

# Navy veteran, wife arrested in Jacksonville after Alabama child's skeletal remains identified

Police found a pink children's shirt and a small bundle of curly hair. The community affectionately nicknamed her Baby Jane Doe. Her father was stationed at Mayport.

Author: Sarah Glenn

Published: 2:51 PM EST January 19, 2023

Updated: 6:51 PM EST January 19, 2023

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. — A couple was arrested in Jacksonville on Tuesday after the skeletal remains of a baby were found in Alabama, over 10 years ago.

On Jan. 28, 2012, [police officers in Opelika](#), Alabama responded to a trailer park after receiving reports of skeletal remains. Investigators found a skull in the yard of the residence but the majority of bones were found near the woods. While they searched, officials found a pink children's shirt and a small bundle of curly hair.

## **Baby Jane Doe**

The FBI performed a medical examination at their lab in Quantico, Va. The examine determined the remains were likely from a black little girl between the ages of 4 and 7-years-old. The community affectionately nicknamed her Baby Jane Doe, police said.

When an autopsy was performed, it was found that the child had fractures to her skull, arms, legs, shoulders and ribs - In total she had over 15 individual fractures from blunt force trauma. All of the injuries occurred sometime before

her death. It is also believed that Baby Jane Doe was malnourished and blind in her left eye, due to a fractured socket. Her death was determined a homicide that likely happened between the summer of 2010 and 2011, officials said.

After unsuccessful attempts and advancements in DNA testing, a comprehensive genealogical profile was created for Baby Jane Doe and uploaded to a database. Once uploaded, an experienced genealogist was assigned to the case. In Oct. of 2022, investigators were able to identify the baby's father as 50-year-old Lamar Vickerstaff Jr., who was born and raised in Opelika. He lived in several places during his career with the Navy but eventually ended up in Jacksonville at Naval Station Mayport.

Detectives met with Vickerstaff at the Naval base to notify him of his daughter's death. He did not give officials any information on the identify of the child. Investigators also spoke with his wife, Ruth Vickerstaff, who said she did not know who his daughter was or who the mother might be. She married Mr. Vickerstaff in 2006, police said.

### **Never reported as missing**

Genealogists were able to identify a few possible matches for Baby Jane Doe's mother before detectives narrowed it down to one Maryland woman. In Dec. of 2022, officials had a meeting with 37-year-old Sherry Wiggins who confirmed she was the biological mother of the child. The Virginia resident told police she gave birth to a baby girl named Amore Joveah Wiggins in Jan. of 2006. However, the Vickerstaff's were given both physical and legal custody of her daughter in 2009, when her visitation rights were also taken away. Wiggins was able to show investigators documentation that proved she had been paying child support to Vickerstaff since 2009.



*Credit: Opelika Police*

**Amore Joveah Wiggins, born in Jan. 2006**

Searching schools and pediatric records in areas where the Vickerstaffs lived, detectives determined that Amore was never enrolled in school. She was never reported as missing.

Lamar and Ruth Vickerstaff were both arrested in Jacksonville on Jan. 17. Lamar Vickerstaff faces charges for felony murder while Ruth Vickerstaff faces charges for failure to report a missing child. Lamar Vickerstaff was still actively stationed at Mayport at the time of this arrest, according to the Naval Station.

They will be extradited to Lee County, Alabama.

***This is an active investigation. If you have any information, please contact the Opelika Police Department Detective Division at (334) 705-5220.***