

# Feazell 294 to defend Lucas

## Ex-DA to represent defendant in Florida

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Saying it is the right thing to do, former McLennan County District Attorney Vic Feazell plans to defend Henry Lee Lucas in three murder cases filed against him in Florida.

Feazell said Lucas and Clementine Schroeder, known as "Sister Clemmie," have asked him to represent Lucas. Schroeder, who had a jail ministry in Georgetown when Lucas was in the Williamson County Jail, has been a Lucas confidant for at least seven years.

"I told Sister Clemmie if she would pray for me and pray for the Belo case every day, that when it was over, I would get back on Henry's case and see what I could do," Feazell said.

"I made a commitment and that is what I intend to do. She kept her commitment to me. With a \$58 million verdict, I have reason to believe that God hears and answers prayers. I think Sister Clemmie has a red phone straight to God."

A McLennan County jury in April awarded Feazell \$58 million in his libel suit against the Belo Broadcasting Co., which owns Channel 8 in Dallas, and former television reporter Charles Duncan.

The jury found that Duncan's series in 1985 maliciously portrayed Feazell as a lax, corrupt prosecutor who took bribes to dismiss cases.

The verdict is the largest in a libel case in the country.

Feazell settled with Belo officials in June for an undisclosed amount, but the settlement is reported to have made him a millionaire many times over.

Asked why, with his newly acquired fortune, he would want to get involved with Lucas again, Feazell said, "The same reason I got into it in the first place. It is the right thing to do."

Feazell presided over a special grand jury in 1985 that considered three McLennan County homicides to which Lucas had confessed.

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## FEAZELL

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Sheriff's Department investigator Truman Simons had developed a strong suspect in one of the homicides, and when Lucas confessed to it, his suspect, who was about to confess, became uncooperative.

After the grand jury cleared Lucas in the three murders, hundreds of other confessions he had made were called into question. Soon afterward, the Lucas confession spree came crashing down and the Texas Ranger Lucas Task Force, which was set up to provide law enforcement officers from around the country access to Lucas, was disbanded.

Feazell accused Task Force members of feeding information to Lucas to get him to confess to slayings he did not commit.

Texas Ranger Capt. Bob Prince, who was in charge of the task force, called Feazell's accusations a personal affront to the integrity of all law officers.

When told this week that Feazell would be representing Lucas in Florida, Prince questioned if he will be "defending Lucas or promoting Vic Feazell."

"It is none of my concern. It doesn't bother me at all. Certainly, Lucas is entitled and expected to have adequate representation, and I am sure he will get competent representation," said Prince, who is now stationed in Houston.

Feazell has claimed that Duncan's 10-part series on Channel 8 paved the way for the federal government to indict him in 1986 on bribery, racketeering and mail fraud charges. Officials embarrassed over the Lucas confession revelations provided a willing Duncan with false information to make Feazell look like a crook, Feazell has said.

The TV reports and the indictment were in retaliation for Feazell's role in exposing that Lucas lied to authorities, Feazell has contended. Much of the evidence brought out at the libel trial tended to back up his claims.

"I only want the same thing I wanted in late 1984 when I first got into this," Feazell said, "and that is to find the truth. It would be really easy to walk away from this and forget right now, but that is not the right thing to do. I like to finish what I start."

Attorney Bob Adams, appointed to represent Lucas in Jackson and Holmes counties in Florida, said Friday that he has filed a motion to withdraw from the three Lucas murder cases — mostly because the counties don't sufficiently compensate appointed attorneys to make it worth his while.

Like Feazell, however, Adams says if the judge doesn't let him off the cases, he thinks he has a good chance to get at least one or more of the cases dismissed for lack of evidence.

Feazell said he "can prove absolutely" that Lucas didn't commit one of the crimes, but he declined to elaborate.

He said if the cases are not dismissed, Tulsa, Okla., attorney Gary Richardson will join him in Florida to assist with Lucas' defense.

Richardson, a former U.S. attorney in Oklahoma, successfully represented Feazell in his federal criminal trial in Austin in 1987 and in his libel suit this year.