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writings were sent to friends, relatives and a romance magazine called *True Confessions*, which received a 200-page, handwritten manuscript graphically detailing Stone's death.

Vicki Trombaugh, a close friend who received one of the letters, said Stone knew when she moved into Barfield's apartment that he had been charged with raping a female acquaintance earlier this year.

She also said Stone believed Barfield's claims of innocence and was prepared to stand by him.

"She believed Larry. Why? I don't know," Trombaugh said. "She believed that Larry wouldn't do such a thing — just like people now don't believe what he is accused of."

Born in the West Texas town of Monahans, Barfield is the youngest of five children and was the only one still at home when his parents divorced in the mid-1960s.

He moved to Arkansas with his mother and attended high school in Hot Springs. While working in a shoe factory during the summer of 1970, he met Loetta Lowe, who describes herself as Barfield's first serious girlfriend.

Now married, Loetta Lowe Hill says she and Barfield talked about marriage, but she broke off the relationship when his mother disapproved.

"He was her (the mother's) special one. She babied him all the time," Hill recalled. "She was afraid someone was going to come and take him away from her."

Hill, 36, says Barfield as a teen-ager was "real shy" about sex and was prone to fits of jealousy. She said he became very upset when she ended the relationship.

"He just wouldn't take no for an answer," she said. "When he fell for somebody, he fell real hard."

Within a few months, Barfield dropped out of high school, joined the Air Force and married another Hot Springs woman. The young couple had one child, a boy, before the marriage ended after less than two years.

The whereabouts of the woman and son could not be determined.

In 1974, while still in the Air Force, Barfield met his second wife at a Salem, Ore., restaurant where he worked as a cook and she as a waitress.

Carla Barfield, whose 10-year marriage to Barfield ended in 1986, fondly remembers her former husband as supportive, ambitious and always holding down a job as the couple moved around the country.

Over the years, Barfield worked as a nightclub manager, a factory machinist and as a worker in the food service department of the University of Arkansas in Little Rock.

In his spare time, he enjoyed writing and tinkering with inventions. Carla Barfield recalled one time when he tried to invent a board game, some sort of variation of chess.

"He was always a relaxed person," she said recently from her home in Birmingham, Ala.

Carla Barfield said their marriage began to deteriorate after the couple moved to Hot Springs and their 15-month-old daughter died.

According to county coroner reports, Jennifer Barfield died Jan. 22, 1980, of accidental carbon monoxide poisoning while sleeping in a tiny bedroom with a gas space heater.

Barfield told authorities he had left the girl sleeping with the bedroom door closed and the windows covered with plastic. By the time the girl's mother returned home two hours later, the baby had stopped breathing.

"There are no reasons to doubt the death as other than accidental," the coroner wrote.

Carla Barfield said when she and Barfield previously decided not to have any more children, Barfield underwent a vasectomy, a procedure she said he regretted after Jennifer's death.

She also said she initially blamed Barfield for their daughter's death, because the girl had been left in his care.

"We were both shocked and saddened by her death for a long time. We kind of drifted apart after that," she said. "It took me a long time to realize that it wasn't his fault."

Loetta Hill occasionally ran into her former boyfriend and said he was a devoted father visibly distressed by his daughter's death.

"I feel like that's when it all started," she said, referring to whatever problems led to his criminal record.



Lawrence Barfield: Friends say he was shy during high school in 1970



Veronica Stone: Believed Barfield was innocent of rape charges

Barfield and his second wife divorced in 1986 but reunited the next year in Modesto, Calif., where he was living.

Carla Barfield, 31, who has not remarried, said they lived together again until child molestation charges were leveled against Barfield in June 1987.

The charges stemmed from incidents months earlier, when Barfield lived with a girlfriend, Joyce McKinney. The victim in the case was the 8-year-old daughter of a friend of McKinney's.

Court records show Barfield repeatedly denied any wrongdoing. And Carla Barfield contends that the charge was the vindictive work of Barfield's ex-girlfriend.

McKinney, however, tells a different story.

In a recent interview from California, she said she had become uncomfortable with Barfield's ideas about sex long before he reunited with his former wife.

McKinney, 40, said their relationship started out platonic but became romantic. She said that he was "oversexed," that he tried to interest her in threesomes and that he persuaded her to help him start a dating service he called Mating Unlimited.

"He's a man who's very messed up," she said. "He's weird enough to have gone off the other end. I know that I've lived in fear ever since I've known him."

Found guilty of child molestation — his first criminal conviction — Barfield served a six-month sentence in county jail and was released on three-years' probation.

A court-appointed psychologist had recommended the maximum eight-year prison term, saying Barfield refused to acknowledge any wrongdoing.

"He has seemingly conducted himself in a responsible manner throughout his life and continues to express attitudes from which responsible behavior could be expected," Dr. Philip Trompetter wrote in a presentencing report.

"If all of the allegations against the defendant are true, he presents a danger to the safety of the community. He steadfastly denies all claims of sexual impropriety."

After his release from jail, Barfield received permission from California authorities to move to Grapevine, where he worked for a construction site cleanup crew contracted by one of his brothers.

Norman Barfield, owner of Barfield Building Co., did not respond to repeated requests for an interview.

Lawrence Barfield rented the apartment on Worth Street and soon became friends with two women who lived together in the same complex — Vicki Trombaugh and Veronica Stone. Eventually, both women went to work with Barfield at construction sites.

Stone moved into Barfield's apartment in spring of this year, in what friends say she intended to be a platonic arrangement. However, Barfield became enamored of his new roommate and expressed frustration that she did not feel the same way, Trombaugh said.

"It was just something that she couldn't give him," Trombaugh said.

But Carla Barfield, who again was in contact with her ex-husband, said she never heard him express frustration about the relationship with Stone. The last time Carla Barfield spoke with Lawrence Barfield, in mid-September, he told her that Stone was ill and he sought advice on how to care for her.

"He sounded like normal Larry," she recalled. "He seemed like he really cared for the girl. They seemed like good friends."

About a month later, Carla received a letter postmarked Oct. 24, the day before Stone's body was found.

Carla said she recognized Barfield's handwriting: "Dear Carla — Please sit down. Relax a minute. Prepare yourself for some horrible news. . . ."