

Sent 10-21-98

Washington, DC 20024
W: (202)
H: (202)

Telephone #>
Address
removed
9-2011

Jay Grelan
Columnist
Mobile Register
P.O. Box 2488
Mobile, AL 36652

Dear Mr. Grelan:

My name is Artemesia Stanberry . I am an employee in the legislative branch of government and a doctoral student in political science at Howard University.

This past Sunday, I skimmed through one of your articles published via the Mobile Register on-line. The article featured an individual in prison who was found guilty of mass murder. I do not recall the purpose of the article, but I made a note to myself to ask that if you have the time, that you consider interviewing my cousin (Rodney Karl Stanberry), an inmate at a correctional facility located in Clio, Alabama, and maybe some other inmates who claim to be innocent, but are serving time for a crime they are accused of committing. I realize that almost everyone in prison claims to be innocent, but some of them really are. If you do not have the time to go out and personally conduct an interview, I ask that you please take a moment to review the trial and surrounding circumstances that led to the conviction of my cousin. I am certain that you will ascertain that a bad mistake has been made.

Rodney, who is in prison serving time for a crime he did not commit, is the reason for my writing this letter. The person who likely committed the crimes used his constitutional rights (he pled the Fifth) to avoid incriminating himself. That individual– who was not a friend of my cousin’s– in both a taped and signed confession did not even put my cousin at the scene of the crime. My cousin Rodney is serving a very long prison term for attempted murder, robbery, and burglary, all crimes that he did not commit. Rodney is a young man who came from a good family, had a good job, and has a great heart. I know you may be accustomed to hearing this but I will say it again, my cousin Rodney did not and is not capable of committing such a crime. I ask that you review the testimony, the court records, and speak with my Uncle (Rodney’s dad) about this case). In addition, you will discover that Rodney was at his place of employment during the time these horrible crimes took place.

I can go on and on, but a letter would not adequately articulate the complexity of this situation. A letter leaves no room for objectivity for you are not given a chance to ask questions or review documents. So I am asking that you either call me at the one of the telephone numbers listed above or call Rodney’s father (Mr. Earsell Stanberry) at (334) 456-7091 or (334) 604-1290. He has been working tirelessly to find proper representation for Rodney and to get his side of the story heard. It has been unfortunate the experience my Uncle has been having with lawyers he’s paid to represent his son. It breaks my heart the way he has been treated by the people he has employed to help his son get a new trial. It breaks my heart that Rodney has not been granted a new trial for there were flaws in the first. If you were to spend just a half hour of your time talking with my Uncle about the unfortunate incarceration of Rodney, you will see that a terrible mistake was made.

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As I have mentioned to District Attorney John Tyson in a letter about this case, I do not fault our jury system. I fault the mentality of those who want to get a conviction at any and all costs. The real truth is left out of the picture. A human face is left out of the scenario. As I have stated, I can mention a lot more, but a letter does not give the story justice. That is why I ask that you speak with my Uncle.

As the address on this letter indicates, I am in Washington, DC. It is my intention to return to Mobile within a few years to work in government and/or to teach. I am also a long-time reader of the *Mobile Press Register*. My point is that I am familiar with Mobile and your paper. I believe that your paper has the capability of doing an investigative report. I am sure that my cousin is just one of many in Mobile who is innocent of the crimes accused to have committed.

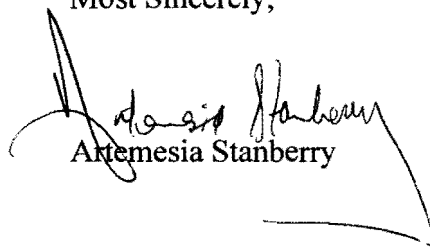
I know it will be difficult for you to believe the words of a stranger. But please know that I believe in people serving time for the crimes they committed. Please know that I have much sympathy for the victim of this violent crime (who has since died from cancer) as well as her family. It breaks my heart that someone would commit such a crime. The victim could have been my mother, an aunt, a cousin, or even me. It destroys me that someone would commit such a crime. But my cousin did not commit the crime of attempted murder, robbery, nor burglary. Over this past summer, I have read a confession from the person who pleaded the Fifth, I have read the appeal, and I have been reviewing the words from my cousin and my Uncle about this case. The confession from the person who likely committed the crime is very revealing. The person does not confess to pulling the trigger, just that he was there with the person who did and that person was not Rodney. Again, my Uncle can provide you with the material he has in his possession for your review.

Mr. Grelan, I would not be writing to you if I even thought there was a slight chance that

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Rodney attempted to murder and rob someone. A young man is languishing away in the prison system. You can only imagine what it must feel like to be serving time for a crime you did not commit. If it could happen to him and others in the prison system, it could happen to you and me. Our society is not well-served when innocent people go to prison while the guilty party remains free.

Most Sincerely,



Artemesia Stanberry

cc Matt Teague
Ron Colquitt
Mike Reifenberg
Stan Tiner
Earsell Stanberry