



Will Paul Flores return to San Luis Obispo County to testify at trial?

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Paul Flores

By KAREN VELIE

Editors Note: This is first in a four-part series on three civil lawsuits and an appeal related to the investigation, trial and incarceration of Paul Flores.

Even though Paul Flores was convicted in 2022 of murdering former Cal Poly student Kristin Smart, multiple civil lawsuits and a criminal appeal continue to wind through the courts. This includes a civil dispute

between volunteer investigator Dennis Mahon and Paul Flores' mother, Susan Flores.

Last week, Mahon's attorney, **Okorie Okorochoa**, filed a motion to have Paul Flores testify at a trial set to start on Sept. 8. This would require the state to transfer Paul Flores from the California State Prison in Corcoran to the San Luis Obispo County Jail.

In 2022, a jury found that Paul Flores murdered Smart during an attempted rape following a 1996 Cal Poly frat party. After the party, Paul Flores helped escort Smart, who was found passed out on a lawn outside the party, back to her dorm room. She was never seen again.

Paul Flores, the primary suspect in the case, was sporting a black eye when interviewed by law enforcement, who determined he lied repeatedly. Even so, it would be years before Paul Flores faced charges.

In 1997, 18-year-old Kirsten Modafferi of Charlotte, North Carolina, was abducted while visiting San Francisco. Also from Charlotte, Mahon flew to the Bay Area to help search for Kirsten Modafferi.

While in California, the missing teen's mom, Debbie Modafferi, introduced Mahon to Kristin Smart's mother, Denise Smart.

Denise Smart told Mahon investigators were no longer taking her calls. Mahon then offered to help, starting a more than decade-long attempt to collect information and get justice for Kristin Smart.

Mahon spent a total of four years in San Luis Obispo County in which he walked the streets of Arroyo Grande seeking information about the teen's disappearance, while working as a pizza delivery driver at night to pay his bills.

Mahon often walked in front of Susan Flores' home with a sign that said, "Dig up Susan Flores' yard! Kristin Smart, Son of Susan.com." Mahon's work led to multiple tips and a lot of controversy.

In 2001, Susan Flores jumped on Mahon as he walked past her home. An officer cuffed Susan Flores and put her in his cruiser. Instead of taking her to jail, the officer removed her from the area and let her go.

In 2002, Susan Flores and her boyfriend Mike McConville filed for and received a restraining order against Mahon. They accused Mahon of stalking and harassment.

Susan Flores later told officers she spotted Mahon jogging past a real estate office where she worked part time. Officers arrested Mahon, who subsequently spent 12 days in jail.

The battle continued with McConville allegedly calling the Dominoes Pizza Mahon worked at and hanging up, which was captured on the caller identification.

An attorney tied to the Smart family filed a civil suit in 2005 on behalf of Mahon against McConnell alleging harassment.

Shortly afterwards, Susan Flores and McConnell filed a counter-complaint against Mahon, Denise and Stan Smart for infliction of emotional distress.

Not long after the counter claim was filed, the court tabled all lawsuits while the criminal investigation was ongoing. Mahon then dropped his lawsuit against McConnell.

Following Paul Flores' conviction, Susan Flores and McConnell dropped their claim against the Smarts under an agreement the Smarts drop a personal injury case they filed against Susan Flores and her husband Rubin Flores.

On July 6, McConville died days before a hearing on his and Susan Flores' lawsuit against Mahon. The trial was continued to Sept. 8 with Susan Flores as the only plaintiff and Mahon as the only defendant left in the case.

On July 22, Mahon filed a request to have Paul Flores attend trial over Susan Flores's allegation of infliction of emotional distress.

"Mahon is an amateur sleuth whose actions contributed to the investigation, prosecution, and conviction of Paul Flores for the 1996 murder of Kristin Smart," according to the motion. "Paul Flores' testimony and presence are material and necessary to resolve key factual disputes regarding the alleged harassment, including the nature and impact of Dennis Mahon's conduct on Susan Flores."