

# Woman identified 20 years after remains found near Liberty City



The DNA Doe Project has released this image of what a woman whose remains were found in 2002 off Texas 135 in Gregg County might have looked like.

Partial skeletal remains found just more than 20 years ago in the Liberty City area have been identified as a woman from the Dallas area.

The DNA Doe Project announced Thursday in a statement that the remains discovered in May 2002 by construction workers off Texas 135 in Gregg County belonged to Pamela Darlene Young of Arlington.

The Gregg County Sheriff's Office in 2020 reached out to the DNA Doe Project, which developed a DNA profile from one of Young's molars, for assistance in the case. The profile from the molar was uploaded to a database that compares DNA profiles of unidentified remains.

“The genealogy in this case was extremely complex, and it took almost two years for the experienced volunteers from the DNA Doe Project to narrow down the family tree to identify Pamela Young,” the group said in a statement. “A DNA sample from her daughter confirmed the identification.”

“Communications with a few distant DNA relatives gave us crucial information we could not have learned from a paper trail, and we are so grateful for their assistance,” DNA Doe Project team co-leader Megan Street Pasika said in the statement.

The announcement comes after the DNA Doe Project released information this past year about the then-unidentified woman on the 19th anniversary of the discovery of the remains. At the time, the group said it had narrowed her age to between 17 and 25 years old and that she was white with an unrepaired cleft palate.

The group also said she might have relatives in Raleigh County, West Virginia; Patrick County, Virginia; or Surry County, North Carolina. Her possible relatives' surnames include Bowman, Niten/Knighton, Grey and Jessup.

At the time, Gregg County Sheriff's Office spokesman Lt. Josh Tubb said the woman's skeletal remains were found by geologists who were sent by the state to do surveying ahead of a project to widen Texas 135 in Liberty City. While they were working, they found the remains, which had been there for some time. Tubb said the team found only a partial skeleton and that the remains, which could have been there for two years, had been bleached by the sun.

Tubb said there was no way for investigators to determine the manner of death.

“She could have passed away of natural causes,” he said.

The sheriff’s office gained first-hand knowledge of The DNA Doe Project’s work a couple years ago when trying to identify a woman who had been known as “Lavender Doe” after she was discovered in October 2006 on an oil lease off Fritz Swanson Road north of Texas 31.

Tubb said investigator Lt. Eddie Hope was referred by a third party to the DNA Doe Project and became familiar with its work.

“He reached out to them and researched what they do, and that’s how he made the decision to utilize their assistance,” Tubb said. “He is in almost-weekly to daily contact with the representative from the DNA Doe Project.”

The DNA Doe Project announced in January 2019 that it had identified Lavender Doe. The following month, the sheriff’s office released her name — Dana Lynn Dodd. Dodd’s family traveled to Longview from out of state in September 2019 for a ceremony to lay to rest the woman who had finally been identified.

In December 2020, Joseph Wayne Burnette was sentenced to 50 years for Dodd’s slaying and another 50 years for the slaying of another woman in Longview.

Tubb said it took the DNA Doe Project such a short time to get DNA sequenced for Lavender Doe — a month to maybe six weeks — that it spoke to “their practices and the efficiency of what they do.”