Witness: David Corder

Date: 2004-06-10

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Called by: People (prosecution)

Phase: Guilt

Examinations: Direct – Rick Distaso; Cross – Mark Geragos; Redirect – Rick Distaso; Recross – Mark Geragos

Day 1 of 1 for this witness

Court: San Mateo County Superior Court, Redwood City (People v. Scott Peterson)

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Direct Examination by Rick Distaso

JUDGE: Do you want to call your next witness.

DISTASO: Yes, Officer Corder.

JUDGE: Officer?

DISTASO: Corder, C-o-r-d-e-r.

CORDER: Yes, I do.

CLERK: Be seated. State and spell your name for the record.

CORDER: Officer David Corder, C-o-r-d-e-r.

CLERK: Thank you.

JUDGE: Go ahead.

DISTASO: Thank you, Your Honor.

DISTASO: Officer Corder, you're obviously in uniform. You're obviously a Modesto police officer?

CORDER: Yes.

DISTASO: And how long have you been a sworn peace officer in the state of California?

CORDER: Ten years.

DISTASO: And what are your duties right now?

CORDER: Right now I am an officer assigned to investigative services investigating property crimes.

DISTASO: At one point did you also, were you also on the K-9 unit?

CORDER: Yes, I was for eight years.

DISTASO: And that's the dog unit, correct?

CORDER: Correct.

DISTASO: On December 24th of 2002 did you have a, were you at that time assigned to the K-9 unit?

CORDER: Yes, I was.

DISTASO: And as part of your duties in that unit were you asked to assist in the search of the Dry Creek Park area with your K-9?

CORDER: Yes.

DISTASO: Can you tell the jury, let's just start at the beginning. You were on duty on the 24th?

CORDER: Actually, I was on duty on the 25th.

DISTASO: Okay.

CORDER: Working day shift, which is 6:00 in the morning until 5:00 o'clock at night. And as soon as we got out of briefing, which is at 6:46 in the morning, I was dispatched to the Dry Creek area, La Loma Park, to assist in the search.

DISTASO: Okay. And the jury has seen these pictures a million times, but this is just to orient you. This is an aerial of the Dry Creek Park area, correct?

CORDER: Correct.

DISTASO: Just to put some, so what we're looking at here is the tennis courts. Here's Covena. Does this look familiar to you?

CORDER: Yes.

DISTASO: Okay. Let's just start at the beginning. You got out of briefing, you were asked to go down to the park?

CORDER: Yes.

DISTASO: Okay. Where did you go?

CORDER: I actually went to the 500 block of Covena, actually where Covena meets Edgebrook and met up with other officers there.

DISTASO: Okay. If you look at this little diagram here, People's 33. You said you went to Edgebrook and Covena, so this area right here?

CORDER: Yes.

DISTASO: And what happened?

CORDER: I met up with other officers. They told me that they had been searching the park during the night and wanted to know if I would use my K-9 also to help search the park and also surrounding area

DISTASO: Okay. And do you remember what the weather was like?

CORDER: It was cold and damp. I don't remember anything else besides that.

DISTASO: Okay. And was the sun up at that time by the time you got there?

CORDER: Yeah, it was daylight. The sun wasn't shining through because of the dew or the fog in the area

DISTASO: And what happened next, you met up with them, they asked you to search, what happened?

CORDER: They asked me to search. I talked to Officer Gonzales who had been out in the park all night with his K-9. He told me they had been back and forth.

GERAGOS: Objection, hearsay.

JUDGE: Hearsay. Sustained.

DISTASO: Actually, Your Honor, it's not for the truth, I want to offer it why he went.

GERAGOS: Why does he just say where did you go next.

DISTASO: Well, those areas were searched and he's aware of it.

JUDGE: Right. I'll tell you what, I'll let you explain the subsequent conduct not for the truth. What did Gonzales tell you?

CORDER: He told me what areas he had searched, that way I could determine what areas I wanted to search and concentrate on with my dog.

JUDGE: Go ahead.

DISTASO: Okay. Where did you go?

CORDER: We decided that since they had already been through the park the night prior that myself and Officer Fisher, who was a trainee at the time would search some of the streets and alleyways around the 500 block of Covena

DISTASO: Okay. And did you do that?

CORDER: Yes, we did.

DISTASO: And does that, does People's 33 show any of the areas where you searched? If you look at, do you see Covena listed on there, Edgebrook?

CORDER: Yes.

DISTASO: Can you, you don't need to write on it, but can you just show the neighborhood area you searched.

CORDER: We started here at the intersection of Covena and Edgebrook. I walked the front yards all the way down Highland, and then came back and went through the alley, which runs behind Highland, came back out Santa Barbara, down Encina, and then I went one block north on every one of these streets here: Santa Barbara, Santa Cruz, Rowland and Covena And I went down one block, which I believe is Roble, in that area

DISTASO: Okay. And did you find anything that, anything that you felt was of evidentiary value in the case?

CORDER: No.

DISTASO: And what happened next?

CORDER: We went back to where Covena meets the park. I used my K-9 to search the areas that were hard for people to get into.

DISTASO: Okay. And so when you say "where Covena meets the park," here, this is where the Dry Creek Park area place that would be?

CORDER: Yes.

DISTASO: And we've heard testimony that in these areas are kind of called different names, but I guess this one's Thousand Oaks Park?

CORDER: Correct.

DISTASO: But this whole area is the Dry Creek portion that we're seeing right here?

CORDER: Yes.

DISTASO: And there is a little trail that leads down to the end of the park near Covena?

CORDER: Yes.

DISTASO: And so you took your dog down there?

CORDER: I took my dog down there. Right along this southern edge of the park there there's backyards back up to the edge of the park and there's a lot of shrubbery and bushes and stuff that's overgrown which makes it hard for people to look in there and search, so I use my dog on

an area search to search up through the bushes that weren't visible to the people.

DISTASO: Okay. And your dogs are trained to kind of search out human scent, I guess, down there?

CORDER: Yes.

DISTASO: You scent the dog into the bushes and whatnot. And did the dog find anything of evidentiary value?

CORDER: No.

DISTASO: The area down in there, can you drive a car down into the park there? I mean, can the public take a car down in there?

CORDER: No.

DISTASO: All right. Are you aware of any, like, homeless encampments down there along the creek bed?

CORDER: Yes, I am.

DISTASO: Do the homeless folks drive their cars up there in the, you know, the creek bed and park them and that's where they keep everything?

CORDER: No.

DISTASO: Okay. So you can't get a car down there is what I'm trying to get at?

CORDER: You can, but it's usually reserved for police cars, emergency vehicles or park workers.

DISTASO: So there's access points for official people to get in there, but the public can't take a car down into this area?

CORDER: No.

DISTASO: All right. And what happened next then?

CORDER: I searched eastbound along that southern edge all the way up to where El Vista crosses over the park.

DISTASO: Okay. Let's see. Let me see if that's on this diagram here. Okay, yeah, so if you can come up here right now. Actually, if I can have you do me a favor. You see this is Scenic Road?

CORDER: Yes.

DISTASO: Can you just label it. You can write on it just like that, officer, just write "Scenic" on there so we know what you're talking about.

CORDER: (writes on chart)

DISTASO: And El Vista is, do you see this right here is El Vista?

CORDER: Yes, El Vista is the first major street or the only street that crosses the river east of the tennis courts.

DISTASO: Okay. And El Vista and then Oakdale on the other side, right?

CORDER: Correct. As soon as it meets Scenic, which is right here, it's El Vista this way and Oakdale.

DISTASO: All right. Just go ahead and write, you can write "El Vista" right here where it's kind of in the neighborhood.

CORDER: (writes on chart)

DISTASO: Okay. You can go ahead and have a seat again. So you took your dog and searched the rest of the park all the way to where the El Vista bridge is?

CORDER: Yes.

DISTASO: And did you do the same thing, run the dog along down the creek bed?

CORDER: Along the edge where the dirt actually drops off towards the water. It's steep in some areas and not very safe for people or dogs to work along there, so I worked whatever brush was safe to work along the edge the bank.

DISTASO: And you did that all the way down to the El Vista bridge?

CORDER: I went east on the south edge of the park up to El Vista, and then I turned around and worked the south end of the river bank going westbound.

DISTASO: Okay. Just so we're clear since the directions aren't going to mean a whole lot to people. Can you come up here to the diagram. So you're working the dog along the edge of the creek?

CORDER: First I started where Covena drops into the park.

DISTASO: Hm-hmm. Just so, it would be right here?

CORDER: Which is right here exactly.

DISTASO: Okay.

CORDER: I worked along where you see these residences here. I worked a fence line, which has a lot of bushes along it, all the way down until we got to El Vista. I stopped at El Vista, and then came back and started working the edge of the water and the bank and all the brush all the way back to Kewin Park.

DISTASO: And Kewin Park, we've heard some testimony is on that diagram, would be to the left-hand side kind of the furthest western-most portion of the park?

CORDER: Yes.

DISTASO: And, again, did you find anything of any evidentiary value?

CORDER: No.

DISTASO: All right. Did, what did you do next?

CORDER: As I was working along the edge of the creek I notice that there was quite a bit of water in there and some deep spots, so I requested through Sergeant Beffa that we have the fire department come out with their raft or zodiac and use them to search the waterway.

DISTASO: The fire department, they have some kind of like a swift water rescue team?

CORDER: Yes.

DISTASO: And the creek bed, that Dry Creek bed is kind of a seasonal creek. And what I mean by that, it runs harder in the winter and then kind of lowers down in the summer?

CORDER: Yes.

DISTASO: So this is of course the wintertime in December. And as you were working along the creek you saw it was running pretty good?

CORDER: Yeah, it was running pretty good. It wasn't up to capacity, but it definitely had enough deep spots to where something could be concealed under the water.

DISTASO: Okay. So you said you called for the fire department?

CORDER: Yes, fire department and their boat crew.

DISTASO: Okay. And what happened, did you see and observe what happened?

CORDER: Yes, they came out to the La Loma Park, the main park there next to the tennis courts. And they brought their truck in by the picnic area and their water crew, loaded the zodiac down in the river there.

DISTASO: And did you actually see them run the boat down the entire length of the creek?

CORDER: I saw them run the boat all the way from there to Kewin Park.

DISTASO: Okay. So all the way from the tennis courts area, all the way down to the western-most edge of the park?

CORDER: Yes.

DISTASO: And did they get out of the water and probe the creek and kind of move their boat downward?

CORDER: Yes, they had to because there are certain spots in there where there might be a lot of brush and they actually had to get out and physically move their boat around the brush and the debris.

DISTASO: After you saw that, how many hours had gone by?

CORDER: Probably five to six hours.

DISTASO: Okay. And what happened next then?

CORDER: Once they got down to Kewin Park, I quit following along with them and went ahead and worked the southern edge of the park back up to where the foot path came down.

DISTASO: Did the boat crew continue on down, I mean did you see them continuing but you just turned back?

CORDER: I don't know if they were stopped to move around something and then I continued back. I don't recall.

DISTASO: Okay. So you left them at Kewin Park. And when you say you worked the southern edge, you're coming back from Kewin and, again, working this, the right-hand side of the creek bed; is that right?

CORDER: Yes.

DISTASO: Okay. And what happened next?

CORDER: Well, I not only worked, I worked the creek bed on my way down and I worked the brush near the backyards that back up to the park on the way back up to the foot path.

DISTASO: Okay. And did you use your dog during that search again?

CORDER: Yes.

DISTASO: And when you got back to the foot of the trail at the edge of Covena did you find anything of evidentiary value?

CORDER: No.

DISTASO: And what happened next?

CORDER: I believe it was around 2:00 o'clock or so in the afternoon. I took the trainee that was riding with me, Mr. Fisher, back to the police department where he completed his report.

DISTASO: And when trainee, when trainees are with you, it's kind of their training and duty to write the report of the incident?

CORDER: Yes.

DISTASO: And what happened next, if anything, on that particular day regarding this incident?

CORDER: That's all the action I took that day.

DISTASO: Okay. Were you involved in any other, on any other day of searches that were set up either in Stanislaus County or out of Stanislaus County for Laci Peterson?

CORDER: Yes, I was.

DISTASO: When was the next time you did something?

CORDER: I believe it was January 6th.

DISTASO: And what did you do?

CORDER: I was called by Officer Matt Ponce and he knew that I had some all-terrain vehicles that could be helpful in their search and asked if I would be willing to come with two of my all-terrain vehicles and go up to La Grange, California

DISTASO: All right. Hold on. Let me stop you. Just to put us in the perspective of where we are, Stanislaus County is where Modesto's located, correct?

CORDER: Correct.

DISTASO: And is La Grange, do you know if it's in Stanislaus County?

CORDER: I think it's in about four different counties.

DISTASO: Okay. It's one of those corner places, right?

CORDER: Yes.

DISTASO: Is it east, though, of Modesto?

CORDER: Yes, it's east of Modesto.

DISTASO: So it's kind of towards the foothills?

CORDER: Yes.

DISTASO: What happened then? You were asked to assist in a search out there?

CORDER: Yes. We met up and went to the old La Grange bridge. Officer Ponce knew that there was some mine shafts in the area that they thought they would like to check. Officer Ponce and I rode east from the La Grange foot bridge to a mine shaft going into the side of a mountain. We can see that the sand was disturbed and there were footprints towards it, so I went into the mine shaft and crawled back to see if there was anything in there.

DISTASO: Okay. Did you find anything?

CORDER: No.

DISTASO: Did you do anything else?

CORDER: We checked three other mine shafts up in that same general area during the course of the day.

DISTASO: And you didn't find anything?

CORDER: No.

DISTASO: Were you involved in any other searches for Laci Peterson?

CORDER: No.

DISTASO: Okay. Does that pretty much conclude a summary of the activities you took in this particular investigation?

CORDER: Yes.

DISTASO: All right. Thank you. Nothing further, Your Honor.

Cross Examination by Mark Geragos

JUDGE: Mr. Geragos.

GERAGOS: Thank you, judge.

GERAGOS: Officer Corder, the first time that you were dispatched to this investigation was on the morning, Christmas morning, the 25th?

CORDER: Yes.

GERAGOS: And that was at about 6:00 in the morning you said?

CORDER: 6:46.

GERAGOS: 6:46. The, and you said you thought it was daylight by then?

CORDER: Yeah, I could see around without my flashlight.

GERAGOS: Okay. The first place that you went was where?

CORDER: The 500 block of Covena, right here, Covena and Edgebrook.

JUDGE: There's a pointer there.

CORDER: Okay. We parked several patrol cars right here in this area of Covena

GERAGOS: Covena and Edgebrook?

CORDER: Yeah, there's a end dead right there so it's a good place to park our cars.

GERAGOS: When you say "we," who was there with you?

CORDER: Myself and several other day shift officers were there. I could give you a list of them from my report. It's quite extensive.

GERAGOS: Okay. So more than five or six?

CORDER: Yes.

GERAGOS: Okay. When you went over there were you the only K-9 unit?

CORDER: At that point in time, yes.

GERAGOS: Okay. And then did you work the neighborhood along with this trainee, Fisher?

CORDER: Work the residential streets do you mean?

GERAGOS: The residential streets.

CORDER: Yes.

GERAGOS: Okay. And, specifically, where did you go first?

CORDER: I started by walking along the front yards of Highland. This is the Peterson residence here and this is the street that backs up to it.

GERAGOS: Okay.

CORDER: A lot of these houses have really deep set front yards with some garages in the back. So I actually walked back into several of those yards to see if anybody could have gone back there and been injured. Went back, looked around and continued along the front of all the residences looking, checking things such as garbage cans or there was a lot of prunings on the street.

GERAGOS: Okay. As you're going along, what would your typical search be of a house? Would you go into the backyards or were you basically just trying to go through the front yards and see if there was anything around?

CORDER: Just check the front yards. Something that would be easy for a person if they were injured or something where they might stumble up to.

GERAGOS: So I understand correctly so the jury understands, you're not, you're not going inside the houses here?

CORDER: No, not inside the houses or the backyards.

GERAGOS: Or the backyards. What you're doing is looking to see in the front yards or on the side yards where you can see, I take it, whether or not somebody's either stumbled or fell or something like that?

CORDER: Yes.

GERAGOS: Then as you do that were you assigned to a specific area? Did you guys take quadrants or areas. Did you divide that. Let me ask you it better. When you parked easterly, there was a number of officers it looks as many as 10 or 15, right?

CORDER: Correct.

GERAGOS: Do you guys divide up the territory you're going to go look up?

CORDER: I don't remember what exactly how we divided the area. I know that we had a method to it. I know that Fisher and I would take a couple blocks either way.

GERAGOS: Okay. Now as you're coming along here, you're just looking in the front yards. To the best of your knowledge, is that standard practice for one of these types of search so that the others would be doing roughly the same, just going through front yard to front yard?

CORDER: On a missing person-type search?

GERAGOS: Yes.

CORDER: Yes.

GERAGOS: Okay. So I understand correctly, nothing that you know of was ordered or you weren't instructed to go and search houses, I take it, inside the residences?

CORDER: No.

GERAGOS: As you went down Highland and you went through the front yards, how far down did you go?

CORDER: Highland comes down, it intersects with Santa Barbara here. And this small alley that runs behind here actually comes back into Highland about over here off your map.

GERAGOS: Okay.

CORDER: Once I came through the front yards and the street looking here, I went back up the alley, came back around and then checked back down Covena and then all the surrounding streets.

GERAGOS: Okay. Now what was the, do you have a clear memory of on Covena that morning, Christmas morning, I assume you were there at 6:46 all the way through 2:00 in the afternoon, did I understand that correct?

CORDER: Correct.

GERAGOS: Okay. During that time did the street become active or filled up with people? Covena is what I'm referring to.

CORDER: I don't recall being packed or anything, just a normal police activity going around with people searching different areas.

GERAGOS: Okay. Now at the time that you finished doing these yard searches, for a lack of a better term, did you then, you kind of did a full sweep, I guess, of the alley; is that fair?

CORDER: Yes.

GERAGOS: And that's you, Fisher and your dog?

CORDER: I didn't have my dog at the time.

GERAGOS: Okay. Where was the dog?

CORDER: He was in the car parked at Covena and Edgebrook.

GERAGOS: Did you then go back and get the dog?

CORDER: Not until I finished searching the yards and alleyways.

GERAGOS: Okay. How long did that take?

CORDER: The report indicates that we finished the yards around 8:00 o'clock. I believe it took a little longer than that.

GERAGOS: Okay. When you went, what did you do after you finished doing the yards?

CORDER: I went back and got my K-9 partner.

GERAGOS: Okay. And what's the K-9's name?

CORDER: Nike.

GERAGOS: And you and Nike went where?

CORDER: We went down the foot path.

GERAGOS: Okay. Now as you, that would be at the end of Covena, correct?

CORDER: Yes.

GERAGOS: Okay. The Peterson house is here and 200 yards down to the foot path there?

CORDER: Yes.

GERAGOS: Okay. Then you walked down the foot path, that's a fairly well-traveled path, is it not?

CORDER: Yes.

GERAGOS: Okay. And that leads into the park itself?

CORDER: Yes.

GERAGOS: What's the, various officers testified of various names of the park is, but do you have, are you familiar with this park area?

CORDER: Yes.

GERAGOS: What, as you first entered this park, as you go down the trail into the park off of Covena, by the way, right here there is a kind of a dead end or end of a cul-de-sac, isn't it?

CORDER: Well, the roadway ends in this area here. It just stops right here. Actually, seems like it's right back over here in an actual paved surface and then there is a,

GERAGOS: And then there is a path that goes into the park, correct?

CORDER: Yes.

GERAGOS: Now when you enter into it, what is the name of that park as you go in?

CORDER: It depends who you ask.

GERAGOS: That's true.

CORDER: And what map you're looking at. It's got Thousand Oaks Park, East La Loma Park. I usually call it La Loma Park.

GERAGOS: La Loma Park?

CORDER: Yes.

GERAGOS: Now when you went down that path, you had your K-9, you had Nike with you, right?

CORDER: Yes.

GERAGOS: Okay. And what was the first area you went, did you go to the left or the right?

CORDER: I went to the right.

GERAGOS: Okay. And as you went to the right, is this, is this area in here, there's a lot of vegetation around here; is there not?

CORDER: Along the edges most of the way there's quite a bit of vegetation.

GERAGOS: Okay. And were you searching or looking in that vegetation in there?

CORDER: Yes, the dog was.

GERAGOS: Okay. You didn't go in?

CORDER: I would search it as easy, if it was easy to get in there without being over in head in brush I would.

GERAGOS: Okay. And then did you find any items at all, whether mittens or gloves or things of that nature?

CORDER: No.

GERAGOS: Okay. Did you, as the dog was searching you would work the brush areas, correct?

CORDER: Yes.

GERAGOS: And then you turned to the right and headed in, I guess on, probably easier to look on 36, isn't it, if you get your bearings here as to where you are.

CORDER: Here's right where the path comes down here.

GERAGOS: Okay. And where did you go from there?

CORDER: I worked the brush area all along the back of the houses, which would be the south side of the park.

GERAGOS: Okay.

CORDER: And as I worked it all the way up to El Vista, then I searched and came back around.

GERAGOS: Okay. Now as you're doing that, are you running into any transients along the way in this area?

CORDER: I didn't see any transients along this area here.

GERAGOS: Where did you see them?

CORDER: I heard, well, actually I saw some officers talking to some transients.

GERAGOS: Over by the hospital area?

CORDER: Right across from where hospital is. So let's see, it should be,

GERAGOS: Is that right below Scenic?

CORDER: Yeah, it's right below Scenic a little bit west of where Coffee Road west intersects with it.

GERAGOS: Okay. Now, as you and the dog are working this area and the brush, approximately how long did it take you to do that, to get down to El Vista?

CORDER: I really have no idea

GERAGOS: Okay. Is it a fair statement that whatever time you got back from doing the front yard searches, 8:00 to 8:30, whatever that might have been then, that you then went down to the park and spent the rest of your time down in the park?

CORDER: Yes.

GERAGOS: Okay. And the rest of the time you went down in the park you were with Nike?

CORDER: Yes.

GERAGOS: Okay. At approximately what time did the fire department show up?

CORDER: I don't recall and it's not indicated in the report.

GERAGOS: Okay. Had you been in the park for a while before they showed up?

CORDER: Whatever time it took me to get down to El Vista and start working the actual river edge back is when I thought there was some kind of hazardous-looking spots and deep spots and we ought to call for fire. I made a request through Lieutenant Beffa or Lieutenant Able, whoever was there, whatever time it took to organize their team and come out.

GERAGOS: Now when say there's some hazardous spots or some deep spots, as you're working this area along the backyards, is there a, is there a trail that one could walk on? You walked about the trail that comes off of Covena, is there also a walking trail that goes along to El Vista?

CORDER: There is. There's a paved area that runs right down the middle the park. It's a bike and walking path.

GERAGOS: Okay. And how far from the bike and walking path is the deep water as you described it or these hazardous areas?

CORDER: It varies because the path, the paved path goes at an angle through the park.

GERAGOS: So it serpentine, swings back and forth closer to the area and then farther away at different points?

CORDER: Yes.

GERAGOS: Okay. What's the closest that it gets?

CORDER: This is just a guess, but it may be as close as 25 to 30 feet.

GERAGOS: Okay. Now as you're heading towards El Vista, are there some tennis courts as well that are, that you would pass?

CORDER: Yes.

GERAGOS: Okay. And there's also a parking lot, I believe, is that correct, where I've got my pen?

CORDER: That's correct.

GERAGOS: Okay. So you're working this area on the side that goes all the way passed the tennis courts, and then you turn around and you come back along this route that I've got my pen on?

CORDER: Exactly.

GERAGOS: Now at what point did you meet up with the fire department?

CORDER: About straight across from the tennis court area

GERAGOS: Okay. And were they on the other side? You had been working, what is this, the north side?

CORDER: South side.

GERAGOS: South side, I'm sorry. Be working the south side and pass the tennis courts, you meet up with them as you're on the south side?

CORDER: On the north side.

GERAGOS: On the north side. Okay. Then did they actually get into the water?

CORDER: Yes.

GERAGOS: And are they in boats?

CORDER: They're in a zodiac boat is what I call it. I don't know if that's exactly what they're called. It kind of has metal alluminum bottom and it's rubber on the outsides.

GERAGOS: Okay. How many people are in those?

CORDER: I don't remember.

GERAGOS: More than one?

CORDER: Well, the crew was probably three or four guys. I don't remember how many were in the boat and how many were acting as safety officers with ropes.

GERAGOS: Okay. Can you describe for the jury what they were doing in the creek.

CORDER: They were going along in the boat in the areas where the boat would fit and they were probing any deep holes or any areas that you couldn't plainly see and make sure that there was nothing in the water.

GERAGOS: Okay. Would the boat float along as they were doing this?

CORDER: In some portions.

GERAGOS: Okay. And did they have ropes attached to it?

CORDER: I believe they had ropes attached to the boat and to the firemen for a safety line.

GERAGOS: Okay. And somebody's on the ground while they're in the boat walking along?

CORDER: Yes, there was a fireman that was walking along the bank up top where it's flat.

GERAGOS: And you, you and Nike are following along there as well?

CORDER: Yes.

GERAGOS: Okay. Now as you're doing that are you checking the brush areas as well?

CORDER: Yes.

GERAGOS: Okay. And this takes approximately how long, two hours?

CORDER: Maybe. That just be a guess, two hours.

GERAGOS: Okay.

CORDER: Maybe more, maybe less.

GERAGOS: Who else was with you besides Nike at any point besides the fire crew?

CORDER: Officer Fisher was there and later in the day I believe two of our horse units came out and they were also paralleling the boat crew that was going down.

GERAGOS: Okay. Now in the report it says at one point you crossed into the bridge north of the river. Do you know where that is?

CORDER: Yes.

GERAGOS: Can you point that out on the map.

CORDER: As you come along the part there's a foot bridge and crosses, heads, this would be Coffee Road, dead ends, and the foot bridge comes out right in that area. I think that you can see it runs right down through here and angles over.

GERAGOS: Do you want to write down with one of these markers, a black one, and just write "foot bridge" there.

CORDER: (writes on map)

GERAGOS: Now, the, you indicated before in your testimony you stopped searching at about 2:00 o'clock; is that correct?

CORDER: Correct.

GERAGOS: And the initial, or at least the report indicates that there was two CSOs, three equestrian units, two bike units, is that accurate as far as you can remember?

CORDER: Yes.

GERAGOS: Okay. And were all of those people with you during the entire time period of the search down in the park itself?

CORDER: No, they weren't with me, they would take their own areas or walk whatever area they wanted to walk.

GERAGOS: Okay. And then did you all come back up through the park and up the trail that leads back onto Covena?

CORDER: I don't know how they came out, but my car was still parked there so that's where I exited.

GERAGOS: Okay. Did you see while you were in the park that day other nonsworn law enforcement personnel, civilians searching?

CORDER: Nonsworn law enforcement?

GERAGOS: Yes, other than the fire department and the CSOs, did you see civilians at the park?

CORDER: Civilians, yes, I did.

GERAGOS: Okay. Did it appear to be people using the park or people who were actually searching?

CORDER: A little of both.

GERAGOS: Okay. Can you estimate how many people were out there? This would have been on Christmas day.

CORDER: I couldn't even estimate.

GERAGOS: Now, the, Mr. Distaso asked you about whether, I guess that ended your involvement at this point, 2:00 o'clock, that's the end of your shift?

CORDER: The end of my shift was actually 5:00 o'clock that night.

GERAGOS: Okay. Where did you go after too?

CORDER: I went to the station to let Mr. Fisher complete his report.

GERAGOS: Okay. And did you do anything else in connection with the search the following day on the 26th?

CORDER: I don't recall specifically going to do any searching. If I did, it might have just been a drive through of the park when I began my day.

GERAGOS: Okay. Now when you say, there was there some questions about the vehicles in the park. Vehicles can actually drive into the park and, in fact, there is a parking lot; is there not?

CORDER: Yes.

GERAGOS: That's specifically right here where the pen is. Would you mark down the parking lot area

CORDER: (Witness complies.) Okay.

GERAGOS: Is that the only parking lot in the park as far as you're aware?

CORDER: Yes.

GERAGOS: Okay. How far on the other side where the foot bridge is, and that's Scenic as we indicated before, how far away would you say Scenic is from that foot bridge area, the actual road, from the road to the foot bridge?

CORDER: Well, the foot bridge there's actually a path that leads from the foot bridge all the way up to Scenic. It's down at the base of a hill. It would strictly be a guess to say 50 to 75 yards from the actual bridge to the Scenic Road.

GERAGOS: Right. And from Scenic you can actually park and walk down the path?

CORDER: I don't know if you could or not at that time. There used to be some businesses on that side of the road and they had been torn down and I don't know if you could at that time.

GERAGOS: Okay. How about now at the present time?

CORDER: I'm not sure. I haven't looked over there.

GERAGOS: Are there multiple openings into the park from other streets, such as there is from Covena, and other areas around this entire area that you searched? There are other areas where the street you can drive up to the street, park, and just walk and via path into the park?

CORDER: The only other one I know of is further down Edgebrook and it's a path that leads to, there's a pumphouse down there. I think they call it Thousand Oaks Pumphouse or something like that, and that's the only other real path that I can think of.

GERAGOS: Okay. Now you know where the foot bridge is there's also the, Officer Hudson was just in here and talking about when you cross that bridge there's a large expansive grass. Do you know where I'm talking about where there's some rest rooms and a grassy area over the foot bridge.

CORDER: Well, there's a lot of grass across the foot bridge. I don't remember if there's a bathroom.

GERAGOS: Okay. Do you remember where you can pull up on the street and there's literally some cement steps that go right into the grass area where you can just park and walk five or six steps into the park at that point?

CORDER: I really don't know. I don't work that side of town that often.

GERAGOS: Okay. Fair enough. The 26th you said you may have done a drive through, is that correct, drive through the park?

CORDER: Correct.

GERAGOS: 27th?

CORDER: 27th I was dispatched to a suspicious person call.

GERAGOS: In regards to this case?

CORDER: Yes.

GERAGOS: And where was that?

CORDER: Um, if I can refer to my report.

GERAGOS: Sure. Do you have your report in front of you?

CORDER: I do. 344 Covena on the 27th.

GERAGOS: Let's just see if you and I are talking from the same report.

CORDER: Yes.

GERAGOS: Okay. The, this was a call that you that had been received and you were dispatched out to; is that correct?

CORDER: Correct.

GERAGOS: And there was, specifically where was it?

CORDER: 344 Covena?

GERAGOS: Yeah.

CORDER: It's the corner of Covena and Roble, which is not indicated on this map. It would be the corner house, one block down from Encena

GERAGOS: Okay.

CORDER: It be about here.

GERAGOS: At that point, was the call was in regards to a van?

CORDER: Not really a van, it was in regards to a volunteer passing out fliers.

GERAGOS: Okay.

CORDER: Walked up to a house, and when they walked up they thought they saw somebody hiding inside the house or they thought they saw somebody run to the back of the house.

GERAGOS: Okay. When you went there you didn't find anybody; is that correct?

CORDER: No, it was a vacant house under renovation.

GERAGOS: And that was approximately how far away, we talked about two blocks?

CORDER: Two blocks.

GERAGOS: Okay. You didn't go inside the residence, just kind of peered through the windows?

CORDER: Peered through the windows on all sides. It was secure.

GERAGOS: Okay. Thank you. I have no further questions.

Redirect Examination by Rick Distaso

JUDGE: Redirect examination.

DISTASO: Thank you, Your Honor.

DISTASO: Officer Corder, I take it that this other incident on the 27th you went around the house, looked in the windows, right?

CORDER: Yes.

DISTASO: You said it appeared to be under renovation?

CORDER: Yes, there was no furniture inside. It looked like somebody had been doing work inside.

DISTASO: And there was a van outside that looked like it hadn't been driven in some time?

CORDER: Yes.

DISTASO: Did you go back and check that again or did you see that again at some point?

CORDER: I did. Detective Buehler had mentioned it to me and wanted to know what I had seen when I went out there. I told him what I had seen and told him that I would actually go back in the house and see if the van was still there, and I did and the house was still not finished.

DISTASO: So pretty much in the same condition you saw it before?

CORDER: Yes.

DISTASO: And that the time span between the 27th when you first went out there and then the second time?

CORDER: I can't recall exactly. I'm just going off of the date on Detective Buehler's report, which is February 27th of 2003, so almost two months.

DISTASO: So almost two months later. Okay. And then regarding the people in your report that were helping you or that were at least out there on the search on the 25th, it looks like there was yourself, Officer Nicolai, Lieutenant Able, Sergeant Beffa, Officer MacDonald, Officer Wallace, Officer Bloed, Officer Lee, Officer Nickerson, Officer Baldwin, Officer Rhea, Sergeant Melton, Officer McGill, Officer Ponce, Officer Parsons, Officer Gonzales, Officer Barba, Detective Banks, Detective Brocchini, CSO Cline and CSO Nicolai. And CSO means Community Service Officer, right?

CORDER: Yes.

DISTASO: Those aren't like patrol officers, those are investigative techs, that kind of thing?

CORDER: Yeah, they respond to non-injury traffic accidents and cold burglaries, burglaries that have already happened and there's no chance of a suspect being there.

DISTASO: Okay. And three equestrian units, two bike units, two K-9 units, and that was yourself and Officer Gonzales, right?

CORDER: Actually, Officer Parsons is a K-9 unit, also.

DISTASO: The fire department you told us about one detective. I think that covers it. And that's it, Your Honor. I don't have anything else.

Recross Examination by Mark Geragos

JUDGE: Mr. Geragos.

GERAGOS: There's an area called Moose Park there, also?

CORDER: Yes.

GERAGOS: Is there a parking lot there as well?

CORDER: Yes, Moose Park has its own parking lot.

GERAGOS: Can you see that on the aerial view that's up on the board, 37?

CORDER: Yes.

GERAGOS: Can you mark that.

CORDER: No, actually, it's kind of hard to see here.

GERAGOS: Do you want to just circle it.

CORDER: Yes.

GERAGOS: Thank you. I have no further question.

JUDGE: May this witness be excused?

GERAGOS: Yes.

DISTASO: Yes.

CORDER: Thank you, Your Honor.