

Press Conference

September 20, 2018

Opening Statement

Vitae of Sheriff Don Gudmundson

- Graduate of Concordia College – Moorhead with a B.A. Degree in Biology
- Graduate Detroit Police Academy
- Police Officer in two inner city neighborhoods in Detroit
- Serology and Trace Evidence Section of the Crime Lab – 10 months
- Original member of Homicide Squad 7 – a squad that investigated Robbery, Rape and Burglary Murders
- Detroit had over 800 homicide investigations in 1975
- Cleared nearly 80% of the 125 murder cases we investigated in 1975
- Graduate Illinois Bureau of Investigation Academy
- Special Agent assigned to Homicide Squad-Chicago
- Special Agent assigned to Cook County Organized Crime Homicide Task Force
- Sheriff of Fillmore County
- Police Chief City of Lakeville
- Sheriff of Dakota County
- Sheriff of Steele County
- Police Chief City of Faribault
- Sheriff of Stearns County – May 2017 to present

Jacob Wetterling



January 13, 1989 / October 22, 1989

- ❖ The place to start in our discussion of how the the Jacob Wetterling investigation was conducted is not October 22nd, 1989 the date of Jacob's abduction, but January 13th, 1989.

Cold Spring Sexual Assault

- ❖ It starts with the kidnapping and sexual assault of a 12-year-old Cold Spring boy.
- ❖ On January 13th, 1989 the boy, who was wearing a snowmobile suit, was walking home from the Side Café in Cold Spring at 9:45 p.m., when he was approached by a man, who pulled up and asked where **Kraemer** lives.

****NOTE****

- ❖ Kraemers lived in Cold Spring in this area, which would indicate that the perpetrator was probably a local person.
- ❖ He also tells the victim following the assault that he has an appointment at The Red Carpet Bar in St. Cloud, which also would indicate he was a local.

Cold Spring Sexual Assault

- ❖ After the boy approached the car, the man exited the car, grabbed him and threw him in the backseat of the car.

“I have a gun, don’t try anything.”

Car Descriptors

In the original report to Deputy Hoeschen

- Smelled like a new car
- Light blue
- Bucket seats made of cloth
- Dark leather straps along the edges of the seat
- Blue strap running through the center of the seat
- Luggage rack
- Seat belts automatically come on
- Child Safety Locks
- Transmission on the steering column

Perpetrator Descriptors

In the original report to Deputy Hoeschen

- Wearing camouflaged fatigues
- Dark gray zipper type vest
- Brown baseball cap
- Thick eyebrows
- Wide Eyes
- Fat Nose
- Possibly a mustache
- Rough dark skin
- Skin slightly wrinkled
- Broad shoulders
- Husky build
- Very deep voice
- Ears that slightly stuck out

Cold Spring Boy's Description of Perpetrator

To **Stearns County Sheriff Chief Investigator Pearce** on January 14th:

- White male with dark skin
- 5'7" – 5'-8" / broad shoulders
- 170 lbs with small gut
- Ears stuck out
- Larger nose
- Brown eyes
- Not wearing glasses
- Age somewhere between 30-40
- Green camouflaged army fatigues (shirt & pants)
- Possibly a dark gray colored vest
- Brown baseball cap with lettering on it
- Black army boots
- Talked in a deep voice
- Bottom row of teeth were crooked somewhat
- Military type watch on his left wrist

Cold Spring Boy's Description of Perpetrator Vehicle

- ❖ Portable radio, which was wrapped up in gray duct tape, sitting on the front passenger seat
- ❖ Radio had an antenna on it
- ❖ Heard short bit of radio traffic, specifically a male and female's voice prior to the subject turning the radio off.

- ❖ Following the kidnapping of the Cold Spring boy, the perpetrator drove in circles and then backwards for a little bit.
- ❖ Pearce writes, “...exaggerated turns and was trying to confuse him to this specific location.”
- ❖ After the assault, the suspect tells the Cold Spring boy:
 - “You are lucky to be alive”**
 - “Start running and keep running”**
 - To run or he would shoot him
- ❖ Suspect keeps Cold Spring boy’s jeans and underwear.

Cold Spring Abduction - January 16, 1989

Pearce writes, “Officer Zieglmeier contacted this writer by telephone. Officer Zieglmeier indicated he had information regarding a possible suspect in the assault of the Cold Spring boy. Officer Zieglmeier indicated **Danny Heinrich** drives a 1987 dark blue Mercury 4-door, MN lic. 086-CEZ. According to Officer Zieglmeier, Danny Heinrich’s ‘87 Mercury has a light blue interior. Officer Zieglmeier indicated Danny Heinrich does know and is often accompanied by Duane Hart.”

Officer Zieglmeier indicated Danny Heinrich is currently in either the National Guard or Army Reserve and is seen on a regular basis in military fatigues.

Cold Spring Abduction – January 16, 1989

- ❖ Pearce checks out Heinrich's employment in the National Guard and determines what type of military gear and clothing would have been available to Heinrich.
- ❖ Pearce and Detective Leland spot Heinrich's vehicle, parked and unattended in a driveway at Heinrich's father's home south of Paynesville.

Cold Spring Abduction

- ❖ They appear to dismiss Heinrich as a suspect based on a few discrepancies in the Cold Spring boy's description of the suspect vehicle and Heinrich's vehicle.
- ❖ Specifically because the vehicle did not have automatic seat belts and the transmission was on the console.

Cold Spring Abduction

❖ From Pearce's January 16th, 1989 report:

“As of this date and time Officers have not interviewed Danny Heinrich regarding this matter.”

Cold Spring Abduction

- ❖ Very shortly after on January 18th, 1989 and **unsolicited**, the boy tells Pearce that he was mistaken and that the vehicle did not have automatic seat belts and that the transmission was not on the steering column, but was on the console.
- ❖ The boy described the vehicle as having a luggage rack, however, it did not.

Cold Spring Abduction

- ❖ The investigation into the sexual assault of the Cold Spring boy then turns to other sex offenders.
- ❖ The boy also is subjected to numerous additional interviews and photo lineups.
- ❖ They do not check out Duane “Dewey” Hart.

Cold Spring Abduction

- ❖ There is no mention in the file about other assaults of young boys in Paynesville in the preceding years even though it is clear that the Paynesville Police Chief was talked to on February 10, 1989 as a part of this investigation.

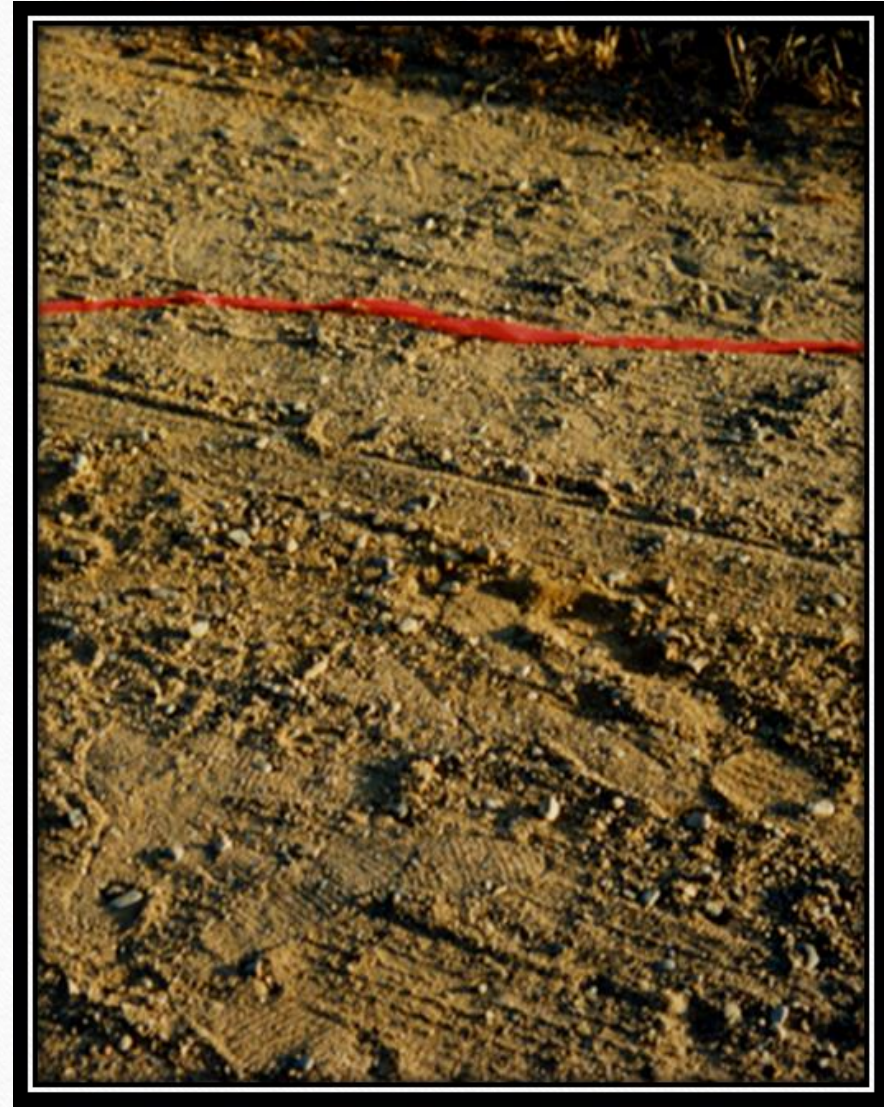
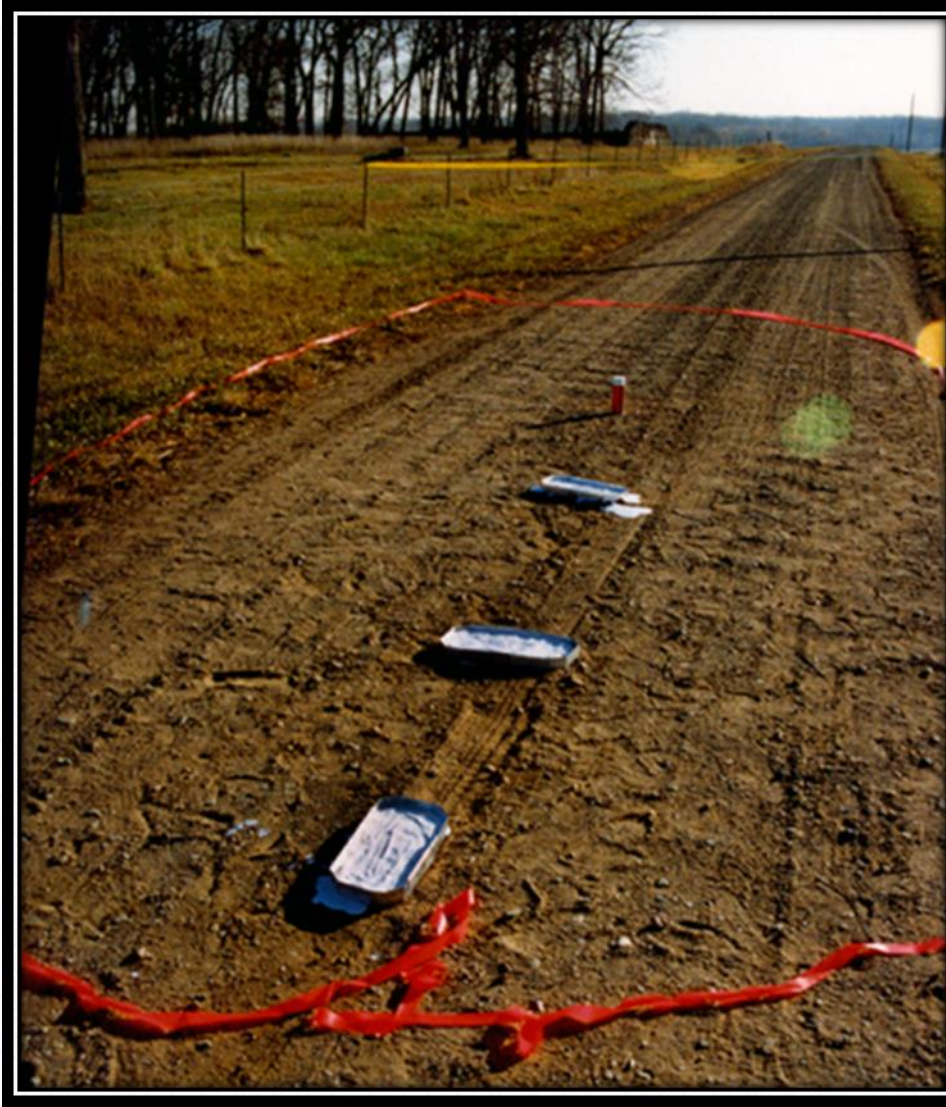
Jacob Wetterling's Abduction

October 22, 1989

- Approximately 9:15 p.m.
- A masked male subject approached 3 juvenile males, Aaron Larson, Trevor Wetterling and Jacob Wetterling near the address of 29748 91st Avenue in St. Joseph Township.
- The masked male subject abducts **Jacob Wetterling**.
- Tire tracks and footprints are found in the area of the abduction scene.

Tire tracks
at the
scene of
the
abduction

The tires
were
identified as
**Sears
Superguard
Radials** on
October
24th.



Trevor Wetterling's Description of Perpetrator

- 5'-10"
- Wearing dark colored clothes
- Nylon stocking over his face
- Armed with a handgun

Aaron Larson's Description of Perpetrator

- Wearing dark clothes
- Boots & gloves which were colored black
- 5'9"
- Voice was "rough and it sounded like he had a cold when he talked."

“I got a gun, put the bikes in the ditch.”

“I have a gun, don’t try anything.”

Wetterling Abduction

Perpetrator orders Aaron to

“run towards the woods”

Perpetrator orders Trevor to

**“run as fast as you can through
the woods”**

Cold Spring Abduction

❖ After the assault, the suspect tells the Cold Spring boy:

“You are lucky to be alive”

“Start running and keep running”

To run or he would shoot him

Wetterling Abduction

- ❖ It is Chief Investigator **Pearce** who responds to the Wetterling home at 11:00 p.m. on October 22nd and takes statements from Trevor and Aaron.
- ❖ Deputy **Zieglmeier** is already at the Wetterling home. Later, he accompanies Pearce to a local motel and then to the Tom Thumb to identify the two clerks who were working.

Wetterling Abduction

- ❖ Deputies Zieglmeier and Homan do a neighborhood survey on October 23rd checking 22 homes.
- ❖ It is unclear when on the 23rd the survey was conducted.
- ❖ At 10 of the homes, it is noted, “**Nobody at home.**”
- ❖ 6 more homes were checked by a Deputy Leigh.

Wetterling Abduction

- ❖ The first mention of the Cold Spring abduction and assault is on November 30th, 1989 in an interview of the Cold Spring victim and his parents.

Wetterling Abduction

- ❖ Heinrich is interviewed on December 12th, 1989 and a Deputy/Detective observes that his vehicle has **Sears Superguard Radials**.
- ❖ *It should be noted that in dozens of reports by officers that they dismiss potential suspects because they do not have the Sears tires, which are consistent with tire prints from the scene.*
- ❖ Only one other mention in thousands of pages of reports of **Sears Superguard Radials** and they were on a disabled vehicle.

The tires were
identified as
**Sears
Superguard
Radials**
on October 24th.

Wetterling Abduction

- ❖ Heinrich also denies wearing camouflage clothes or army boots when he is not on National Guard duty.
- ❖ In Pearce's report when Heinrich is listed as a suspect in the Cold Spring kidnapping, it states that **Heinrich is seen on a regular basis in military fatigues.**

Wetterling Abduction

❖ On December 16th, 1989 a teletype from the Task Force concluded that the

“two abductions are believed to be the same.”

Paynesville Incidents

Paynesville Incidents

- ❖ From August 1986 to late Autumn 1988, there are 8 incidents involving juvenile boys who were assaulted.
- ❖ There were 7 victims, one boy was victimized twice and there were two additional juveniles who were witnesses to the assaults.

Incident #1

- August 1986
- Juvenile male was knocked off his bicycle
 - White male
 - 5'9"
 - Mud-like substance on his face
- Juvenile struck the man and he fled

****NOTE****

Heinrich is in the military and would have known how to use mud or face paint as a disguise.

Incident #2

- August 21st, 1986
- Two juvenile males left a pizza place
- One juvenile male was attacked by a man
 - 5'6" – 5'8"
 - Wearing long sleeve sweater & gloves
- Juvenile was struck in the back of the head & knocked to the ground
- Suspect groped the juvenile's front pockets
- As the second juvenile approached, the man fled

Incident #3

- November 30th, 1986
- Heavy set male, wearing nylon windbreaker comes out of the bushes
- Put his hand over the juvenile male's mouth and dragged him into the trees
- Suspect said, **"Shut up or I'll kill you."**
- Voice was described as "low, static filled"
- Suspect groped the juvenile's genitals over and under his clothing
- Took stocking cap and cut off a piece of his hair with a jagged knife
- Told victim after the assault, **"keep laying down for five minutes or I will blow your head off."**
- Asked juvenile's name & age

Incident #4

- February 14th, 1987
- Juvenile male was attacked in the stairwell of an apartment by a heavy set male
 - 5'6"
 - Dark colored quilted jacket
 - Mask covered his face
 - Spoke in a deep, low whisper
- Suspect threw victim down the stairs and victim screamed
- Victim was told to be quiet or he would be killed
- Suspect groped the victim over his clothing
- Asked what grade the victim was in
- Suspect took victim's wallet
- Told victim not to move or he would be killed

Incident #5

- May 17th, 1987
- Previous victim in Incident #4 was knocked off his bicycle
 - Pudgy male
 - Dark looking face
 - Dark clothing
- Suspect groped the juvenile's genital area
- Victim screamed that the suspect had already gotten him
- Suspect fled on foot leaving behind a baseball cap



Incident #6

- September 20th, 1987
- Two juveniles were approached
 - Chubby male
 - 5'7" – 5'8"
 - Short, chubby legs
 - Face was either painted or wore a mask
- As the juveniles saw the suspect approach, they screamed and ran

Incident #7

- Summer of 1988
- Group of juveniles were camping
- One juvenile was attacked
 - White male with husky build
 - Raspy voice
 - **Wore panty hose over his face**
 - Wore camo colored pants
 - Green army type jacket
 - Black boots
 - Gloves
- Suspect sat on the juvenile, held a small knife to his throat
- When the juvenile screamed, the suspect said, **“Shut up or I’ll kill you.”**
- Juvenile fought back and escaped

Incident #3 - Suspect said,
“Shut up or I’ll kill you.”

Incident #8

- Late Fall of 1988
- Juvenile male was delivering papers
- Suspect knocked the juvenile off his bike and fled
 - Possibly wearing a ski mask
 - Dark colored stocking hat
 - **Black shirt**
 - **Black pants**
 - Black gloves

Wetterling Abduction

- On October 24th, 1989 at 3:40 p.m., less than 48 hours after the Wetterling abduction, a victim in the Paynesville incidents appears at the Sheriff's Office and talks to Benton County Deputy Theis assigned to the Task Force.
- He speculates that the incidents in Paynesville are connected to the Wetterling abduction because the way it was done, **“quick, military, and proficient.”**

Wetterling Abduction

- He tells the deputy about the incidents and states that he saw two of the ambushes by the Paynesville perpetrator. He also gives the name of the Paynesville officer assigned to the cases and states a hat was left at the scene by a perpetrator.

Wetterling Abduction

- It is **January 5th, 1990** before this lead sheet is checked out by a St. Cloud Officer assigned to the Task Force.

Paynesville Incidents

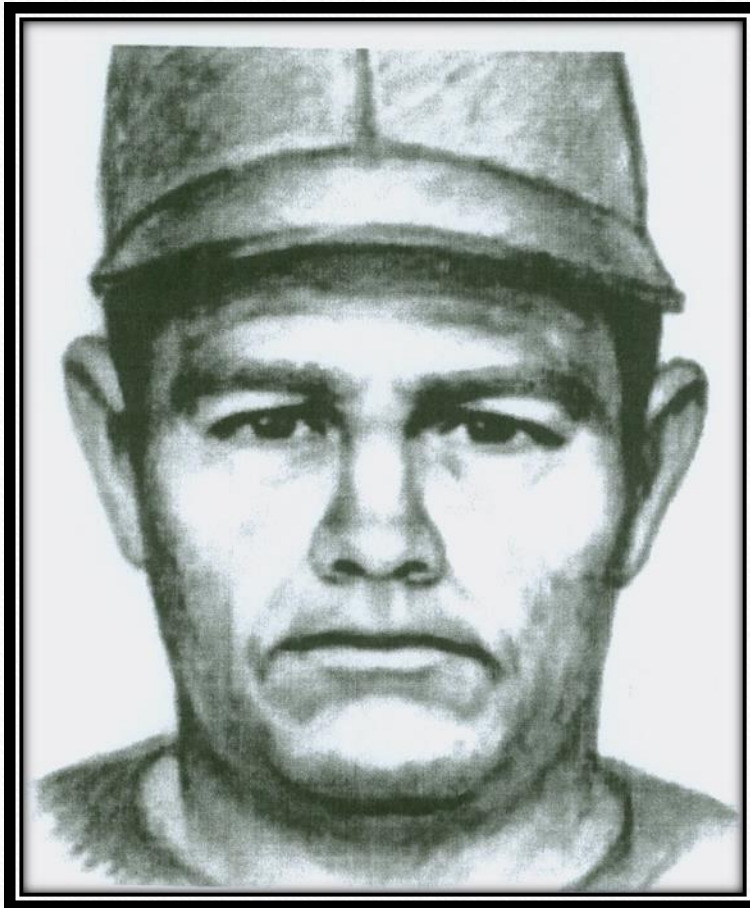
- ❖ On January 8th, 1990 Paynesville Police Chief is interviewed and says Paynesville has experienced approximately one year of episodes and he believes that **Danny Heinrich**, who is in the National Guard, should be considered a suspect in the molestations.

Paynesville Incidents

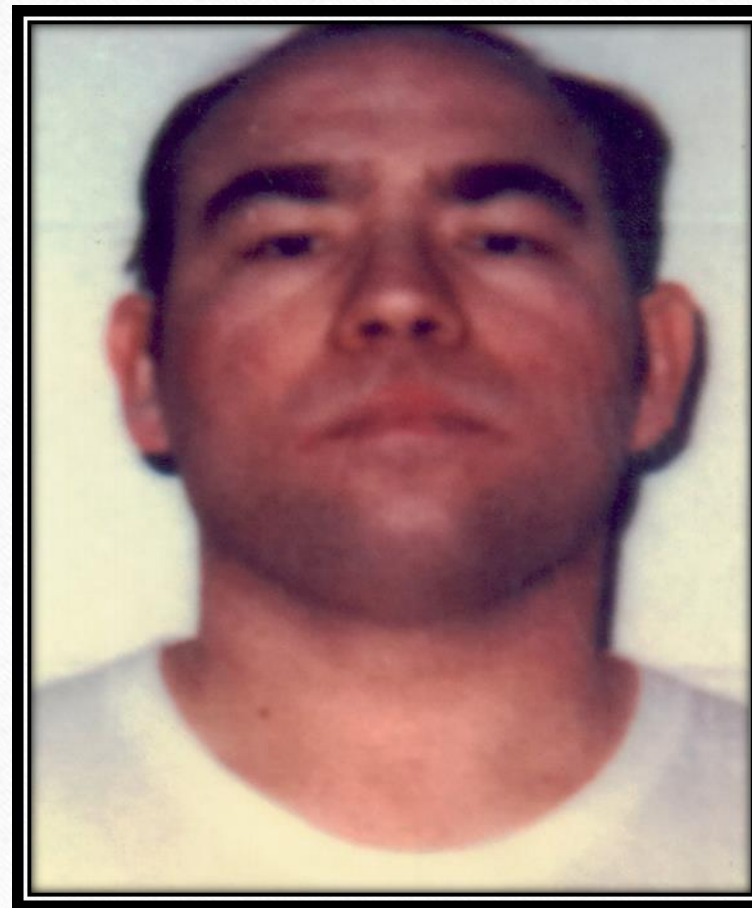
❖ In a January 10th Sheriff's Office report, Sgt. Nohner, who is working with an FBI Agent, interviews Danny Heinrich about the Wetterling kidnapping and writes:

“It should be noted that Mr. Heinrich bears a strong resemblance to the artist's conception of the abductor in the Cold Spring incident involving (*name redacted*). He is also about the same physical size and commented in our interview that he was a member of the National Guard out of Willmar.”

Cold Spring Composite (1989)



Heinrich in Lineup (1990)



****Note****

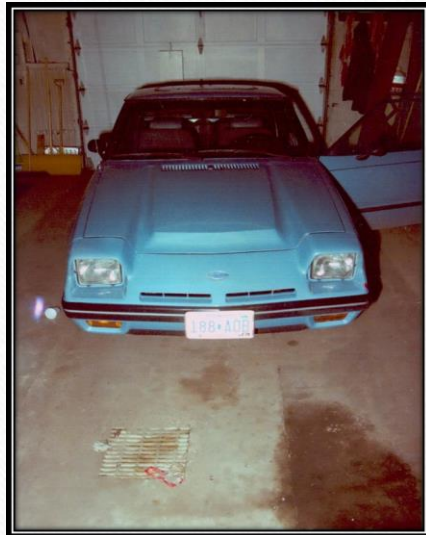
- ❖ As a result of the interviews of the Paynesville victims, the Task Force appears to be focusing on Duane Hart, not **Danny Heinrich**.

Wetterling Abduction

- ❖ On January 12th, 1990 a report written by Sheriff's Detective Mund states that a polygraph examination was given to Danny Heinrich by an FBI Agent and Heinrich registered **deceptive on all questions pertaining to the kidnapping of the Cold Spring boy and Jacob Wetterling.**
- ❖ Heinrich tells officers he feels that the reason he failed the polygraph examination is that he was nervous.

Wetterling Abduction

- ❖ Also on the January 12th, 1990 Heinrich's 1982 Ford EXP, 2 door, blue in color, was photographed by a Sheriff's Investigator and an FBI Agent.

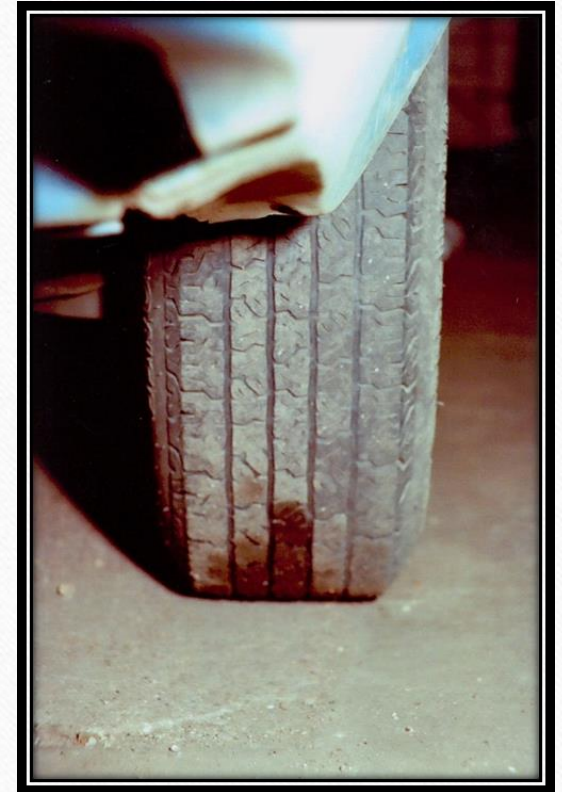
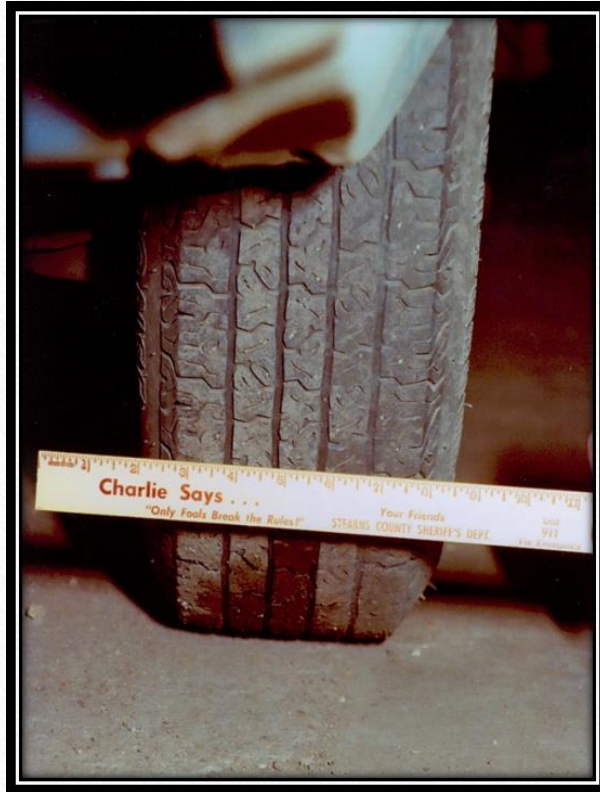


Wetterling Abduction

❖ Quoting from Sheriff's Detective Mund's report of January 12th:

“Photographs were taken of the tires which were consistent with those tires found at the scene (Wetterling) by gross tread design.”

Ford EXP Sears Superguard Radials



****Note****

- ❖ Detective Mund is called to the Wetterling abduction on the night of October 22nd.
- ❖ He is the Detective who takes the plaster casts of the tires and footprints left at the scene.



Wetterling Abduction

❖ Also, and again quoting from Detective Mund's report:

“It should be noted that during the interview, writer observed Mr. Heinrich’s soles of his shoes. Found them to appear to be consistent with the footprint pattern found at the scene of Wetterling abduction.”

Heinrich's Shoes



Heinrich's shoes



Footprints from the scene

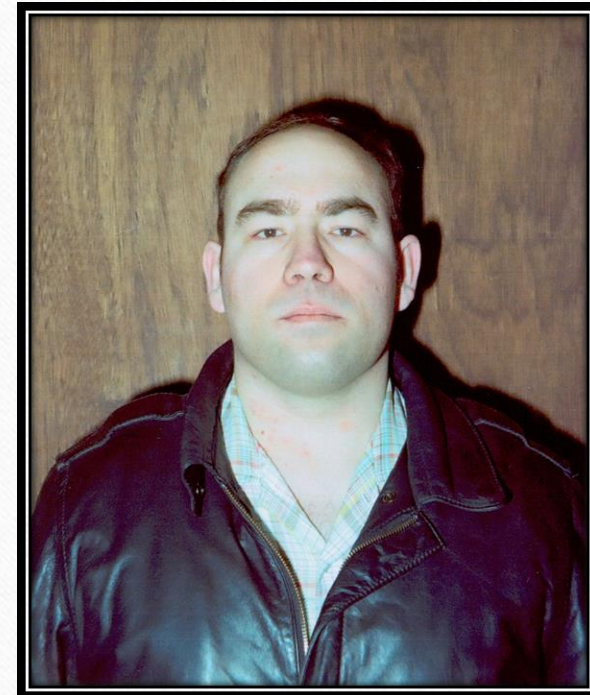


Wetterling Abduction

- ❖ On January 12th, 1990 Danny Heinrich's shoes are sent to the FBI lab.
- ❖ Analysis later indicates that Heinrich's right shoe and a right shoe imprint corresponded in design.

Wetterling Abduction

- ❖ On January 12th, 1990 it is decided that Heinrich will be placed under surveillance.



❖ **Pearce** and Detective Olson start surveillance on the 12th and quoting from their report:

2035 hours:

“Subject Heinrich left the apartment and entered his vehicle. Proceeded south on Hwy 124 and then doubled back. Proceeded east on Hwy 23 and turned into Paynesville Industrial Park, double back from that location. Subject proceeded east on Hwy 55 and south on Hwy 4 and CR 20. Subject then double backed and proceeded back west on Hwy 55.”

2055 hours:

“Subject turned right onto 160th Street. 2590 picked up surveillance. Subject turned his lights out and was lost.”

- ❖ Following the kidnapping of the Cold Spring boy, the perpetrator drove in circles and then backwards for a little bit.
- ❖ Pearce writes, “...exaggerated turns and was trying to confuse him to this specific location.”

Wetterling Abduction

- ❖ On January 14th, 1990 a surveillance report says that Heinrich makes apparent evasive moves and then drives through rural dirt roads.

****Note****

- ❖ His actions certainly should have set off alarm bells since an innocent man would be unlikely to take the driving maneuvers to escape the surveillance team.
- ❖ It appears Heinrich is under surveillance for parts of 3 days.

Wetterling Abduction

- ❖ On January 15th, 1990 Detective Olson and an FBI Agent arrange to take the tires off of Heinrich's vehicle and vacuum the interior of his car.

Wetterling Abduction

- ❖ Background information on Heinrich is run by interviewing co-workers and acquaintances.
- ❖ This work is being done by Sheriff's Investigators and FBI Agents.

Wetterling Abduction

- ❖ On January 16th, 1990 Detective Olson's report states he receives a copy of Danny Heinrich's DWI arrest from 1986 in the City of Paynesville by a Paynesville officer, who confiscated a battery operated police scanner which was hooked up to a cigarette lighter charging system.

Cold Spring Boy's Description of Perpetrator Vehicle

- ❖ Portable radio, which was wrapped up in gray duct tape, sitting on the front passenger seat
- ❖ Radio had an antenna on it
- ❖ Heard short bit of radio traffic, specifically a male and female's voice prior to the subject turning the radio off

Wetterling Abduction

- ❖ January 16th, 1990 a vehicle, a blue 1987 4-door Mercury Topaz, repossessed from Heinrich was located in Princeton.



You will recall
that the Cold
Spring boy said
the vehicle had
Child Safety
Locks.



Transmission
on center
console.

(The Cold Spring boy is brought to the vehicle and says)
“... that he feels this vehicle is similar to the vehicle he was abducted in and
(the boy) felt the seat and stated the rear seat **‘feels like’** the seat of the vehicle
in which he was abducted.

“(The boy) viewed the interior of the vehicle and stated that after viewing the interior he would not change anything on this vehicle.

This officer then asked (the boy) of 1-10, the number 1 being this vehicle being the least like the vehicle in which he was abducted and 10 being the most like in which he was abducted for (the boy) to rate this vehicle.”

“(The boy) advised this officer that on a scale of 1-10, he would rate this vehicle an **8** or possibly a **9** as this vehicle being similar to the vehicle in which he was abducted.”

In a statement to a Hennepin Detective, the Cold Spring boy says,

“He then said this man ordered him to pull his underwear and jeans up without touching his butt to the back seat covers.”

- Obviously, Danny Heinrich was worried about seminal fluid stains in the car.
- At this time, the vehicle should have been black lighted for seminal fluid stains in the car.

Wetterling Abduction

- ❖ A resident of the apartment where Danny Heinrich lives says that he does wear camouflage clothing such as a field jacket and hat around town along with army pants and army boots.
- ❖ Danny Heinrich earlier denies he ever wears his military clothing and boots.
- ❖ At the same time in subsequent days, backgrounds are being run on Duane Hart.

Wetterling Abduction

- ❖ On January 23rd, 1990 a search warrant is executed by the FBI and the Sheriff's Office at Danny Heinrich's father's residence in Paynesville.

Search Warrant

CONFISCATED ITEMS:

❖ Army Boots



❖ Camouflage pants & shirt



❖ 2 police scanners w/ scanner book (which had detailed police channels)



❖ Zippered Vest



Search Warrant

- ❖ This vest was never shown, as far as the reports indicate, to the Cold Spring victim.
- ❖ All of the items taken in the search warrant, including the vest, were released back to Heinrich at the direction of the County Attorney's Office on February 8, 1991.

****NOTED****

- ❖ During the search, photographs from a locked trunk were noted:
 - a male child coming out of a shower with a towel wrapped around
 - a male child in his underwear
 - 3 fully clothed children

****NOTED****

- ❖ Danny Heinrich objects to the confiscation of those photos stating they, **“just don’t look right.”**
- ❖ *Inexplicably*, they are not confiscated.

****NOTED****

- ❖ Heinrich maintains the children were named Wurm and he obtained them when he was at the Willmar Regional Treatment Center.
- ❖ It was determined on January 29th, 1990 that no children or family named Wurm had any association with the treatment center, but the family was located and they did know the Heinrich family.

Wetterling Abduction

- ❖ On January 25th, 1990 Heinrich is interviewed by an FBI agent and Sheriff's Detective and tells them he had burned the photos of the "Wurm" children because they looked bad and they were no kind of pictures to have anyway.

****NOTED****

- ❖ Danny Heinrich says he chewed tobacco for many years and it was noted that his bottom teeth had black spots in the front.

▪ Bottom row of teeth were crooked somewhat



In a report, the Cold Spring boy describes them as cheese teeth.

Wetterling Abduction

- ❖ On January 24th Heinrich appears at the Stearns County Sheriff's Office and inquires of the disposition of his tires.
- ❖ Sheriff's Detective Olson asks if he would submit to a physical line-up and Heinrich said he would not unless a court order directed him to and after he had consulted with an attorney.

Wetterling Abduction

- ❖ Carpet and fiber samples from Heinrich's car, the Mercury Topaz, are given to the FBI on January 25th, 1990.

Wetterling Abduction

❖ On January 26th, 1990 Heinrich is in a physical line-up, which he consents to.



Wetterling Abduction

- ❖ Two young men view him in the line-up according to Sheriff's reports.
- ❖ A week prior to the Wetterling kidnapping, these two young men view a suspicious person and car.

Wetterling Abduction

In the line-up on January 26th, 1990
the Cold Spring boy does not pick out Danny Heinrich.

Wetterling Abduction

❖ In Detective Olson's report, he writes,

“This officer asked (victim) if he had a clear mental picture of the individual who assaulted him on 1-13-89. He indicated that he did not really have a clear picture at this time and that as time has gone by it has gotten less and less clear.”

Wetterling Abduction

Detective Olson writes,

When asked to rate Danny Heinrich “...on a scale of 1-10 as far as similarity to the person who assaulted him (victim) gave Mr. Heinrich a 4.”

Wetterling Abduction

- ❖ Physical line-ups of Heinrich should have been planned prior to the line-up.
- ❖ All of the victims from Paynesville as well as Aaron Larson and Trevor Wetterling should have been involved in this line-up.

Wetterling Abduction

- ❖ They do not employ a voice line-up making the participants in the line-up say out loud words that were used in the two abductions or in the Paynesville incidents.

- “I have a gun, don’t try anything”
- “Get the f__k in the car”
- “...do it or I am going to shoot you”
- “You are lucky to be alive”
- “Keep on running, don’t look back or I’ll shoot you”
- “I’ll find you after school and kill you”
- “Shut up or I’ll kill you”
- “Lay down here for five minutes; if you don’t I will blow your head off.”

Wetterling Abduction

- ❖ On February 7th, 1990 Heinrich appears at the Sheriff's Office demanding his property back. Quoting from the report written by Detective Mund,

“Mr. Heinrich was upset with Officer's inquiring from friends and relatives whether or not he is a homosexual. Mr. Heinrich indicated that he was going to place an end to this investigation or (sic) him and sue the county and the FBI.”

Wetterling Abduction

- ❖ Heinrich is arrested the evening of February 9th, 1990 by Stearns County Detectives at a bar in Roscoe.
- ❖ Detective Olson states that Heinrich is interrogated by FBI Agents at the Stearns County Sheriff's Office and Heinrich demands to know if he is under arrest.

Wetterling Abduction

- ❖ Heinrich is told he was being arrested on local charges of kidnapping and molesting (the Cold Spring boy).
- ❖ He was officially placed under arrest by Detectives Pearce and Olson from the Sheriff's Office.

Wetterling Abduction

- ❖ Heinrich states emphatically that he was not guilty of this crime and that he was being framed.
- ❖ Heinrich maintains he is innocent and calls the charges “bulls—t.”

Wetterling Abduction

- ❖ The interrogation of Heinrich by FBI Agents is monitored (according to a retired Stearns County Detective) by Agents from the Behavioral Science Unit (crime profilers) of the FBI National Academy, Quantico, VA.

Wetterling Abduction

- ❖ The file does not indicate that the profilers wrote a report.
- ❖ However, a retired Stearns County Detective I have interviewed states the profilers tell officers that **they don't think Heinrich did the crimes.**

Wetterling Abduction

- ❖ We regard the interrogation as the most fatal flaw in the Wetterling investigation.
- ❖ The BCA supplied their most experienced homicide special agents to the Wetterling investigation and up until April, they were running meaningless leads.
- ❖ There was no one in the Sheriff's Office with extensive homicide investigation experience.
- ❖ The FBI are not trained homicide investigators.

Wetterling Abduction

❖ An FBI Agent writes on a Stearns County Sheriff's Office supplemental report on February 9, 1990:

“The information provided to Garber was that the FBI lab had made a positive match between a fiber taken from the carpet of Danny Heinrich's former vehicle, a 1987 Mercury Topaz and a fiber found on the victim, the Cold Spring boy's, snowmobile suit, and this writer was not to inform anyone in the Sheriff's Department about the match.”

Note: FBI Agent Al Garber is the Wetterling Task Force Commander

Wetterling Abduction

- ❖ On February 9th, 1990 a booking card shows that Heinrich has been arrested for 1st Degree Criminal Sexual Conduct/Kidnapping and then the notation

“Released per County Attorney – Pat Strom.”

Wetterling Abduction

There is no mention of Heinrich following his release until background investigations are noted in March & April of 1990.

Wetterling Abduction

- ❖ The first mention of the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA) having anything to do with Heinrich is on April 23rd, 1990 when a BCA Agent and a Sheriff's Detective interview a man who knew Heinrich.

Wetterling Abduction

- ❖ For approximately one week from April into May 1990, ten background investigations of Heinrich are conducted.
- ❖ It is October of 1990 before another mention is made of Heinrich.

(1) Paynesville Incidents

- White male
- 5'6" to 5'9"
- Heavy set male / pudgy / chubby / short legs / Husky build
- Low, static filled voice, deep, low whisper, raspy voice
- Dark colored quilted jacket
- Dark clothing – black shirt, pants, gloves
- Camo colored pants
- Mud-like substance on his face / face painted / wore mask / panty hose over face
- Wearing long sleeve sweater & gloves
- Black boots
- Blue baseball cap
- Green army type jacket
- Asked juvenile name & age
- Nylon windbreaker
- Dark colored stocking hat

(2) Cold Spring Abduction

- White male
- 5'7" – 5'8"
- Broad shoulders / Husky build
- 170 lbs with small gut
- Very deep voice
- Dark gray zipper type vest
- Camouflaged fatigues
- Brown baseball cap
- Rough, dark skin
- Brown eyes
- Wide eyes, thick eyebrows, fat nose
- Not wearing glasses
- Possibly a mustache
- Skin slightly wrinkled
- Ears slightly stuck out
- 30-40 years old
- Bottom row of teeth were crooked
- Military type watch on left wrist

(3) Wetterling Abduction

- Male
- 5'9" - 5'10"
- Approx. 180 lbs
- Nylon stocking over his face
- Dark coat
- Dark pants
- Black boots
- Black gloves
- Low rough voice as if he had a cold
- Asked boys how old they were

• **Armed with
a handgun**

- Brown eyes
- Wide eyes, thick eyebrows
- Fat nose
- Not wearing glasses
- Ears slightly stuck out
- 30-40 years old
- Tobacco chewer
- Military member



(1) Paynesville Incidents

- White male
- 5'6" to 5'9"
- Heavy set male / pudgy / chubby / short legs / Husky build
- Low, static filled voice, deep, low whisper, raspy voice
- Dark colored quilted jacket
- Dark clothing – black shirt, pants, gloves
- Camo colored pants
- Mud-like substance on his face / face painted / wore mask / panty hose over face
- Wearing long sleeve sweater & gloves
- Black boots
- Blue baseball cap
- Green army type jacket
- Asked juvenile name & age
- Nylon windbreaker
- Dark colored stocking hat

(2) Cold Spring Abduction

- White male
- 5'7" – 5'8"
- Broad shoulders / Husky build
- 170 lbs with small gut
- Very deep voice
- Dark gray zipper type vest
- Camouflaged fatigues
- Brown baseball cap
- Brown eyes
- Wide eyes, thick eyebrows, fat nose
- Not wearing glasses
- Skin slightly wrinkled
- Ears slightly stuck out
- 30-40 years old
- Bottom row of teeth were crooked
- Military type watch on left wrist
- Possibly a mustache
- Rough, dark skin

(3) Wetterling Abduction

- Male
- 5'9" - 5'10"
- Approx. 180 lbs
- Nylon stocking over his face
- Dark coat
- Dark pants
- Black boots
- Black gloves
- Low rough voice as if he had a cold
- Asked boys how old they were
- Armed with a handgun

Duane Hart Interview

- ❖ In March 1991 Special Agent Al Garber and a Department of Corrections Investigator interview Duane Hart at a Minnesota Correctional Facility.
- ❖ Hart is a convicted sex offender from Paynesville, who is a groomer of young boys who he abuses while Danny Heinrich ambushes and takes trophies from his victims.
- ❖ Hart also is a friend of Danny Heinrich's brother, David.

❖ Suspect keeps Cold Spring boy's jeans and underwear.

• Took stocking cap and cut off a piece of his hair with a jagged knife

• Suspect took victim's wallet

Duane Hart Interview

❖ Hart tells Garber in this interview that in the early Fall or Summer of 1989, he was in Danny Heinrich's apartment in Paynesville and observes a black "ninja" type suit next to Heinrich's bed.

Paynesville Incidents

Paynesville victim says perpetrator was wearing a black shirt and black pants.

Duane Hart Interview

❖ Hart tells Garber that Heinrich shows him a dark blue pistol.

Wetterling Abduction

Trevor Wetterling and Aaron Larson see a handgun.

Duane Hart Interview

- ❖ Hart sees two police scanners; one is gray in color.

Cold Spring Abduction

- ❖ The Cold Spring boy in his statement to Pearce says,
“...he observed what appeared to be a portable radio which was wrapped in gray duct tape sitting on the front passenger seat.”

Duane Hart Interview

- ❖ On the evening Hart was visiting Heinrich, Heinrich was upset about losing his job at Fingerhut.
 - Note: Heinrich's last day at Fingerhut, which was located near St. Joseph, was **October 8th, 1989** and he was unemployed until November 12th, 1989.

Duane Hart Interview

- ❖ Heinrich asks Hart how to get rid of a body asking if putting the body down a well or in the river would be the best way.
- ❖ Hart tells him that a body down the well will stink and that a body in the river will float.

Duane Hart Interview

- ❖ Hart then tells him it would be better to get rid of a body by putting it under plastic in a sewage treatment plant.
- ❖ Both Hart and Heinrich worked building sewage treatment plants.

Duane Hart Interview

- ❖ Hart says his purpose in speaking to Agent Garber is that Hart is suspected of kidnapping Jacob Wetterling and he wanted to provide information regarding Heinrich which may be helpful to authorities.

Duane Hart Interview

- ❖ In a second interview with Garber in October 1991, Hart said he thinks the person who kidnapped Jacob Wetterling was a **loner** and a construction worker who was working in St. Joseph area at the time of the abduction.

Duane Hart Interview

- ❖ Sergeant Bohlsen, U.S. Army National Guard, said of Heinrich,
“...**he’s always by himself.**” (January 16th, 1990)
- ❖ Peter Lauer, who lived at the Plaza Hotel where Heinrich lived, “**He is a loner.**”
(January 17th, 1990)
- ❖ Heinrich’s brother, David, describes Danny as being “**pretty much of a loner...**”
(January 17th, 1990)

Duane Hart Interview

❖ Hart said the abductor had a:

❖ Ninja suit

❖ A short-wave radio

❖ A light tan van.

- Suspect knocked the juvenile off his bike and fled
 - Possibly wearing a ski mask
 - Dark colored stocking hat
 - Black shirt
 - Black pants
 - Black gloves

Duane Hart Interview

- ❖ He said the abductor lives in the vicinity of St. Joseph or Paynesville and described the kidnapper as being good at covering his ass.
- ❖ Hart said authorities had spoken to him (the suspect).

Duane Hart Interview

- ❖ For a second time, Hart tells Garber that the child abductor in Cold Spring carried a police radio.
- ❖ Hart said he believed that a blue car was used in the sexual assaults of children near Paynesville.

What happened to this information?

Based on reading the file,
it is not apparent that any follow up was done on this information.

Wetterling Abduction

There is no mention of Heinrich in the files for **more than 20 years**.

Wetterling Abduction

- ❖ On July 18th, 2012 a DNA profile was obtained from the Cold Spring boy's snowmobile suit and sweatshirt.



****NOTE****
DNA
evidence was
taken from
the sleeve.

Wetterling Abduction

❖ Then on March 5th,
2015 DNA results
from the hat come
back to three
individuals.



Wetterling Abduction

- ❖ On May 12th, 2015 hairs from Danny Heinrich, taken voluntarily from him on January 12th, 1990 are deemed suitable for nuclear DNA testing.

Wetterling Abduction

❖ On July 12th, 2015 the lab report states,

**“The predominant male DNA profile matches
Danny James Heinrich.”**

Note: The hat comes back at 80.5% match with Heinrich.

Wetterling Abduction

- ❖ From there a search warrant is submitted on July 27th, 2015 by Detective Kern of the Stearns County Sheriff's Office for Heinrich's home in Annandale.

Wetterling Abduction

❖ Jacob Wetterling's remains are found and removed at a farm site near Paynesville on September 2nd, 2016.



Recap of Why Heinrich Should Have Been Considered the Main Suspect

- He was in the military and wears camo around Paynesville. He **lies** and says he never does that.
- In the military, he would have learned to use mud or face paint to disguise himself.
- The Mercury Topaz used in the Cold Spring abduction matches the description given by the Cold Spring boy and the boy rates it an 8-9 out of 10 to be the car he was kidnapped in.

Recap of Why Heinrich Should Have Been Considered the Main Suspect

- A fiber found on the Cold Spring victim's snowmobile suit is consistent with fibers found in Heinrich's Mercury Topaz.
- The Sears Superguard Radials match tire prints left at the Wetterling scene. Suspects are most often eliminated precisely because they do not have the tires. **He has the tires.**
- His shoeprints correspond to shoe prints at the Wetterling scene mixed in with Nike shoe prints worn by Jacob Wetterling. **He has the shoes.**

Recap of Why Heinrich Should Have Been Considered the Main Suspect

- It is the Detective who spots this who takes the casts and knows those prints better than other officers.
- He **fails** a polygraph examination given by an FBI Agent as to whether he was involved with either the Cold Spring abduction or the Wetterling kidnapping.
- He has photos of children seen during the search warrant in his possession and **lies** about how he obtained them and who they are.

Recap of Why Heinrich Should Have Been Considered the Main Suspect

- He has no known adult girlfriends or boyfriends.
- He has the portable police scanner mentioned by the Cold Spring boy and confiscated in an earlier DWI arrest, the search warrant and seen by Duane Hart.
- He uses every means to evade the surveillance by officers and agents.
- In two assaults, he asks victim's age and grade. (Paynesville & Wetterling)

Recap of Why Heinrich Should Have Been Considered the Main Suspect

- All across each of the three cases, he says the same types of things.
- His voice is described by multiple victims as deep, raspy and is very distinctive.
- Duane Hart describes the black ninja suit described by a Paynesville victim.
- He has a **handgun** as seen by Duane Hart.

Recap of Why Heinrich Should Have Been Considered the Main Suspect

- In the same month where he loses his job and when he kidnaps and kills Jacob Wetterling, he asks Duane Hart **how to get rid of a body**.
- His overall physical description fits Paynesville, Cold Spring and Wetterling cases.
- He fits the composite almost to a “T.”

Sheriff's Final Statement