

*Follow-up I/V Stephen Ray Transcript Det. Ross Diskin:

On 01/25/10 I conducted a follow-up interview with Stephen Ray. The following is a transcript of that interview:

Stephen: Hello?

Det. Diskin: Yeah can I talk to Stephen Ray

Stephen: This is him

Det. Diskin: Stephen this is Detective Diskin with the Yavapai County Sheriff's Office

Stephen: Yeah

Det. Diskin: I'm calling; I just had a couple questions. Your attorney had let us know that you had remembered some additional facts about the sweat lodge case

Stephen: Yeah

Det. Diskin: and so I just kinda wanted to talk to you about that if you had some time

Stephen: Okay

Det. Diskin: They had told us that you remembered seeing James Ray put water on himself and Megan, is that correct?

Stephen: That's right, I remember feeling him splash because I was sitting just to the right of him and his staff

Det. Diskin: Okay

Stephen: so it went, I think the order went him, his operations, Director of Operations, Megan, then I think it went his personal assistant and then the guy who's in charge of his audio visual and then I think I was the one right after that. And I felt him, he had a bucket of water that he was using to, after they brought the rocks in he would put some of the water on the fire but I did you know feel him you know splash, I guess there was a ladle in there in the bucket and he took the ladle and he splashed it toward himself and toward the, toward his assistants.

Det. Diskin: Okay and when he was putting the water on the, on the rocks, was he using the ladle or was he just pouring it out of the bucket?

Stephen: I think he was pouring it out of the bucket

Det. Diskin: Okay. So the ladle was probably just to put water on him and the employees?

Stephen: That could be

Det. Diskin: Okay. And the other thing I wanted to ask you, the last time you were interviewed you were still having some problems. I had talked to one of your friends too that said you were still having no taste for food and some other aches and pains. Are you still having issues?

Stephen: Yeah I still don't have any taste or smell. I have trouble, I'm a college graduate and I used to pride myself on a very rich vocabulary and I find myself uhm like searching for words. I can't, you know when I'm trying to speak I, I get kind of you know try to search for words. I can't find words and just things that I normally would remember like you know me and my buddy were out, I was over at my buddy's house and there were some pictures of these actresses came on and I'm like oh yeah she's hot and I couldn't remember her name and I should, there's no way I should not have been able to remember her name cause one of my you know, someone I would readily recognize.

Det. Diskin: Okay

Stephen: Beyond that I still have ringing in my ears, traumatic headaches, trouble sleeping

Det. Diskin: Okay, it sounds kind of similar to what, there was a guy in 2005 that had some problems and he still has those same problems and it sounds kind of similar to what, what's going on with you. Have you gone to see a doctor or gone to get a CAT scan to see if there was any kind of damage?

Stephen: Well that's, I went and saw a, per the release instructions they said I should go see a general practitioner within a month which I did and then a cardiologist at approximately three months. When I saw the general practitioner she had mentioned that if a couple of months later that those things I just described to you had not, had not uhm, uhm, resolved themselves then I should go see a neurologist. My, my, my challenge with that is I'm, you know I don't have a job and I don't have insurance so most health care providers obviously don't want to see someone that has no ability to pay so that's been a bit of a challenge. Luckily in [REDACTED] I have a friend whose an ear, nose and throat surgeon and he allowed me to, he went to his practice and spoke with one of the physicians and she stepped up to see me and she actually spent quite a bit of time with me for you know \$100. It was kind of like a professional discount kind of thing as a favor to him. But from the neurologist, you know the specialty stand point, no one really is willing to see someone who has no ability to pay.

Det. Diskin: Right. Yeah I can understand that so you're kind of in a tough situation.

Stephen: And I understand that and you know with all the, you know I'm getting threatening letters from all the, you know from the hospital and all of them and I understand they need to get paid and they deserve to get paid, I just, you know I'm about really one of the last things that I have left is my credit and now that's in jeopardy so hopefully Mr. (Inaudible) will be able to help, you know let them know that you know they will get paid. Hopefully it's just a matter of time.

Det. Diskin: So James Ray didn't take care of those medical bills?

Stephen: No

Det. Diskin: Okay

Stephen: No, the first attorney that I was talking to was another kind of a favor from a friend. He actually wrote a letter to James Ray and James Ray's company and asked them, basically gave them the scenario I just described to you that I lack the ability to pay and that my credit was pretty much really important to me and about all I had left and uhm and asked them to pay and he got a letter back that said that they were, and this was on November 5th I think, he said that they had sent it on to the insurance and the decision would be forthcoming shortly.

Det. Diskin: Huh, and no one ever got back to you?

Stephen: And then the last I heard was from the attorney from (Inaudible) that they were having a meeting, they had a meeting I think it was last week to discuss it but nothing has been paid yet.

Det. Diskin: Okay, well I hope that gets taken care of for you. It's certainly not your fault that you have these medical bills.

Stephen: Mmm hmmm

Det. Diskin: Is there anything else? I'm kinda going through your interview right now but is there anything else that you remembered since the incident that you didn't tell the Detective that originally interviewed you?

Stephen: I'm not sure if I told her about it but one of the things, and I'm sure it's been mentioned by other people, but just in case it hasn't, James Ray was very adamant about everyone taking a heaping teaspoon or tablespoon of salt. He provided everyone with a backpack and you know when they arrived and inside the backpack was a spoon and a must have been a couple of pound bag of salt. He was very adamant about everyone every day had to take a large spoonful of salt.

Det. Diskin: Okay

Stephen: I've spoken to friends who are like survivalists and that kind of stuff and they said that they thought that was ridiculous because too much salt can actually dehydrate people and you know the urban legend is you know when people have salt they retain water however if you take too much salt then it actually dehydrates you faster. In fact that's one of the things they say. If you ever get stranded in a place that has like only sea water, you're not supposed to drink sea water because that will actually dehydrate you much faster than if you didn't have any water at all. So I thought that was odd that that was a very adamant recommendation that he made and obviously he's not a medical doctor so I don't know where he got that from but that's something that I think could be important for you know, I don't know if they did that in previous years but they were really adamant about that.

Det. Diskin: Yeah I knew that they did that, that they asked people to you know keep using the salt and to drink water and stuff but I didn't know that could be bad, that too much salt could dehydrate you.

Stephen: So that might be something that I don't know if you guys have, if your department has access to medical people that might be something to ask if you know, if you hadn't been doing that in previous years and he upon bad information or you know had people do that and that might have contributed to people getting sick.

Det. Diskin: Okay, yeah we'll look into that and see. Did you follow the directions as far as how much salt he told you to take?

Stephen: Yes

Det. Diskin: Okay. Alright. If you can think of anything else, can I give you my direct line?

Stephen: Sure

Det. Diskin: And you can give me a call if you remember anything or hear something that you think is important. Its area code [REDACTED] and my first name is Ross, R-o-s-s and my last name is Diskin, D-i-s-k-i-n.

Stephen: Okay. Would it be helpful to you to have access to some of the information that Mr. Ray has been sending out? He has an email that goes out to, and I'm not sure who all it goes out to but I know that I get it, and the last one said well something to the affect that his investigative team has completed their investigation, was a total accident and they, he attached or had a link to a document that I think proclaiming his claims of you know what they found out. Would that be something that would be helpful for you guys to see if you don't have it already?

Det. Diskin: Yeah I'm not sure if we have that or not. We have what's on his website which his attorneys had sent us some documents previously explaining why Ray isn't responsible. But and then he put something on his website recently that made reference

to that and actually posted those links and a PDF file on his website. I don't know if that's the same thing that went out on email or not.

Stephen: It might be cause it sounds like that's what it was; it's supposedly some evidence or the findings of why he's not at fault and why it was supposedly an accident

Det. Diskin: Is that what he's calling the White Papers?

Stephen: I think so

Det. Diskin: Okay

Stephen: Let me pull it up quick, I've got my computer up.

Det. Diskin: Yeah if you have anything different that's not on that website we would definitely like to have it.

Stephen: Okay. And what is your email address?

Det. Diskin: My email is [REDACTED] spells out parts of email)

Stephen: That's [REDACTED]?

Det. Diskin: No a [REDACTED]

Stephen: Oh v, okay. Okay, perfect. Okay well I'll look it over and if there's anything that's different than what's on his website, I'll forward it over to you.

Det. Diskin: Okay great, thanks, I appreciate it.

Stephen: So how's the investigation going? Is there, is it gonna be the DA that files charges or is it gonna be taken to a Grand Jury or what's the status currently?

Det. Diskin: Well right now we're not really allowed to say or to talk about it. But hopefully soon we will be able to talk about it. I don't know if he's gonna be indicted or not

Stephen: Okay

Det. Diskin: What do you think should happen?

Stephen: I think he was grossly negligent and I think he should have to suffer the consequences of that.

Det. Diskin: Okay

Stephen: I mean I think that, I really think that he, because of his greed he didn't show adequate care for his participants. I take it back to I used to be a distance runner and even for you know a little short 2K run or 5K run/walk, event organizers have paramedics there. Which is not anywhere, doesn't even scratch the surface of the extremes that he was, you know he's exposing his participants to and he didn't have qualified personnel there number one in case something happened. Number two when people started to get sick he moved on anyway.

Det. Diskin: Okay

Stephen: He showed a callous disregard for the participants because of you know his own ego and greed

Det. Diskin: Yeah, several people have definitely said that so we'll wait and see what happens. But if you have any questions along the way feel free to give me a call.

Stephen: Okay, I guess too, part of it, you know it's, one of the things he's preached you know non stop is about honor, integrity and accountability and then when something happens that's the first thing he runs from.

Det. Diskin: Yeah, you mean he's not taking responsibility for this? Yeah so anyway, I'll try and get back with you. We originally, and let me try and explain this. We consider you guy's victims. The ones, I mean even though you survived obviously you were injured and you're hurt, but we aren't at this time really looking to charge him with you being a victim. And so your lawyer can explain this but that affects your rights as a victim. If he was charged with a crime in which you're the victim, and he's found guilty, then you're given certain things like restitution and things like that. But we do consider you guys victims but since you know we're looking at this as a homicide, you know, might kind of be overkill to tack on you know another 50 aggravated assaults or you know endangerments or whatever but we can talk more about that in the future but right now we're just looking at the homicide charges. And I can't remember if it was your attorney or one of the other attorney's was you know wanting us to list you guys as victims and I don't know if I ever got back to him but after I looked into that with the prosecutor we didn't feel like we needed to do that right now. But it doesn't mean that he won't be charged with a crime down the road with you as a victim. So anyway, if you have any questions, feel free to give me a call.

Stephen: Okay, one thing that I didn't quite understand is that there was, I guess there's a couple of different levels of what he could be charged with in regard to whether it's second degree murder, if it's gross negligent homicide or just negligence. Are there, what, two or three different statutes for the negligent homicide?

Det. Diskin: Yeah there's several different statutes and you know you can pull up the law and kinda see which one you think would be more appropriate and look at the different ones. It's the Arizona Revised Statutes is what it's called.

Stephen: Arizona

Det. Diskin: Revised Statutes.

Stephen: Okay

Det. Diskin: And you know we've looked it over. You know the evidence is pretty clear in this case, I think, and so we'll see what happens with it. But yeah there's different things that he could be charged with.

Stephen: Okay. Perfect. Alright well you know thank you for the help and thank you for the hard work on getting to the bottom of all of it cause I know that one of the really sad parts about how it's gonna pan out and part of what's gonna hamper I think your guys' efforts is that there's quite a few people that, for lack of a better way to put it, that I believe have drank his verbal Kool Aide and would be willing to lie on the stand for him. So

Det. Diskin: That's becoming apparent

Stephen: Yeah and so it just boggles my mind when you have those people that lost their lives and then people are still willing to, I mean there was a call that he had after which was supposed to be for participants and one of his underlings spoke up and said, 'the people that passed away were in another place and were having so much fun that they just didn't want to come back'. And I thought that was the biggest crock of crap that I've ever heard in my life.

Det. Diskin: Yeah that was Barbara Waters who said that and we talked to the person. There was a channeling session and we talked to that person and it wasn't like that, that's not what the Channeler said. So anyway, I don't know, I guess it depends on what people personally believe about what happens when you die. I guess that would affect whether or not you believe that.

Stephen: I understand it's, I'm sure it's difficult from your guys' end when it gets into that kind of realm because I don't know how many people you know, I mean luckily for us it's your guys' job to be on our behalf and the people that passed away's behalf and say hey wait a second, maybe they wanted to come back and because of your negligence their bodies were damaged so badly they couldn't come back.

Det. Diskin: The law doesn't really look at the spiritual aspect of it, they look at criminal statutes and whether or not the elements of those statutes are met by what someone does. But I think that that's very offensive to the family members of the victims. What does James Shores' three kids think when they hear that? They think oh dad didn't want to come back to us? You know?

Stephen: Exactly

Det. Diskin: And so that was heartbreaking for the families but anyway

Stephen: Okay

Det. Diskin: If you have any questions feel free to give me a call. Your attorney has my contact information too.

Stephen: Okay. That sounds good. I'll go back through my notes and see if there's anything else that came up when I was, as a result of my conversation with Lou and then so I'll give you a call.

Det. Diskin: Okay

Stephen: Thank you so much

Det. Diskin: Thank you, take care, bye.

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