

RIPTIDE

Recovery, Information, Prevention, and Tactical Intervention for Drowning Emergencies

May 11, 2006

Steve and Jan Jenkins

Dear Steve and Jan,

Re: Chris Jenkins

As we have discussed, Walt Hendrick and I have shown Chris' case to dozens of experienced public safety divers, marine patrol officers, and hundreds of medicolegal death investigators, coroners, and medical examiners, beginning in June 2005. The first two groups come from our student base and from conference attendees. The last 3 groups come from coworkers, students and conference attendees, where I have given power point presentations showing Chris's case. The population of these groups come from across the US and Canada.

The overwhelming responses were as follows:

It is very unusual for a body to surface in cold water in February if the victim entered the water in the fall. One study examining over 100 bodies found in New York City waterways found that almost every body surfaced no earlier than April, and none surfaced in February.

Chris was found face up with his arms folded over his chest. Face up is not a usual position for someone of Chris's body type, but it is not unheard of. The arms over the chest are more unusual – and the vast majority of the people we showed Chris's photographs to said they had never seen a body surface and travel down river in that position. The position of his arms, especially without the presence of rigor, is extremely unusual for a body to have been on the bottom, then ascended to the surface, and then traveled downstream to a resting location.

One of Chris's hands was desiccated, which means it was out of the water for at least a couple or a few days. That was a consensus opinion. This means he did not surface and float downstream to his recovery location in a day's time.

Most people thought he looked very good for having been in the water for almost 4 months, but there were a few who said they had similar looking recoveries.

Stay safe always,
Andrea Zaferes

President Treasurer Walt Butch Hendrick	Vice President Secretary Andrea Zaferes
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