviction for rape and multiple parole violations. He was out on bail in a felony drug case when the stabbing occurred.

Buck is currently held without bail in the Ada County Jail. If convicted of first-degree murder, he could face up to life in prison or the death penalty.

Forensic Science testimony was provided by Idaho State Police Forensic Services.



ISP Forensic News

VOL. I...NO.2

NEWS FOR TODAY!

isp.idaho.gov/forensics

Bannock County



Richard A. Burns

Eastern Idaho Methamphetamine Dealer Sentenced to Over 17 Years in Federal Prison

Richard A. Burns, 37, of St. Anthony, Idaho, was sentenced in U.S. District Court to 210 months in

federal prison for possession with intent to distribute methamphetamine. U.S. District Judge B. Lynn Winmill also ordered Burns to serve five years of supervised release following his prison sentence. Burns pleaded guilty to the charge on December 4, 2019.

On May 11, 2019, an Idaho State Police Trooper stopped Burns and a co-defendant on the interstate in Pocatello. While the trooper spoke with the co-defendant, Burns got into the driver's seat and fled, taking police on a high-speed chase. Ultimately, Burns crashed the car in Blackfoot and escaped on foot. Officers searched the vehicle and found over three pounds of methamphetamine located in a bag under the front passenger floorboard. Additionally, officers found two loaded 9mm handguns in the car.

Officers later apprehended Burns on June 5, 2019, after ISP Detectives located him traveling to Boise. Officers spiked Burns' vehicle near Carey, Idaho. After searching his car, officers found almost a pound of methamphetamine; along with digital scales, clean plastic baggies, a drug ledger, and a 9mm pistol. Burns later confessed to dealing drugs throughout the state.

Methamphetamine quant analysis was performed by Idaho State Police Forensic Services.



ISP Forensic News

VOL. I...NO.3

NEWS FOR TODAY!

isp.idaho.gov/forensics

Custer County



Benjamin J. Savage and Charlie McBride

Challis man sentenced to 22 years to life in prison for “cold- blooded murder”

The man convicted of killing Charles McBride, 23, was sentenced to 22 years minimum and life in prison.

Ben Savage, 36, plead guilty to shooting, killing, burning, and burying McBride in February 2019.

Judge Stevan H. Thompson called it an “execution style killing.” Prosecutor Justin

Oleson described it as a “cold-blooded murder.”

Through a plea agreement, Savage did not have to stand trial and could not be considered for the death penalty.

Crime scene processing, fire debris, firearms, and biology analyses were performed by Idaho State Police Forensic Services.



ISP Forensic News

VOL. I...NO.4

NEWS FOR TODAY!

isp.idaho.gov/forensics

Elmore County



Police find \$18,000 worth of meth in Mountain Home apartment



Jessica Van Dyke

Two people were arrested on four drug-related felony charges after police found roughly \$18,000 worth of methamphetamine in a Mountain Home apartment.

The Elmore County Sheriff's Office announced the arrests of Jessica Van Dyke and Timothy Richards. The Narcotics Unit had been investigating someone who lived at the North Park Apartments for a delivery of meth.

Police served a search warrant of the apartment and found a half-pound of meth, worth about \$18,000 on the street, and multiple pieces of drug paraphernalia.

Van Dyke and Richards were taken into custody on charges of trafficking drugs, delivering drugs, drug possession, and drug paraphernalia.

Controlled Substance analysis is being performed by Idaho State Police Forensic Services.



ISP Forensic News

VOL. I...NO.5

NEWS FOR TODAY!

isp.idaho.gov/forensics

Idaho County



Man identified as responsible for Elk City woman's murder, took own life



Billy Jack Jones and LeAnna Maree Bailey

Investigators have determined an Elk City man, who died at his own hand in early October 2020, was responsible for the September 2020 murder of LeAnna Maree Bailey.

The Idaho County Sheriff's Office investigation found probable cause that Billy Jack Jones, 47, killed Bailey in Elk City on or about September 15, 2020.

Bailey had dinner with a friend, Sabrina Chambers, on the night of September 14 and she is believed to be the last person to see Bailey alive.

Chambers and Jones had been in a long term relationship that had recently ended. He admitted to Chambers that he had been secretly watching Chambers and Bailey. Jones felt Bailey was the cause of their relationship ending.

Chambers and Jones had been paid to help Bailey clean up the Wild Rose Lane property where she was currently staying. Bailey had caught Jones stealing items and this created some of the conflict.

On September 15, Bailey failed to show up for her meeting with Chambers. Chambers drove to the Wild Rose Lane property and found broken glass in the driveway and Bailey's car missing. On September 19, a hunter found Bailey's car over an embankment about three miles from the Wild Rose Lane property. Bailey's body was found in the back of the vehicle by the Idaho County Sheriff's Office.

Investigators believe Bailey was killed while sleeping in her car. The rear seat of the SUV was folded down and converted to a sleeping area with blankets and mats. It appeared the assailant broke out the driver's side rear window of her car and attacked her from that doorway. Bailey was severely beaten with bruising on her hands, arms, shoulders, face, and head. Her nose was broken and she had a major skull fracture. Bailey had also been strangled, as well as shot three times with a .22 caliber weapon.

Around September 15, a significant scratch was seen on Jones' right upper lip by Chambers and later by investigators. Jones was interviewed several times and denied killing Bailey. He was scheduled for a polygraph examination, but the examiner canceled the examination before starting. Jones' heart rate was elevated and erratic. Investigators questioned him about possible drug use prior to the exam, Jones denied the drug use. Following the polygraph attempt, Jones met with Chambers, where she made it clear their relationship was over, saying "I'm having a hard time believing someone I shared my bed with for 13 years is capable of killing someone." Jones began crying and walked away without a denial.

On October 8, deputies were called to Elk City for the suicide of Jones. He had killed his two dogs, shot a propane tank in the upstairs area of his home (which failed to explode or ignite), then shot himself in the head with a .44 Ruger carbine rifle. In the area of Jones' body, investigators found methamphetamine, marijuana, and other drug paraphernalia.

Latent print processing, Biology screening, and DNA analysis was performed by Idaho State Police Forensic Services.



ISP Forensic News

VOL. I...NO.6

NEWS FOR TODAY!

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Kootenai County



Wife said husband died in boat accident, but autopsy found lethal amount of Benadryl



Laurcene "Lori" Isenberg

An Idaho woman who said her husband fell overboard during a morning boat ride in 2018 was arrested in connection to his death.

Laurcene "Lori" Isenberg, 66, was taken into custody on a felony charge of first-degree murder following a grand jury indictment.

Her husband, Larry Isenberg, disappeared on February 13, 2018, after Lori said he fell off their boat in Lake Coeur d'Alene while he was looking at a stalled motor.

Lori said she spent some time searching for Larry, but could not find him. He was found weeks later after a resident called 911 to report seeing a body floating in the lake.

An autopsy determined that he had a lethal amount of Benadryl in his system. Lori said that Larry had been sick with the flu but wanted to take her on a boat ride to watch the sunrise. She said the motor started making strange sounds and Larry went over to look at it.

In a letter, Lori wrote, "He stood up, looked at me with a confused look on his face and started to fall over. I jumped up and tried to get to him, but I tripped on the heater and banged my head and couldn't reach him in time." Lori said she was "frantically looking for him" but couldn't find her husband. She eventually found his cellphone on the boat and called 911.

Court documents, however, accuse Lori of planning to kill her husband by intentionally creating the situation in which he died.

Lori has pled not guilty and is awaiting the start of her trial set for January 2021.

Last year, she pleaded guilty to three counts of wire fraud for embezzling \$500,000 from her former employer. She was sentenced to five years in prison. Four of her daughters also pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit wire fraud for taking money from their mother that was embezzled.

Biology screening, Controlled substance, and DNA analyses were performed by Idaho State Police Forensic Services.