

# The Dallas Morning News

Texas' Leading Newspaper

Dallas, Texas

DallasNews.com

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## Sunday

NOVEMBER 21, 2004

### HIGH SCHOOL PLAYOFFS

Lubbock	36	Fort Worth	33	Texas Tech	48
North Tarrant	10	South Tarrant	28	Hillcrest	20
Plano West	17	SPORISDAY, ICC, 6-8CC		FV Nolan	37
				Bishop Lynch	0



**Longley stays out of limelight**  
But he's still a folk hero to Cowboys fans

**Mostly cloudy**

**High 66 Low 54**  
5-day outlook, 2D

**NATION**

**Republicans block intelligence changes**

House Republicans unveiled a plan to gut the intelligence oversight provisions of the 9-11 commission bill.

Allen: Congress approved a massive spending bill with a provision that allows tax credits for energy research and development. It will have regard to privacy protection. Embarrassed Republican leaders said it was a mistake and would be repealed.

**SPORTSDAY**

**NBA brawl fallout**

The NBA indefinitely suspended four players after one of the worst brawls in U.S. sports history.

**WORLD**

**Bush works summit**

The nuclear ambitions of Iran and North Korea dominated a gathering of Asia-Pacific leaders with President Bush.

**SCIENCE & MEDICINE**

**The promise of baby neurons**

Killed off a few brain cells with too much weekend fun? Fear not. Mine are on the way.

Allen: The last probable ancestor to all living humans and apes is discovered in Spain.

**METRO**

**Top Texas**

Our Metro columnists name their picks for the News' Texas of the Year. Local history favorite online at [www.DallasNews.com/opinion](http://www.DallasNews.com/opinion).

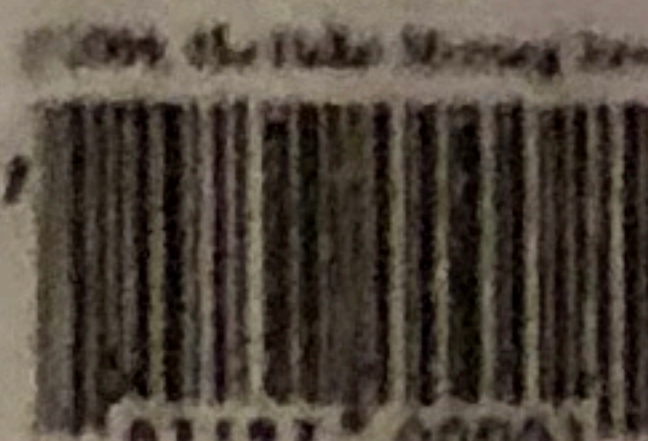
**TRAVEL**

**Hint: It's not in Dallas**

Take our Geography Challenge. What's the world's tallest building, and where will it be? Answers 71

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## Pat-downs rubbing fliers the wrong way

**Airport screeners say getting up close and personal is no fun**

By COLLEEN MCCAIN  
NIELSON  
Staff Writer

In the old days, the indignities of air travel involved intrusive elbow-frush seatbelt checks and tulle skirts. In the last few years, they included removing your shoes to get through security and having

your nail clippers confiscated. And now there's full-body pat-downs — including bra checks — for people who set off metal detectors. Or are unlucky enough to be randomly selected.

The Transportation Security Administration changed its screening procedures in September. But frequent fliers could experience the expanded searches for the first time during the holiday season.

TSA officials say the new PAT-DOWN Page 26A

## S. Texas DA refuses to pursue ex-priest

**1960 murder case remains unsolved despite new witnesses**

By BROOKS METZGER  
Staff Writer

MALLEN, Texas — Police thought they had cracked the sensational 1960 murder case and finally could make an arrest. They thought their new witnesses might finally mean justice for Irene Guerra, a schoolteacher who vanished in a church on Easter weekend in

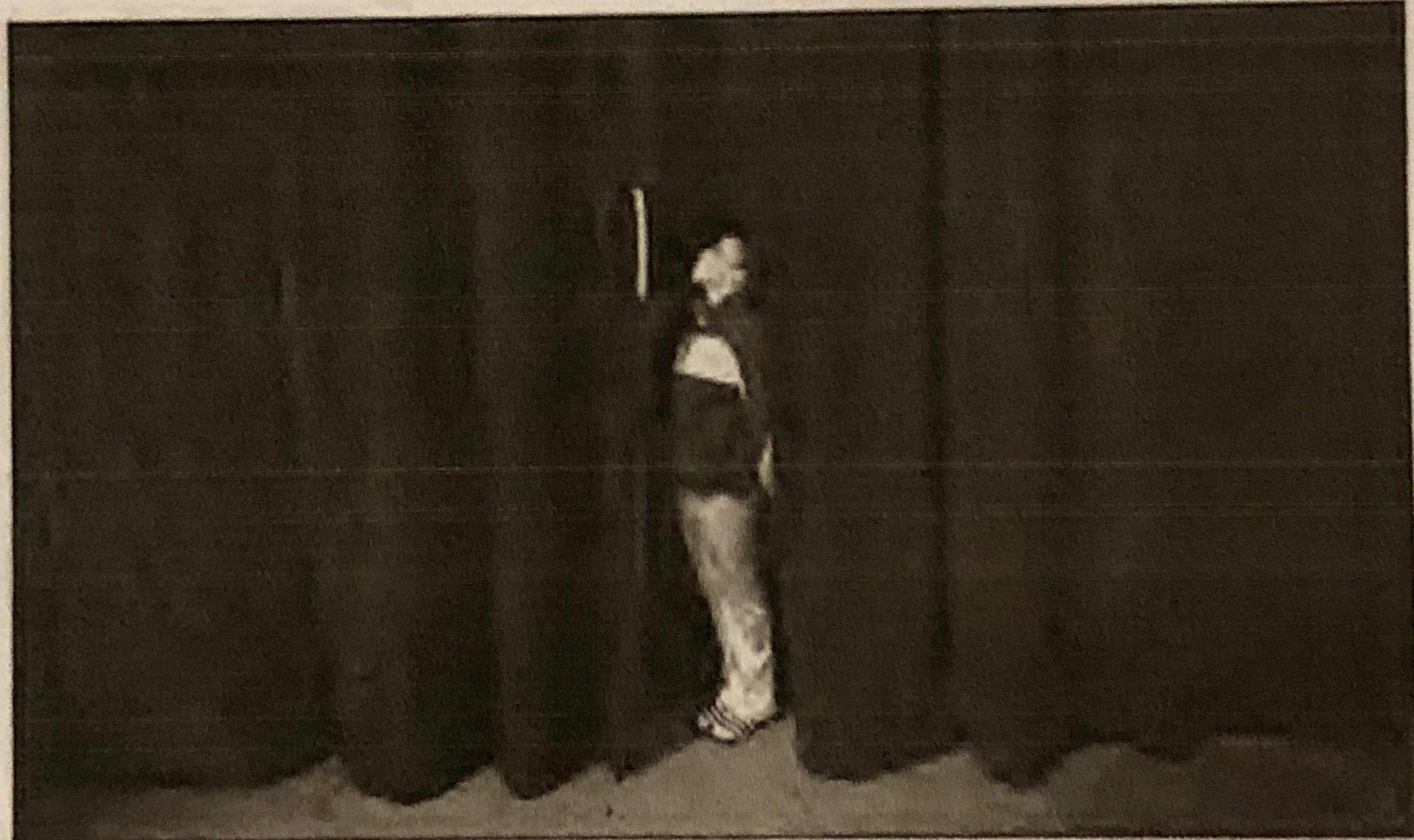
1960 after meeting a young priest, named John Fell. The police, however, ran into an insurmountable opponent on their own side of the law: veteran Tarrant County District Attorney Ben Guerra, who refused to prosecute. Mr. Guerra publicly criticized investigators' work and called the case unsolvable unless you believe

pages 11. He refused for months to take a grand jury before releasing under pressure from the victim's family. He had assistant prosecutors present evidence this year — but they had "no targets in mind." Mr. Guerra acknowledged poverty and the secret proceeding ended



See DA Page 35A

## Carly's curtain call



Since her win, Carly Patterson has been front and center for U.S. gymnasts. She'll work the hometown crowd tonight at American Airlines Center.

### Busy post-Olympics tour brings gymnast back to North Texas

By SCOTT FARWELL  
Dallas County Staff

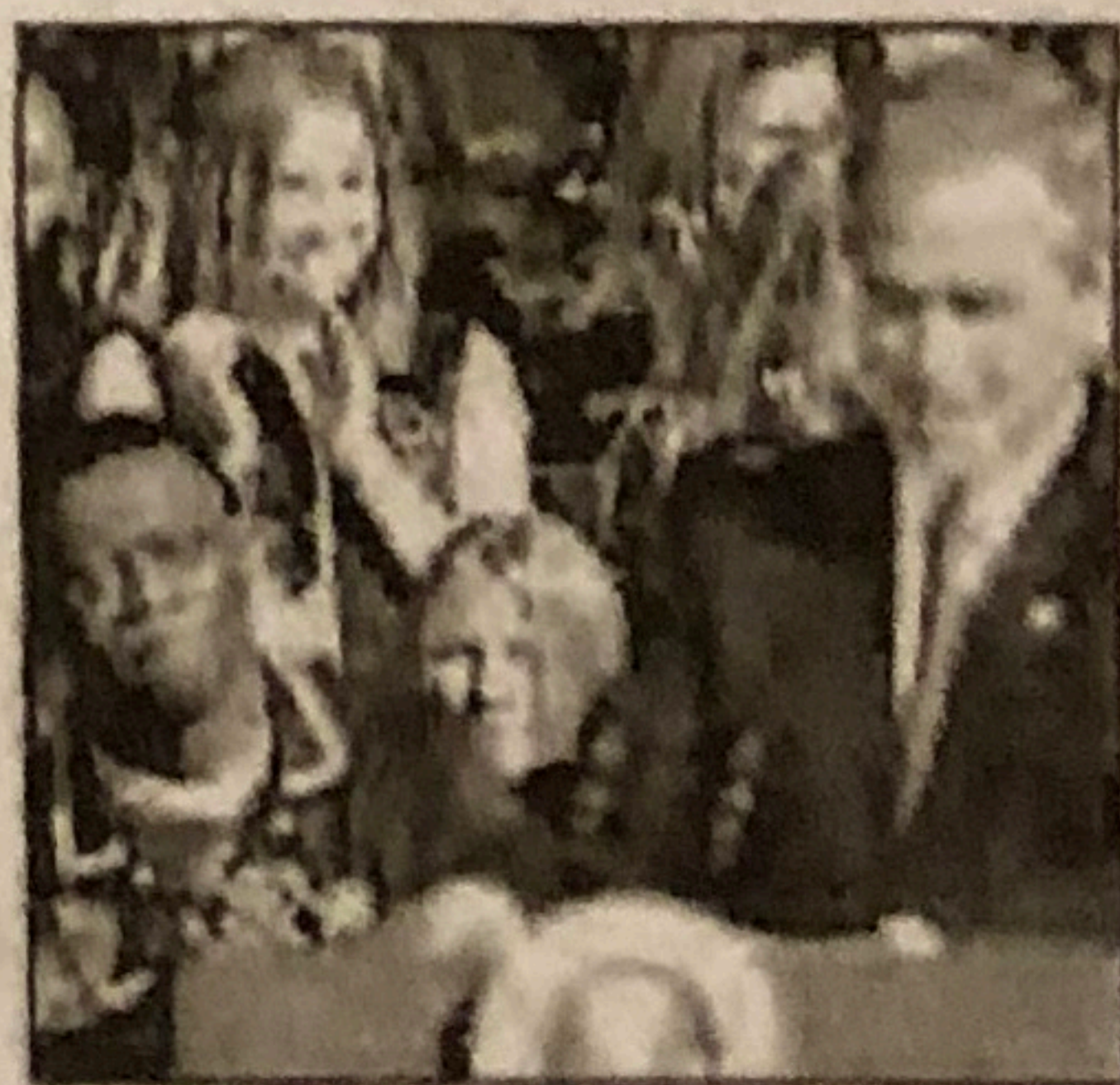
Three months ago in Athens, Greece, Carly Patterson sprinted across our television screens, punched the floor, tucked and spun like a pony-tailed pinwheel to win Olympic gold. When she did, our spirits soared with her.

In that instant, Carly, a 16-year-old high school kid from Allen who ignores flip-flops and scuffed skirts, who wears thick black goggles, whose goody-earbuds are on and her mouth is open and she's who sings out loud and flirts with boys and loves on her mother in public, was trans-

formed. She is more mature now than when I saw her sing, more famous, and is an odd celebrity, potentially more alone as the star of the 2004 U.S. Maxx Tour of Gymnastics Champions, which stops at 6 p.m. at American Airlines Center. Tickets suggest the large crowd in the 42-city tour may great her.

Carly is the second woman in U.S. history behind Texas Mary Lou Retton, to win the all-around gold in gymnastics. Coming out of the Olympics in

See GOLDEN Page 26A



Carly wasn't shy when it came to meeting President Bush at the White House. "I got a little pushy, probably too pushy, but I just really wanted to meet him."

**INSIDE**

### U.S. soldier among those killed in attacks in several Iraqi cities

Violence surged through central and northern Iraq on Sunday as a 3-year-old Iraqi insurgency staged attacks in several cities, including Baghdad and Fallujah. Four employees of the Public Works Ministry were considered an ambush of a U.S. military convoy ended with the death of one soldier and the wounding of six others. And in the west, a firebomb was set off by a rebel soldier, but only a single soldier was injured.

## A view to savagery in Fallujah's streets

**In rebel Iraqi city, Marines saw their most intense test of urban warfare yet**

By DEKETER YU-KING  
The New York Times

FALLUJAH, Iraq — Eight days after the Americans entered the city on Oct. 3, a pair of Marines waded their way up the deserted streets of a mine-laden city through rubble by an American tank.

As the Marines pushed their way along a line of gunfire rang down, fired by an insurgent hiding in the top of the tower. The bullets hit the first Marine to the fire, hit and died together; the Marine behind him, Lance Cpl. William Miller, age 22, lay in silence but heavy, mortally wounded.

"Miller!" the Marines called from below. "Miller!"

With that, the Marines took a tactical commitment against leveling a compound behind seized the group. One after another, the group's members dashed into the minefield, their darkness and long-gone fire, and wound their way up the stairs. After four attempts, the team's last-luck was carried from the tower, its commander, thickly and covered with dust. With many insurgents closing in to join the battle, the Marines ran through valleys of gunfire back to their base.

"I was trying to be careful, but I was trying to get him out, you know what I'm

See A VIEW Page 22A

# DA refuses to pursue ex-priest

Continued from Page 1A  
with an indictment.

The issues obstacles to prosecution, Mr. Guerra said, are contradictory physical evidence gathered in 1960 and the now witness' un-aided story.

But old police records obtained by *The Dallas Morning News* tell that explanation into question, as do interviews with the new witnesses.

Two of Mr. Feit's former deputy colleagues, for example, say he orchestrated himself in individual conversations with them many years ago.

The police records outline several factors that made him the prime suspect almost as soon as the 25-year-old woman's raped and bloodstained remains were found in a McAllen canal. Five days after her disappearance.

His portable photographic slide shows, say, where Ms. Guerra's body was dumped.

He changed his statements to investigators.

He hid and prayed with the victim at a church residence at the night she disappeared, then was clandestinely absent from work and returned with injuries to his hands.

He was a suspect in a 1960 slaying that occurred the same time as a young woman who resembled Ms. Guerra, slain after a visit to Mr. Feit ultimately was convicted in that case.

He hid his involvement from both sides.

The state obtained the documents from a source outside law enforcement after Mr. Guerra refused to release records of investigation in prosecute McAllen Police Chief Victor Rodriguez's homicide.

The chief said that much of Mr. Guerra's conduct over the murder investigation was completed in 2002 had been "completely contrary to the role of a prosecutor." He said he was at a loss of opinion.

Mr. Feit, who led the investigation and worked in the 1970s, said he considers the case closed because of the grand jury action.

Told of his former colleagues' statements, he responded, "Oh, that's very interesting. That's a story right there. Good stuff."

Mr. Feit, 72, did not answer when a reporter asked about his property's presence at the crime scene. Instead, he walked away and entered his office at the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, a Catholic charity in Phoenix where he has worked as a high-profile lobbyist.

In 1960, Mr. Feit told investigators that he did not kill Ms. Guerra, and he requested that details be reported in recent years.

He declined to talk to police during the recent investigation. According to a law enforcement source, an investigator who attempted to ask Mr. Feit about his work as a priest in McAllen got the response: "That man doesn't exist anymore."

Prosecutors did not subpoena Mr. Feit to appear before the grand jury, which would have had to find to testify or waive his Fifth Amendment right against self-incrimination.

"If anybody has presumed that you are guilty of a crime, that doesn't mean that I'm going to put you through the trauma of grand jury so that will be the straw that breaks the camel's back," Mr. Guerra said. "I don't work that way."

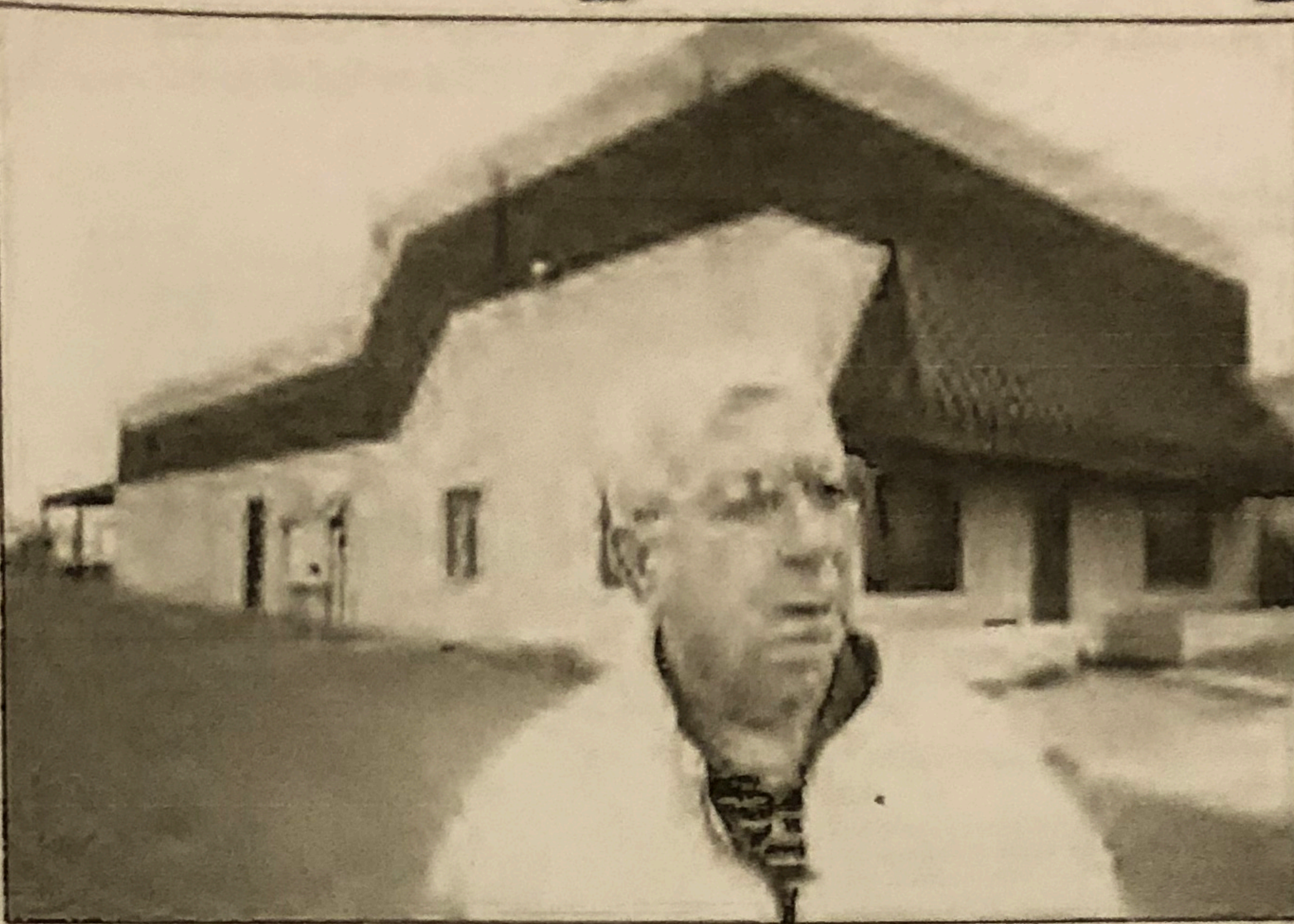
The focus news provided to *The News* contain no sign of the contradictory physical evidence cited by the district attorney. Mr. Guerra initially would not elaborate, although he did say authorities couldn't determine how and when his slide viewer ended up in the canal. Later he said that police had "scooped up" evidence in 1960 — by handling Ms. Guerra's corpse, for example, before dumping it in fingerprints.

Some statements Mr. Guerra made in a series of recent interviews with *The News* do not square with the original case records.

"That's a lie" — For example, he said there was no documentation that Mr. Feit suffered red injuries on the night Ms. Guerra disappeared. The records show that the suspect and a colleague talked with investigators about scratches on his hands, which Mr. Feit blamed on a series of accidents.

Mr. Guerra said he didn't think his office had the statements Mr. Feit gave police in 1960.

"I don't recall that we have any statements by any of the witnesses that had that, because it



John Feit, who has worked as a layman at a Catholic charity in Phoenix, said he considers the McAllen murder case closed.

was only an investigation where everybody was a possible target," he said.

The prosecutor became particularly annoyed when asked about the polygraph tests, which indicated that Mr. Feit was deceptive when he denied attacking the two women.

"That's a lie. That's a lie," Mr. Guerra said, suggesting that media reports that the priest had faked were based on the recollection of polygraph examiner George Lindberg, now a federal judge in Illinois.

When a reporter read him excerpts in the contrary from Mr. Lindberg's 1980 report, Mr. Guerra then said he didn't recall that the test had found deceptive polygraph results, he used, are not admissible in court.

Mr. Guerra said he had a confused details of this year's grand jury presentation to cover his top prosecutors, when he refused to make available for an interview.

The grand jury heard every detail, Mr. Guerra said. "The final word has been spoken through a grand jury."

### New leads

The renewed police investigation revived haunting memories in many longtime residents of Hidalgo County, an overwhelmingly Catholic community on the Mexican border.

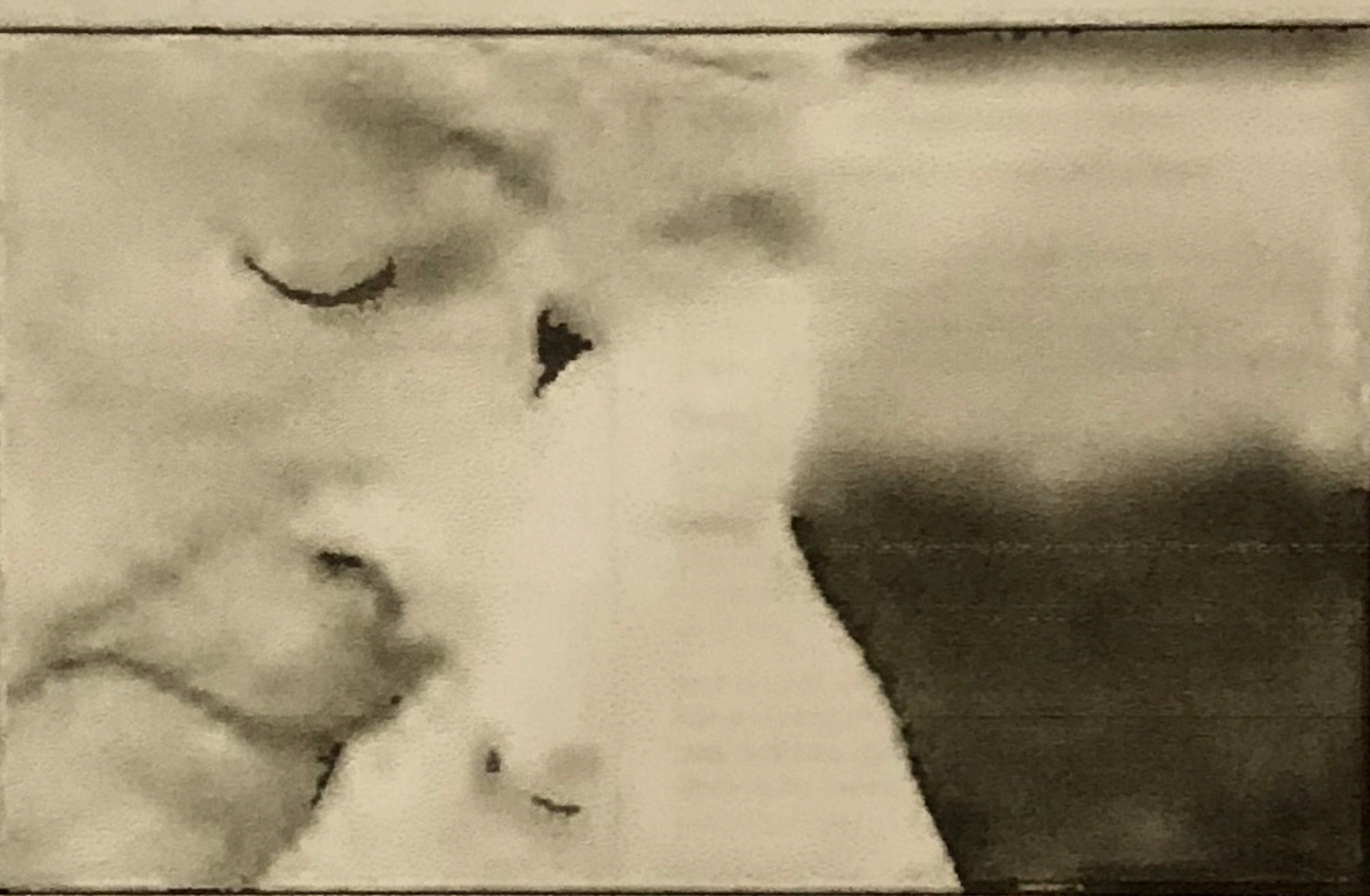
Chief Rodriguez, retired the Texas Rangers' elite cold-case unit, which helped open up several new witnesses to supplement old evidence. Neither the chief nor the Rangers would comment on details of the case.

The most significant new witnesses were the Rev. Joseph O'Brien, with whom Mr. Feit worked temporarily at McAllen's Sacred Heart Catholic Church in 1960; and Dale Tacheny, who was a priest at a Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate monastery that later sheltered Mr. Feit.

Both men say Mr. Feit made incriminating statements that they had kept private for many years out of a sense of religious obligation. They say they had only recently about their similar experiences with the priest and each other's cooperation with police.

Mr. Guerra said it would be "improbable" if the men had concealed a crime. But he also scoffed at the idea. "The church concealed 150 percent with the 1960 investigation," he said.

The district attorney was a high school student then and lived, as he has most of his life, in Hidalgo County.



Dale Tacheny, who was at a monastery that sheltered Mr. Feit, visited Irene Guerra's grave in June. Mr. Tacheny said the monastery's leader told him that Mr. Feit had killed a woman.

He attended, and sometimes still attends, a Catholic church in the county seat of El Paso. He figured in the original inquiry a few weeks before Ms. Guerra disappeared, another young woman reported that a man had grabbed her from behind as she walked alone in the church, put a cloth over her mouth and threw her to the floor. When she hit his finger and screamed, he fled.

The woman identified the assailant as Mr. Feit, who did not work at the church but had visited that day. She testified against him in a trial that ended with a hung jury. Later, he pleaded no contest to a reduced charge of aggravated assault and was fined \$300.

Mr. Guerra said he found no significance in the plea. "When I see something like that, a no-contest plea after a hung jury, I consider some of those accommodations settlements. That's like the biblical law suits — sometimes you pay money even though you're not guilty because you can't afford the lawyer who's defending you."

Some of Ms. Guerra's relatives and some former law officers have publicly suggested that Mr. Guerra has concealed prosecuting the case for religious reasons. He vehemently denies that.

"The indirect accusation people are making, based on 'I want to protect a murderer because he's a Catholic,' but 'just has nothing to do with Catholicism,'" Mr. Guerra said he concluded (Rev. Father O'Brien and Mr. Tacheny were unavailable based on information from police and other sources, whom he would not identify. He acknowledged that he and his wife never sought to interview the witnesses.

Told that *The News* had interviewed Father O'Brien, Mr. Guerra asked, "Is he in a position to say anything incriminating?" He said the witness was of "questionable status" and had "a lot of red herrings" which he would not describe.

Father O'Brien, 76, left active ministry five years ago and lives in San Antonio as a clergy retirement homebound by his religious order, the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate.

The *News* found that the priest was physically weak — slow on his feet, short of breath, easily tired — but alert and quick to recall many names from decades ago.

"I was surprised they didn't talk to me," Father O'Brien said of the prosecutor's office. He said he was disappointed that Mr. Feit was not indicted and added: "I'd love for it to be resolved."

Father O'Brien said he suspected Mr. Feit almost immediately after Ms. Guerra was reported missing, because of the scratches on his hands and because he gave conflicting explanations for them. He said that before the body was found, he searched the basement and attic of Sacred Heart's residence for clues but found nothing.

Records show that during the original investigation, Father O'Brien shared his suspicions about the injuries with police. Today, he is blunt: "They were finger nail scratches," he told *The News*.

Father O'Brien said he repeatedly pressed Mr. Feit in 1960 to admit guilt, once nearly promising a \$10,000 payoff. After police had questioned Mr. Feit for the last time, he got the admission he had been making himself.

Warne, he recalled, after "I said, 'John, how can I help you and I don't know the truth?'"

Valdes O'Brien said he considered a member of the details of that confession, which occurred privately at the Oblates regional headquarters in San Antonio.

He did not repeat the admission in police court, he said, because he believed his offer of help had put him under a duty of confidentiality in his fellow Oblates. And he said he believed that Mr. Feit kept the story

secret and so hid from the family.

Publicly, Father O'Brien stayed silent away from the church as recently as four years ago. Interviewed for a copy of McAllen's public TV show on unresolved crimes, he said the original investigation may have "focused too much on the church and (Ms. Guerra's) friends."

Father O'Brien said he felt free to speak after he was told recently that Mr. Feit had made similar admissions to other clergymen.

### Another witness

Dale Tacheny, a 75-year-old tax consultant in Oklahoma City, said he was one of those men.

In the early 1960s, as a priest in the Oblate order, he worked at a monastery in rural southern Missouri that had little contact with the outside world. His job was to oversee and ensure the monastery's self-sufficiency. In 1963, he included Mr. Feit.

Mr. Tacheny said the monastery's leader, who is deceased, told him that Mr. Feit had killed a woman.

The new resident gradually began to talk with him about the crime but expressed no remorse, Mr. Tacheny said. He said Mr. Feit eventually recognized that he had sexual compulsion to attack women from behind and learned to control it.

He said Mr. Feit told him that his religious superiors had helped him avoid a scandal charge. Those superiors are now deceased; national representatives of the Oblates did not respond to interview requests.

The priest, Mr. Tacheny said, told him that shortly before he fled, he had heard a young woman's confession in a church residence because she felt uncomfortable going into the sanctuary. These details match Mr. Feit's 1960 statements to police.

According to Mr. Tacheny, the priest said he had attacked and restrained the woman, kept her in the residence's basement temporarily, and he was then charged with her until she suffocated with a bag over her head, and dumped her body in a canal on Easter Sunday night.

The autopsy report said Ms. Guerra, who suffered a major head wound, could have been suffocated. It estimated that her body was put in the canal on Easter.

Mr. Feit never recused his victim. Mr. Tacheny said that some



A high school picture of Irene Guerra, who died at age 25.

said when or where the crime had occurred. He said he came to assume that it had taken place in 1963 in San Antonio, where Mr. Feit had been before arriving at the monastery that year. Mr. Tacheny finally took the information to police in 2002.

Mr. Guerra, the district attorney, said that because Mr. Tacheny placed the crime in the wrong city and year he was useless as a witness.

"I can't go into court with something like that," he said. "No explanation can be found."

Mr. Guerra expressed skepticism of Mr. Tacheny because he left the priesthood many years ago and instead, had this might have "an axe to grind" with the church. The prosecutor also said he suspected that Mr. Tacheny tried to cash in with a book about the case.

Mr. Tacheny said he had no plan to write a book and no grudge against the church. He said he had once agreed to contribute a book of clergy memoirs but withdrew from the project after reflecting on his encounter with Mr. Feit. He said he realized then that he needed to go to police instead. The collection of the book, which has since been published, contained this account.

Speaking out has brought him no financial gain and put him at risk of being sued, Mr. Tacheny said. But it has been a relief, he added, to tell the truth at last.

"I was part of a cover-up," he said.

### Family's frustration

Earlier this year, Mr. Tacheny visited south Texas to pay the respects at Irene Guerra's grave and apologize to her survivors.

His actions and the renewed investigation have left the relatives feeling somewhat vindicated but frustrated with Mr. Guerra.

They want the case turned over to a special prosecutor, a move that Mr. Guerra's refusal to approve. The case would be prosecuted, he said, only if there were DNA evidence of a confirmed and infection.

Noemi Duane Nader, a distant relative of Mrs. Guerra, has spent years digging into the church, and she's not giving up. She's convinced that Mr. Guerra denied not to prosecute without considering all the facts.

"The plan of Rene Guerra," she said, "is to bury the facts with time."

The prosecutor said the recent police investigation had been a hopeful, unrelenting.

"It was just a wasted effort and was not very good for the case," he said. "Justice for Irene Guerra, I think, was out the window many years ago."

In talking about his reluctance to prosecute Mr. Feit, Mr. Guerra said he knew how it felt to be falsely accused. He referred to various misandry allegations that have been made against him over the years.

For example, he faces a lawsuit filed by a lawyer who has been twice tried to prosecute on their charges. Mr. Guerra called a judge in one of those cases a charlatan, drawing a public reprimand from the State Bar.

And in 1986, a grand jury raised a public opinion finding that he had failed to prosecute a murder suspect and his associates, whose police accused of destroying the victim's body and other evidence. Mr. Guerra said the report contained lies that he was not given a chance to refute.

"I have walked in the shoes of a target, and that target was innocent, the district attorney said. "I've been there. It wasn't comfortable."

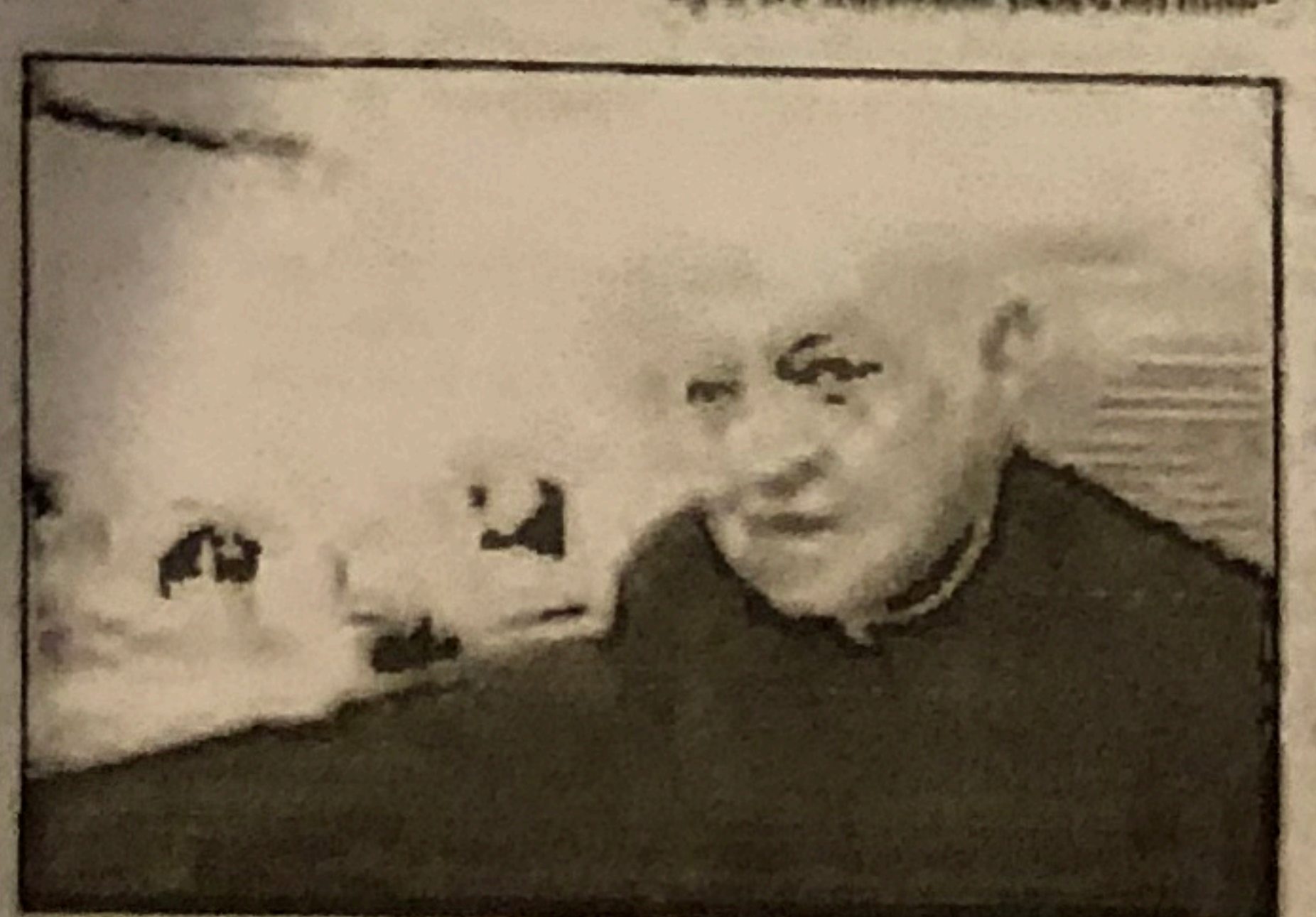
"If John Feit did this," Mr. Guerra added, "I hope that he will atone for his sin."

As for Mr. Guerra, he said: "I think if she died knowing that church after another man, that she died in a state of grace and she should be in heaven, as I believe in God."

By David H. Johnson



Rene Guerra



The Rev. Joseph O'Brien worked with Mr. Feit temporarily at McAllen's Sacred Heart Catholic Church in 1960. He said he was disappointed that Mr. Feit was not indicted.

# Anatomy of a murder case

John Feil has been the prime suspect in Irene Garza's rape and murder since April 1960, when she vanished after going to church in McAllen on the night before Easter. Here are key dates in the case:



Irene Garza

### ON THE LIE DETECTOR

The written report of examiner George Lindberg, who asked him about both the Garza and Guerra crimes, states that:

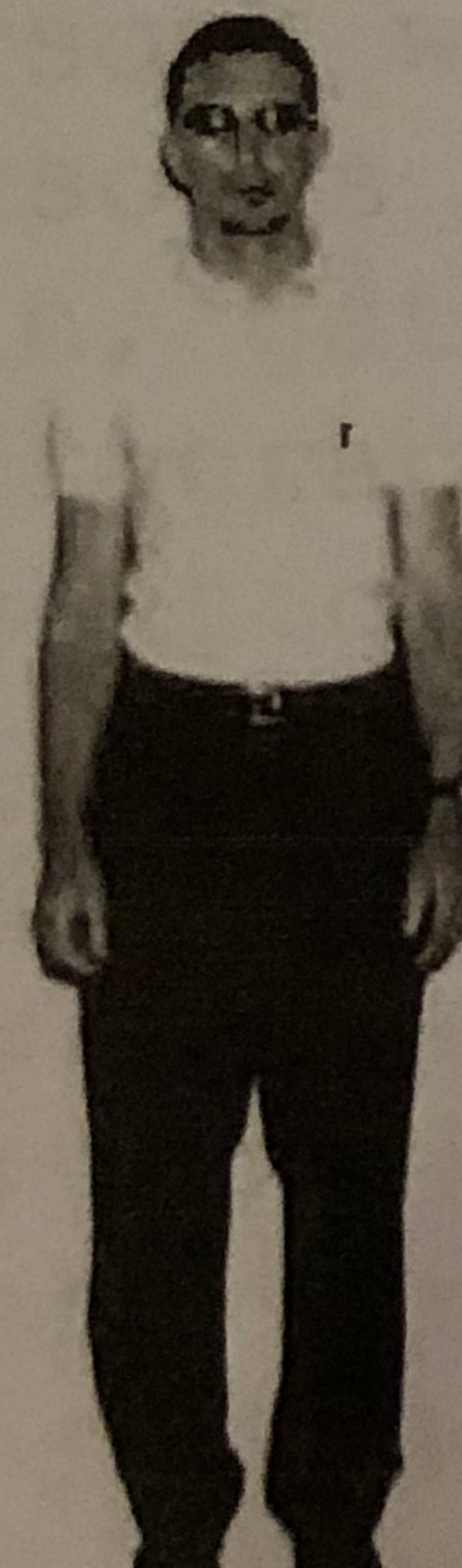
While being tested, Father Feil seized his breathing to four respirations a minute, down from his usual 16 to 20. A person who purposely controls his respiration during these examinations is concealing the truth. Mr. Lindberg told Father Feil to stop. But the priest persisted.

Asked if he would like to suggest additional questions, Father Feil offered "Do you believe it is possible that you may have said something or acted in some way to cause Irene's death?" He said the answer was yes, because "the harsh way he had treated her in the rectory if a ceiling she disappeared."

Mr. Lindberg asked Father Feil "why the lie detector charts showed that he was not telling the truth when he denied committing either of the crimes." The priest said that, contrary to his parishioners' statement to believe, he had heard Ms. Garza's confession in the rectory.

When urged to admit guilt, Father Feil said "there will never be any evidence brought up" and that "without a confession on his part, there is not enough evidence in either of those cases to convict him or that a good defense attorney could not help him." He refused to be fingerprinted and said that the Garza case, "the three, will be soon forgotten."

Father Feil ultimately tried to explain his test performance by saying that a man he didn't know confessed to him that he had attacked Ms. Guerra. "The subject was questioned as to where the confession was obtained, and he told the examiner that it was not in the confessional box, not in the rectory, but out in the open sacristy and was very vague as to where this open place was."



Police took this photograph of Father Feil during the 1960 investigation.

### 1960

#### MARCH 23

A man attacks Maria America Guerra, 20, while she prays alone at a church in Edinburg. He flees after she bites his finger and screams. Ms. Guerra later identifies the man as Father Feil. A witness says she saw Father Feil running from the church shortly after the screaming.

#### APRIL 14

Irene Garza, 25, disappears after going to Sacred Heart Catholic Church near her McAllen home. Her parents, with whom she lives, tell police she phoned a priest about 6:45 p.m. to arrange for a confession and promised to return home soon. Several parishioners say they saw her that evening at the church, which had long lines of people waiting to make confessions. Her car is found about a block from the church.



Sacred Heart Catholic Church

#### APRIL 18 and 19

Searchers find Ms. Garza's left shoe and purse at separate roadside locations a few miles from the church.

#### APRIL 21

Ms. Garza's body is found in an irrigation canal about a mile from Sacred Heart. Police begin to suspect Father Feil after learning that he had been in Edinburg on March 23 about the time that Ms. Guerra was attacked.

#### APRIL 27

Police ask for the public's help in identifying the owner of a film slide viewer found where Ms. Garza's body was dumped. Two days later, Father Feil acknowledges that the equipment is his.

#### JUNE 6, 9 and 17

He fails lie detector tests administered by one of the nation's leading polygraph firms.

#### JULY 15

The Texas Rangers, who are assisting local police, question Father Feil extensively.

#### AUG. 6

Authorities try to arrest Father Feil on a charge of assault with intent to rape Ms. Guerra but discover that he has left Texas. He is declared a fugitive and surrenders about a week later, saying he has been in a hospital recuperating from the stress of interrogations.

### 1961

His prosecution on the assault charge ends in a mistrial with jurors deadlocked 9-3 in favor of conviction.

### 1962

Father Feil pleads no contest to aggravated assault, a reduced charge. He is fined \$500. His attorney says he will return to an unnamed out-of-state hospital.

### 1963

The priest enters Assumption Abbey, a Trappist monastery in southwestern Missouri.

### 1964

Father Feil joins the Servants of the Paraclete religious order at its New Mexico treatment center, where he had been a patient. He later becomes a supervisor and helps child molesters return to ministry.

### Early 1970s

Father Feil leaves the priesthood, marries and has children.

### 1990s to present

He works in Phoenix for the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, a Catholic charity. For years, he is an administrator and spokesman, sometimes testifying before the Arizona Legislature about homelessness.

### 2000

McAllen police reopen the Garza murder investigation. Two of Mr. Feil's former colleagues in the clergy say he told them long ago that he was responsible for Ms. Garza's death.

### 2001

Hidalgo County District Attorney Rric Guerra says the case is too weak to prosecute.

### 2002

Mr. Guerra, under pressure from Ms. Garza's family, presents the case in a grand jury. In June, it declines to indict Mr. Feil.

### FATHER FEIL'S ACCOUNT

The priest, who was helping out at Sacred Heart during Holy Week, initially gave police this sworn account of his actions on the weekend Ms. Garza disappeared:

#### APRIL 14

7 p.m. He receives a phone call at the priest's residence from a woman he does not know. She insists on meeting with a priest privately because she fears being overheard in a confessional. He agrees to see her.

7:10 to 7:20 p.m. Ms. Garza and Father Feil meet alone at the residence, next door to the church, where she talks about "a personal problem" that he won't reveal. He sends her to the sanctuary to make her confession with one of Sacred Heart's three full-time priests. He enters the fourth confessional.

8 to 8:35 p.m. Father Feil gets the rectory keys from the Rev. Joseph O'Brien and takes a short break alone out door, then returns to the confessional.

9 p.m. He takes another short break alone at the rectory.

9:30 p.m. His glasses break because of his "nervous habit of playing around" with them. He borrows a colleague's car and drives to his clergy residence, which is in San Juan, 12 to 15 minutes away, to get his own pair of glasses. He says he doesn't have keys to the facility so he props a wooden road barricade against the house and climbs up it to enter through a balcony, scraping his hands on the brick wall. He washes up, changes clothes and drives back to Sacred Heart in McAllen, where he helps with an 11 p.m. service and spends the night.

#### APRIL 17

Here is Father Feil's sworn account of his actions:

Morning He celebrates Easter Mass at a chapel near Sacred Heart, suffering from a headache that he blames on the saltwater glasses. He borrows a car and drives to San Juan to try to fix the broken pair. He talks and naps in McAllen for another Mass.

Evening Father Feil returns to San Juan with colleagues, realizes he has left clothes in McAllen and borrows another colleague's car to retrieve them. Ms. Garza's parents, who have reported her disappearance to police, come to speak with him at Sacred Heart. He tells them he said nothing to their daughter that night because he was asleep.

Late evening Father Feil begins to fear he "had said something, unintentionally, that might have upset the girl. ... I was worried, so I drove around aimlessly for a while." He stops for a meal later at a burger stand around 9:45 p.m.

### CONTRADICTIONS

He later changes his story and says he heard her confession in the residence — an unusual move.

Father O'Brien tells police he did not see his colleague return. Parishioners say Father Feil's confessional time stopped during far much longer than 15 minutes.

Police records say the burger stand closed at 9:30 p.m. Father Feil later tells investigators that Ms. Garza called when he refused her for seeking to confess at the residence instead of stopping in the next door.



Above: Irene Garza's body was found the Thursday after Easter in an irrigation canal about a mile from her church. Bottom right: Father Feil's signed statement acknowledging he is the owner of the film slide viewer found near where the body was dumped.

### RANGERS' REPORT

"On several occasions throughout the city and evening Feil offered to make a statement of admission, but always adding that it would not be true. We declined to take a statement of this type."

"On several occasions when pointed questions were asked, he would reply, 'I don't remember.' When we insisted that he could remember, he would say, 'They told me to say that.'"

"He repeatedly told the writer that he did have a guilt but would never stain the orders of his faith."

"Intelligence received and partially confirmed by Feil indicates that he will be sent to a monastery."

*This machine belongs to John Feil, 1928, 7100 Juan 4 way. It was purchased in San Antonio, Texas, in July 1958, at Peoples Store. Feil - Feil. April 27, 1960. Feil - Feil, 1960.*

