

Transcript of Grand Jury Testimony
Jan Bridges:
September 2, 2003

Appearing: Jan Bridges

[The witness was duly sworn]

Q [United States Attorney Wil Langelier] State your name.

A: Jan Bridges.

Q: Although you are here pursuant to subpoena, you should know that you have the right to remain silent; that anything you say in this proceeding may be used against you in a court of law; that, although your attorney has no right to be present in this proceeding, you may request that we take a short recess for you to go outside of this grand jury room to consult with your attorney. Do you understand these rights?

A: Yes. I don't need an attorney - I have a law degree.

Q: Do you wish to waive your right to remain silent?

A: Of course.

Q: What is your present occupation?

A: I am a Marshall City Police Officer. Since January 1, 1991. I am presently assigned to the Narcotics Division.

Q: Tell us your educational background.

A: I graduated from Marshall City High School in 1987, Western Marshall College with a B.S. Degree in Criminology in 1991, and Western Marshall Law School June 18, 1995.

Q: You were working while attending law school?

A: Yes. I was a member of the police force.

Q: What were your duties while you were in law school?

A: In law school? I was a full-time law student.

Q: What were your duties in the police force?

A: I was one of the drivers for the Chief of Police.

Q: When did you start driving for the Chief?

A: March, 1991.

Q: You graduated from law school. Are you an attorney?

A: I never passed the bar exam.

Q: Six times. Isn't that true?

A: I was too busy to study for the bar. I had too many responsibilities as a police officer. I was transferred to a tougher job in 1995. I intend to take it again – take off six months and do nothing but study. Next time I'll pass. The seventh time.

Q: What were your duties as driver for the Chief?

A: Five days or nights I was on call from 4:00 p.m. to midnight, or midnight to 8:00 a.m. During those times whenever the Chief had to go somewhere, I would drive him. I would wait for him to get ready to leave and then take him to wherever he had to go next. Me and the car had to be ready to go on a moment's notice, so I always made sure it was checked out. While I waited, I studied. Sometimes I would be assigned to twelve hour duty – weekends or holidays. We drivers rotated.

Q: Anything else?

A: Not really. Sometimes, he would send me on errands.

Q: Errands?

A: Official errands. Whatever the Chief asked.

Q: Such as?

A: I might be responsible for picking up or transferring someone.

Q: Did he ever have you do anything which might be considered personal?

A: Not much. A couple of times I picked up or dropped off his uniform for cleaning, or pick up or drop off some packages or envelopes.

Q: What kind of packages or envelopes?

A: I never looked. I never asked. He never told. Not my job.

Q: The Chief was your uncle, Ronald Bridges, right?

A: Yes. Don't kid yourself. My father had no clout. I got my job on merit. I had to pass the same exams as everyone else. The Chief was my uncle, but that had nothing to do with my qualifying to join the department.

Q: But once you were qualified, your first job was as driver?

A: Yes. The Chief needed reliable drivers. He also was a good teacher. I learned the ropes about everything in the department. A great education.

Q: O.K. When did you conclude your education as driver for the Chief?

A: March 31, 1999

Q: When did you get assigned to the Narcotics Division?

A: Sometime after that.

Q: In fact, you were transferred April 1, 1999?

A: That sounds right.

Q: The Chief was removed from office on July 5, 1999?

A: He wasn't removed. He resigned.

Q: He resigned because he was indicted for official misconduct. Right?

A: The indictment was based on false evidence. In any event, it had nothing to do with my transfer. I believed I needed to make a career move.

Q: Well, you did not go out on patrol as a beat officer?

A: No. I went straight to Narcotics, I have a law degree. I knew about warrants, searches, arrests.

Q: The Chief was convicted of official misconduct and sentenced to twenty years in prison. Isn't that true?

A: Yes, but as I said, I still believe the indictment was based on false evidence. If I may be blunt - a low-life by the name of Lucky Stokes set up the Chief with fabricated evidence - lies. Stokes got immunity, witness protection.

Q: Tell the members of the Grand Jury about Lucky Stokes.

A: I never knew him.

Q: Well, if someone said you knew Stokes, would they be lying?

A: I don't know if they would be lying, but they sure would be wrong.

Q: Lucky Stokes died on March 15, 2002. Isn't that correct?

A: Yes. Stokes was back in town. He blew his witness protection, not that I knew that until later. He had a knife at the throat of my partner, Bobbie Lee, when we went to investigate a complaint of a suspected crack house. We inventoried the knife which had a blade maybe 7-8 inches long. It was a razor sharp, serrated kitchen knife. I only learned Stokes' identity after I shot him. I saved my partner's life.

Q: So you knew him?

A: I didn't know him. I saw him that one time, when he was holding that knife to my partner's throat. My partner is alive today because I took that absolutely necessary action. Stokes was ready to slice and dice my partner.

Q: How did you know that he was the one who, as you said, set up your uncle?

A: From the newspapers and from television. That was a high profile case, and of course I followed it. But I never went into court, and the papers did not print Stokes' picture. When we came out of that crack house, I learned he was the same guy who set up my uncle.

Q: You thought there were two people named Lucky Stokes?

A: At first, I didn't think anything about anyone named Lucky Stokes.

Q: Other than the shooting and what you say you read about him, is it your testimony that you had no other contact with Lucky Stokes?

A: That's what I'm saying.

Q: Come on officer. Before you shot him, you were taking money from Lucky Stokes in exchange for protection; protection from the police and protection from other drug dealers. Isn't that true?

A: No. No. No. - on all counts.

Q: Let's go back. About two months before you shot Lucky Stokes he had made a complaint to Internal Affairs that you were shaking him down for drugs and money. Isn't that true?

A: That's the same kind of thing he did to my uncle - a bogus complaint. If he did make a complaint, and I don't know that he did, it's bogus. I did not know he was in town.

Q: O.K. We will come back to Stokes later. You had a partner by the name of June Johnston, sometimes known as "Fire"?

A: Yes.

Q: You were the one who gave Johnston the nickname, "Fire"?

A: Yeah.

Q: Why?

A: Johnston had a temper. Johnson was suspended for a short time for using excessive force. But, one day, right after Johnston was assigned to our unit, I saw Johnston shoot a coke machine, because it took Johnston's money and refused to spit out a can of soda. Considering Johnston's first name, June, and that crazy temper, Johnston became known as "Fire," which also went along with my nickname of "Ice." We had to pry open the machine to get the bullet out. I thought it was funny, but everyone else steered clear of Johnson after that.

Q: That is a funny story. You told Johnston that you would kill anyone who informed on you. Isn't that true?

A: I don't remember any such thing.

Q: In fact you said, and I quote, "If someone tricks on me, I would not only kill them. I would kill their brothers, their sisters, their aunts, and their uncles. If they had a parakeet, I'd even kill their parakeet." Isn't that true?

A: I may have said something like that, but if I did, it was an act.

Q: So did you make that statement?

A: If I said that, and I'm not saying I did, it wasn't a threat - it was all an act. I was playing the part of a tough guy.

Q: Playing the part?

A: Whatever.

Q: Do you know Dale Davis?

A: Yes.

Q: What's your relationship with Davis?

A: Davis is a low-life drug dealer.

Q: That's not a relationship.

A: What do you mean?

Q: I mean - did you two ever meet?

A: Yes, on the street. That was part of my assignment. Davis is just another low-life drug dealer.

Q: What do you mean?

A: I'm doing an undercover investigation of Davis. I've been trying to get close to the Davis Organization in order to get evidence against Davis, Davis' organization, and to get Davis' drugs off the streets.

Q: In January, 2003, right after the Super Bowl, your team made a series of raids on a group called the Smithereens and on February 3, 2003, you inventoried approximately 4 ounces of crack cocaine that allegedly was seized by you from the leader of the Smithereens, Blackie Crowe. Isn't that right?

A: Yes. I'm proud of that. I'm only sorry that Crowe got away.

Q: In reality, you actually seized almost 2 kilograms of crack from Crowe on February 3, 2003. Isn't that true?

A: No, counselor. If anyone told you that, they are a liar.

Q: Did you have an informant in this case against Crowe and the Smithereens?

A: Maybe. I don't recall. I would have to check the records. Let me get back to you on that.

Q: We have information that since your transfer to narcotics in April of 1999, you don't leave your home with less than five thousand dollars in cash.

A: True. That's flash money. On the street, you have to show them the money.

Q: You wear custom-made clothes that cost in the thousands apiece. Is that true? Dollars, not lira. Right?

A: Sure. I believe that you dress for success.

Q: How much did you pay for the suit you are wearing right now?

A: This? Ah, maybe \$2,500. That was a couple of years ago.

Q: How can you do all that on a police officer's salary? According to your length of service and rank your salary is currently \$47,680 per year.

A: I have a relative that has been very generous towards me, and I've managed to win at Blackjack in Las Vegas.

Q: Who gave you money? Your uncle?

A: Well, my uncle is a relative.

Q: OK. Let's try this. You gave a statement to the Office of Internal Affairs on July 15, 2003?

A: Yes.

Q: You said that the money found in your home in shoe boxes was accumulated gambling winnings?

A: Yes.

Q: Which is true?

A: Both.

Q: In fact, you took money and drugs from Davis and other dealers. Isn't that true?

A: First, it's not the way you are putting it. I was doing undercover work and playing the part of a rogue cop. So I kept cash. I kept it in two shoe boxes. One shoe box was mine, the money from gambling; the other was street money. I never mixed them. I know better than to co-mingle.

Q: IAD found almost fifty thousand dollars in currency in shoe boxes in your apartment. Where did that money come from?

A: I told you. The gambling money was mine; the street money was different.

Q: What do you mean by street money?

A: The Department wasn't supplying money for drug buys or for what we call a flash roll. So I've been using money I seized for that purpose. It's all legal.

Q: You have written orders to keep cash?

A: No. Nothing was put in writing.

Q: What is the name of your superior who ordered you, as you describe it, to play the role of a rogue cop?

A: I can't give you a specific name. We had long standing orders to get the drugs and guns off the street and to use our initiative to do it. Forget the Fourth Amendment. Just get the drugs and guns off the streets. Everybody knows that. I don't see the A.C.L.U. complaining either.

Q: Did you keep records of your street transactions?

A: I did.

Q: Where are these records?

A: I had a grease fire in my apartment last Tuesday and all the records were destroyed.

Q: You were served with the subpoena to appear last Monday, Isn't that a convenient coincidence?

A: Yeah. But it's the truth.

Q: No further questions at this time.

Mary Barry
Court Reporter