

IN THE IOWA DISTRICT COURT, IN AND FOR LINN COUNTY	
STATE OF IOWA, Plaintiff, vs. Michael Scott Schappert 1300 NE Village St, Lot 72, Unit 72 Fairview, OR 97024 Defendant,	COMPLAINT FECR

THE DEFENDANT is accused of the crime of **MURDER IN THE 1ST DEGREE -- PREMEDITATION**, in violation of Section(s) **707.1, 707.2(1)(a) or (b), 703.1**, Code of Iowa, a(n) **Class A Felony**. For that the said defendant did on or about **December 23, 1983** in Linn County and State of Iowa,

having malice aforethought, willfully, deliberately, and with premeditation, or while participating in a forcible felony, kill Ronald Novak and/or aided and abetted another in the commission of the offense at 5044 Rolling Acres Rd., Walker, Linn County, Iowa.

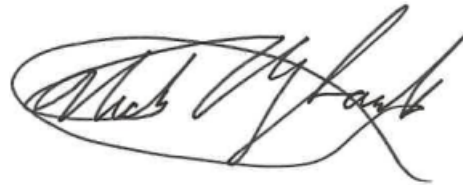
I, the undersigned, being duly sworn, state that all facts contained in this Complaint and Affidavit, told to me by other reliable persons, form the basis for a finding of probable cause by the court that the defendant committed this crime.

On December 24, 1983, Linn County Sheriff's Deputies were dispatched to the above location, which was identified as RR2 at the time, in reference to a deceased person. Upon arrival, deputies found that the deceased person was Ronald Lee Novak, age 24. He was found in an unheated utility/mudroom at the residence laying facedown with his hands bound behind his back with a nylon cord. The utility/mudroom led to the door to the kitchen. The reported temperature at the time was below zero degrees. There was reportedly a significant amount of blood around his head and chest. Novak was wearing a blue coat, t-shirt, blue jeans and light-colored tube socks. An examination of the crime scene revealed there were bloody footprints throughout the house. Investigators seized two hammers, a piece of firewood and a golf club with a bent head that had traces of hair and blood on them near Novak's body. Cash, marijuana and paraphernalia were also seized. Background investigation revealed that Novak had been a marijuana dealer. Investigators observed areas of blood spatter on the walls and door into the kitchen and blood transfer on the walls in the utility room. There were blood tracks into the kitchen and dining room, appearing to have

been tracked into the main part of the residence. There were also reportedly blood smears appearing to be from the shoes on the walls in the upstairs below the scuttle hole to the attic. There was a broken windowpane in the lower right-hand portion of the window to the door that appeared to have been broken out from the outside. There were footprints in the snow coming from the driveway that appeared to lead to a large tree on the south side of the residence to an area where it appeared a subject could have been acting as a lookout while another subject went inside the residence. The scene appeared to be that of a burglary and/or robbery of the residence. An autopsy was conducted and Novak was found to have suffered a bullet wound to his right chest that entered at an upward angle to the middle of his right shoulder where a .22 caliber bullet was located. Novak had abrasions and bruising to the right and left side of his forehead and bruising to the left backside of his head and right center back of his head. The cause of his death was ruled to be a combination of gun shot injuries, blows to his head and exposure to cold environment and shock. Novak's girlfriend reported that she last heard from Novak around 8:00 p.m. and that she could not reach him after 10:00 p.m. A cordless phone was found near Novak's body. Investigation continued in years following his death but then became cold when no further leads were developed as to a suspect. On or about July 22, 2011, a number of crime scene items were sent to the DCI lab for DNA testing. The DCI lab was able to develop a partial male DNA profile from each of the socks worn by Novak that was consistent with each other that indicated a male source other than Novak. In early 2019, the Linn County Sheriff's Office began working with DNA Labs International and Parabon Nanolabs and a snapshot of a suspect was developed but no further identification was done at that time. In June 2020, Parabon was able to identify possible relatives of the DNA contributor through genetic genealogy and detectives then obtained DNA from distant relatives of the suspect that allowed Parabon to track the genealogy down to three brothers. After receiving this information, detectives began obtaining covert DNA samples from each brother and through this process two of the brothers were eliminated. In August of 2022, detectives worked with the Multnomah County Sheriff's Office in Oregon to obtain a covert DNA sample from the third brother, the defendant herein, Michael Schappert, and subsequent DNA testing on that covert DNA sample revealed that the defendant could not be eliminated as a source of the unknown suspect DNA profile developed from the top of Novak's socks. In December 2023, a known sample of the defendant's DNA was collected from him and Schappert was interviewed. He reportedly placed himself in Iowa in late 1983 claiming he hitchhiked there from Oregon before Christmas 1983. He did not provide an explanation as to his DNA being at the crime scene. In a second interview, he recalled being at Novak's residence but still did not give an explanation as to why he was there. The defendant's brother placed a phone call to the defendant on or about December 21, 2023, in which the defendant stated that he was at Novak's residence with another person in the area while trapping, got injured, knew Novak and went there to clean up. This explanation was not consistent with Novak's known behavior at that time of not letting people into his house. In February 2024, further DNA testing on the defendant's known DNA profile and the profile found on the sock revealed that it was approximately 650 trillion times more probable that the sample originated from the defendant and Novak than from Novak and an unknown person providing strong support for the conclusion that the defendant's DNA was on Novak's socks. Further crime scene items were sent to DNA Labs International for testing and a report was generated on those items and sent to the Linn County Sheriff's Office in January 2025. A DNA profile was

obtained from the grip of a claw hammer found on the scene that contained the DNA of three people and provided very strong support that the defendant was a contributor to this profile. The DNA profile obtained from that sample was 570 trillion times more likely to have originated from the defendant and two unknown persons than from three unknown persons. A DNA profile was also obtained from two areas of the blue jeans worn by Novak when his body was found that contained the DNA of three people and provided very strong support that the defendant was a contributor to that profile as well. The DNA profile obtained from one of those samples was 6.2 million times more likely that the sample originated from Novak, the defendant and one other person than Novak and two unknown persons. The DNA profile obtained from the other sample on the blue jeans was 990 billion times more likely that the sample originated from Novak, the defendant and one other person than Novak and two unknown persons. A DNA profile was also obtained from the blue coat worn by Novak when his body was found that contained the DNA of two people and provided very strong support that the defendant was a contributor to that profile as well. The DNA profile obtained from this sample was 13 trillion times more likely that the sample originated from Novak, and the defendant than from Novak and an unknown person. The same report also revealed that the defendant could not be ruled out as a contributor to a mixture of DNA found on the nylon rope. The investigation into the homicide of Ronald Novak has indicated that the defendant was present at Novak's residence when he was killed and that his DNA was found on blood on Novak's socks and on his clothing as well as touch DNA on the claw hammer found next to his body. The circumstances indicate that Novak was killed during what appeared to be a burglary and/or robbery.

Respectfully submitted,



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Subscribed and sworn to before me on May 28, 2025.

/s/ Vicki Mehring
Notarial State of Iowa
Vicki Mehring Commission Number 797189
My Commission Expires 07/14/2025