

Reference Document

"Is Watchtower Harboring a Fugitive at their Headquarters?"

Every Claim, Source, and Verification Status

How to Use This Document

Each entry identifies a specific factual claim made in the video, the source it is based on, where to verify it, and any notes on confidence level. Claims are organized in the order they appear in the video.

Verification levels:

- **PRIMARY** — Sourced from court rulings, court dockets and filings, legislation, official Watchtower publications (including internal manuals like *Shepherd the Flock of God*), IRS filings, Secretary of State corporate records, county property records, or other government/regulatory records. Primary sources can stand on their own.
- **SECONDARY** — Sourced from established advocacy or legal resource sites, academic researchers, or reputable investigative journalism (here, primarily WBIR-TV / 10News, the Knoxville NBC affiliate that reported this story from the beginning). Secondary sources support claims and are strongest when paired with a primary or another independent secondary.

A note on the federal case: the central court record in this video is *Winstead et al. v. Brookhaven Retreat, LLC et al.*, Case No. 3:19-cv-00162, U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Tennessee. Quotations attributed to “the filing” or “paragraph 9” come from the Status Report of Service Regarding Defendant Dawes (Document 22, filed December 3, 2019, with Exhibits A–D). The full docket is publicly available and linked throughout.

SECTION 1: The Paper Trail — Service of Process at Watchtower Farms

Claim: A federal lawsuit by 21 former Brookhaven Retreat employees named Jacqueline Dawes as a defendant; it was filed May 8, 2019, in the Eastern District of Tennessee.

- **Source:** *Winstead et al. v. Brookhaven Retreat, LLC et al.*, Case No. 3:19-cv-00162 (E.D. Tenn.), docket
- **URL:** <https://www.courtlistener.com/docket/15071712/winstead-v-brookhaven-retreat-llc/>
- **Verification:** PRIMARY — Federal court docket (CourtListener / PACER-sourced).
- **Note:** Docket confirms the complaint was filed 05/08/2019 by 21 plaintiffs and that summonses issued as to both Brookhaven Retreat, LLC and Jacqueline Dawes.

Claim: To sue Dawes personally, plaintiffs had to serve her; they could not locate her, and in late October 2019 received a tip from “one of the other creditors of Defendant Dawes” that she was at Watchtower Farms, 800 Red Mills Road, Walkill, New York.

- **Source:** Document 22, Status Report of Service Regarding Defendant Dawes (filed Dec. 3, 2019), *Winstead v. Brookhaven Retreat*
- **URL:** <https://www.courtlistener.com/docket/15071712/winstead-v-brookhaven-retreat-llc/>
- **Verification:** PRIMARY — Federal court filing.
- **Note:** The address and the creditor-tip origin are stated in the filing. Per Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 4, a plaintiff must deliver (“serve”) the summons and complaint before the case can proceed against a defendant individually.

Claim: Plaintiffs sent Dawes certified mail, restricted delivery, to Watchtower Farms. The first envelope went out October 17, 2019, stamped repeatedly with the USPS “Restricted Delivery” stamp in red ink; the green-card receipt came back October 30, 2019, signed by someone listed as her agent — not Dawes.

- **Source:** Document 22 with Exhibits A–D, *Winstead v. Brookhaven Retreat*
- **URL:** <https://www.courtlistener.com/docket/15071712/winstead-v-brookhaven-retreat-llc/>
- **Verification:** PRIMARY — Federal court filing and attached exhibits.
- **Key quote / Direct text:** The filing describes the envelope as “stamped multiple times, as well as the ends of the green return receipt document, with the United States Postal Services stamp ‘Restricted Delivery’ in red ink.”
- **Note:** “Restricted delivery” means only the named addressee — or an agent she formally authorized — is permitted to sign.

Claim: A second certified, restricted-delivery envelope was sent November 6, 2019 (stamped “no less than ten times”), and that green card came back November 20, 2019, again signed by an agent rather than by Dawes.

- **Source:** Document 22 with Exhibits A–D, *Winstead v. Brookhaven Retreat*
- **URL:** <https://www.courtlistener.com/docket/15071712/winstead-v-brookhaven-retreat-llc/>
- **Verification:** PRIMARY — Federal court filing and attached exhibits.

Claim: When plaintiffs' counsel contacted the Wallkill post office, the Postmaster stated that when his office asks whether a named addressee is a resident of Watchtower Farms, the answer is “usually no or is an evasive answer” — and that at no time did Watchtower Farms inform the Postal Service or counsel that Dawes did not reside there.

- **Source:** Document 22, paragraph 9, *Winstead v. Brookhaven Retreat*
- **URL:** <https://www.courtlistener.com/docket/15071712/winstead-v-brookhaven-retreat-llc/>
- **Verification:** PRIMARY — Federal court filing, sworn by an officer of the court.
- **Key quote / Direct text:** “The Postmaster stated that the answer is usually no or is an evasive answer... To Counsel's knowledge, at no time during this service process has Watchtower Farms informed or reported to the Postal Service or undersigned Counsel that Defendant Dawes did not reside at Watchtower Farms.”

Claim: On December 4, 2019, the court ordered plaintiffs to serve Dawes by January 21, 2020, or the claims against her would be dismissed; on January 28, 2020, the claims against Dawes individually were dismissed without prejudice under Rule 4(m) because she was never served.

- **Source:** *Winstead v. Brookhaven Retreat* docket, orders dated 12/4/2019 and 1/28/2020 (Judge Harry S. Mattice, Jr.)
- **URL:** <https://www.courtlistener.com/docket/15071712/winstead-v-brookhaven-retreat-llc/>
- **Verification:** PRIMARY — Federal court docket entries.
- **Note:** “Without prejudice” means the claims could, in principle, be refiled — but only if Dawes can be located and served. As of this writing, the public record reflects no such service. WBIR summarized the outcome: the former employees “can file it again some day — if they can find her to serve her legally.”

SECTION 2: The Money — What Dawes Was Running From

Claim: Brookhaven Retreat closed without warning on March 5, 2019. Dawes emailed staff that morning; about forty employees lost their jobs and roughly five patients in active treatment were sent home.

- **Source:** WBIR-TV / 10News, multiple reports (“Clients, families praise shuttered women's center”; “Records: Women's treatment center had persistent money problems”)
- **URL:** <https://www.wbir.com/article/news/local/clients-families-praise-shuttered-womens-center/51-0b14ddb4-e357-49e0-8d0a-2da286bee2c9>
- **Verification:** SECONDARY — Regional NBC affiliate investigative reporting.
- **Note:** WBIR reports staff were told the morning of March 5 that the center would close by day's end, and that the roughly five clients then in residence had to be packed up and sent home.

Claim: Brookhaven charged roughly \$49,000–\$50,000 a month for its private residency program.

- **Source:** WBIR-TV / 10News (“Records: Women's treatment center had persistent money problems” cites \$49,000; “Former women's center operator faces \$4.2M” cites about \$50,000)
- **URL:** <https://www.wbir.com/article/news/records-womens-treatment-center-had-money-problems-for-months/51-f12d7cde-517a-43fb-bdc4-75cf26d97661>
- **Verification:** SECONDARY — Regional NBC affiliate reporting.
- **Note:** WBIR cited the monthly cost as both “\$49,000” and “about \$50,000” across different articles; both figures trace to the same outlet.

Claim: On March 8, 2019 — three days after the closure — the IRS filed tax liens covering \$2.6 million in unpaid taxes for 2015 and \$1.66 million for 2016, totaling \$4.2 million, against Dawes and Brookhaven.

- **Source:** WBIR-TV / 10News, “Former women's center operator faces \$4.2M in federal tax liens” (Mar. 21, 2019)
- **URL:** <https://www.wbir.com/article/news/former-womens-center-owner-faces-42m-in-federal-liens/51-846c95cb-2265-4a88-8fb8-eb85ea6a9ebc>
- **Verification:** SECONDARY — Reporting on PRIMARY public IRS lien filings. The underlying liens are government records.
- **Note:** A later WBIR article references about \$4.4 million; that reflects accrued penalties and interest on the same debt. Both figures are accurate at different points in time.

Claim: Pinnacle Bank held a \$7 million mortgage on the Brookhaven property (dating to 2013), backed by a \$5.1 million promissory note from Riccochet, LLC, a Dawes-controlled entity. Riccochet fell behind on January and February 2019 payments; by March 7 the balance due was \$4.86 million with interest accruing at \$832 a day. The bank foreclosed in April 2019.

- **Source:** WBIR-TV / 10News, “Bank forecloses on pricey former Blount County women's treatment center” (Apr. 2019)
- **URL:** <https://www.wbir.com/article/news/bank-forecloses-on-pricey-former-blount-county-womens-treatment-center/51-466e5f96-8579-4d30-a8d9-d84bc8b8dcd7>
- **Verification:** SECONDARY — Reporting on PRIMARY records (promissory note, foreclosure filings).
- **Note:** “Riccochet” is spelled with two C's; this matches the Tennessee Secretary of State registration and is not a transcription error.

Claim: In 2016, seven former employees sued Dawes for unpaid wages and settled in December 2017 — meaning the 2019 suit was the second time her workers took her to federal court.

- **Source:** WBIR-TV / 10News, “Records: Women's treatment center had persistent money problems” (Mar. 11, 2019)
- **URL:** <https://www.wbir.com/article/news/records-womens-treatment-center-had-money-problems-for-months/51-f12d7cde-517a-43fb-bdc4-75cf26d97661>
- **Verification:** SECONDARY — Reporting on PRIMARY federal court records.

Claim: A separate \$180,000 settlement was due by March 2018; Dawes did not pay it, and attorney Jesse Nelson sued in Knox County Chancery Court in August 2018 to enforce it. Nelson's filing stated Brookhaven “routinely avoids paying vendors, creditors and employees.”

- **Source:** WBIR-TV / 10News, “Records: Women's treatment center had persistent money problems” (Mar. 11, 2019)
- **URL:** <https://www.wbir.com/article/news/records-womens-treatment-center-had-money-problems-for-months/51-f12d7cde-517a-43fb-bdc4-75cf26d97661>
- **Verification:** SECONDARY — Reporting on a PRIMARY Chancery Court filing.
- **Key quote / Direct text:** Nelson's complaint states Brookhaven “routinely avoids paying vendors, creditors and employees.”

Claim: In April 2018, a Houston couple, David and Kristi Lumpkins, sued Dawes over a \$147,000 payment for their daughter's treatment; their filing accused Dawes of running Brookhaven “as a sham designed to perpetuate fraud against unsuspecting customers.”

- **Source:** WBIR-TV / 10News reporting on the Lumpkins complaint (Blount County / Tennessee court filing)
- **URL:** <https://www.wbir.com/article/news/records-womens-treatment-center-had-money-problems-for-months/51-f12d7cde-517a-43fb-bdc4-75cf26d97661>
- **Verification:** SECONDARY — Reporting on a PRIMARY court filing.
- **Key quote / Direct text:** The complaint alleges Dawes operated Brookhaven “as a sham designed to perpetuate fraud against unsuspecting customers, all in an attempt to fund her personal endeavors.”
- **Note:** WBIR's “money problems” article frames the underlying dispute as a refund fight over treatment for the couple's daughter, whose stay ended in December 2015.

Claim: Knoxville attorney Charmaine Nichols sued Brookhaven in 2016 on behalf of a Florida man whose daughter left treatment before her time was up and who sought a month's deposit back; Nichols won a judgment (in 2018) and, despite filing garnishments, never collected.

- **Source:** WBIR-TV / 10News, “Records: Women's treatment center had persistent money problems” and “Former women's center operator faces \$4.2M in federal tax liens”
- **URL:** <https://www.wbir.com/article/news/records-womens-treatment-center-had-money-problems-for-months/51-f12d7cde-517a-43fb-bdc4-75cf26d97661>
- **Verification:** SECONDARY — Reporting on PRIMARY court records, plus direct attorney comment to WBIR.
- **Note:** WBIR reports Nichols sued in 2016 on behalf of “a Florida man whose daughter left the treatment program before her full time was up,” won a judgment “last summer,” and has been trying to recover the money “ever since, including filing garnishments.”

Claim: Brookhaven accountant Heather Martin testified under oath that she had seen Dawes take \$493,000 in a single direct transfer from Brookhaven's operating accounts to her personal account; former employee Ana Garcia-Smith testified that staff had to rush client deposits to keep banks from closing accounts and that she fielded calls from utilities over unpaid bills.

- **Source:** WBIR-TV / 10News, "Records: Women's treatment center had persistent money problems" (Mar. 11, 2019), reporting on affidavits filed in the Chancery Court enforcement case
- **URL:** <https://www.wbir.com/article/news/records-womens-treatment-center-had-money-problems-for-months/51-f12d7cde-517a-43fb-bdc4-75cf26d97661>
- **Verification:** SECONDARY — Reporting on PRIMARY sworn affidavits.
- **Key quote / Direct text:** WBIR reports Martin "said she'd seen Dawes take \$493,000 in a direct transfer for herself from Brookhaven's operating accounts."

SECTION 3: The Pattern — Who Watchtower Farms Took In

Claim: Brookhaven catered to a wealthy, discreet, national clientele and counted a pop star among its clients; Dawes herself held no medical license or certification.

- **Source:** WBIR-TV / 10News, "Former women's center operator faces \$4.2M in federal tax liens" (states "Dawes holds no medical licensure or certification") and related coverage
- **URL:** <https://www.wbir.com/article/news/former-womens-center-owner-faces-42m-in-federal-liens/51-846c95cb-2265-4a88-8fb8-eb85ea6a9ebc>
- **Verification:** SECONDARY — Regional NBC affiliate reporting.
- **Note:** WBIR describes the clientele as wealthy and discreet and reports Dawes held no medical licensure or certification.

Claim: Dawes lived a lavish lifestyle, including a multimillion-dollar South Knox County mansion called Bellamont (variously listed between roughly \$5 million and \$8.4 million) and high-dollar gatherings at the Blackberry Farm resort.

- **Source:** WBIR-TV / 10News, "Former women's center operator faces \$4.2M in federal tax liens" and "lawsuit...dismissed" coverage
- **URL:** <https://www.wbir.com/article/news/former-womens-center-owner-faces-42m-in-federal-liens/51-846c95cb-2265-4a88-8fb8-eb85ea6a9ebc>
- **Verification:** SECONDARY — Regional NBC affiliate reporting; the property listing and sale are reflected in county records.
- **Note:** WBIR reported the Bellamont estate was offered at \$8.4 million and later reported the home sold in July (2019) for \$3.56 million to a Nashville holding company; the separate Brookhaven treatment-center property was acquired by Pinnacle Bank at foreclosure in a transfer valued at about \$3.4 million.

Claim: All of Dawes's financial and legal troubles were publicly reported by WBIR from March 2019 onward — months before her relocation to New York — and were not obscure.

- **Source:** WBIR-TV / 10News, ongoing investigative series (March 2019 – February 2020)
- **URL:** <https://www.wbir.com/article/news/crime/hard-to-find-blount-woman-who-ran-pricey-center-may-be-living-on-jehovahs-witnesses-farm/51-8e3d4384-96dc-4e3c-9414-98206e8dde2a>
- **Verification:** SECONDARY — Regional NBC affiliate reporting.
- **Note:** WBIR states it "has reported numerous stories about Dawes, her high-flying life and her abrupt disappearance from East Tennessee."

SECTION 4: The Denial — Watchtower's Public Statement

Claim: In coverage published in early 2020, Bryce Hemmelgarn, assistant director of communication for the U.S. Branch of Jehovah's Witnesses, said the organization had no record that Jacqueline Dawes had lived at Watchtower Farms.

- **Source:** WBIR-TV / 10News, “Hard to find: Blount woman who ran pricey center may be living on Jehovah's Witnesses farm”
- **URL:** <https://www.wbir.com/article/news/crime/hard-to-find-blount-woman-who-ran-pricey-center-may-be-living-on-jehovahs-witnesses-farm/51-8e3d4384-96dc-4e3c-9414-98206e8dde2a>
- **Verification:** SECONDARY — Direct attribution in regional NBC affiliate reporting.
- **Key quote / Direct text:** “Bryce Hemmelgarn, assistant director of communication for the United States branch of the Jehovah's Witnesses, said, however, the group has no record she has lived at the farm.”

Claim: Hemmelgarn is a long-standing, senior media spokesperson for the U.S. Branch of Jehovah's Witnesses, quoted by national and regional outlets over many years.

- **Source:** FOX 5 New York, “Inside the Jehovah's Witnesses headquarters” (2017); Deseret News (2020), which calls him “a national spokesman for the faith who lives in New York”
- **URL:** <https://www.fox5ny.com/news/inside-the-jehovahs-witnesses-headquarters-in-orange-county-ny>
- **Verification:** SECONDARY — Multiple independent outlets identify Hemmelgarn as a Jehovah's Witnesses spokesperson.
- **Note:** Outlets describe his role variously as “spokesperson,” “national spokesman,” and “assistant director of communication for the United States branch.” Deseret News (2020) is at: <https://www.deseret.com/faith/2020/8/18/21362454/>

Claim: The federal docket shows certified mail addressed to Dawes was accepted at Watchtower Farms on two occasions in October and November 2019, and that Watchtower never told the Postal Service or counsel she did not reside there — facts in tension with the later “no record” statement.

- **Source:** Document 22, paragraph 9, *Winstead v. Brookhaven Retreat*, WBIR “no record” reporting
- **URL:** <https://www.courtlistener.com/docket/15071712/winstead-v-brookhaven-retreat-llc/>
- **Verification:** PRIMARY — Federal court filing (the service facts); SECONDARY for the spokesperson statement.
- **Note:** The video presents the tension between these two records as the central question and does not assert which explanation is correct; it identifies the two possibilities the record leaves open.

SECTION 5: The Double Standard — Congregational Discipline vs. Dawes

Claim: Watchtower's confidential elders' manual, *Shepherd the Flock of God* (2025 edition), addresses fraud, stating that “Fraud involves intentionally deceiving another person in order to take something that belongs to him,” and that a judicial committee may be formed if fraud is established after the steps of Matthew 18:15-17.

- **Source:** *Shepherd the Flock of God* (2025 edition), Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society — section on “Fraud and Slander”
- **URL:** <https://avoidjw.org/>
- **Verification:** PRIMARY — Internal Watchtower elders' manual.

- **Note:** The manual is an internal, confidential document; analysis and copies are catalogued by AvoidJW.org and other research archives. The video quotes the manual's own language on fraud and the judicial-committee process.

Claim: Ordinary Jehovah's Witnesses can face a judicial committee and disfellowshipping (expulsion and shunning) for conduct the organization classifies as serious wrongdoing, while the public record reflects no comparable accountability for Dawes.

- **Source:** *Shepherd the Flock of God*; creator's 40 years of firsthand experience inside the organization
- **URL:** <https://avoidjw.org/>
- **Verification:** PRIMARY — Internal manual on disciplinary procedure; firsthand testimony of the creator.
- **Note:** The video is explicit that it has no internal records showing what disciplinary action, if any, the organization took regarding Dawes, and that the comparison describes a visible difference in outcome rather than a documented internal decision.

Claim: Watchtower's General Counsel, Philip Brumley, was sanctioned for an affidavit a federal court found showed reckless disregard for the truth, and was held personally responsible for sanctions exceeding \$150,000 — evidence of the organization's documented history of a lack of candor with courts.

- **Source:** *Rowland, et al. v. Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., et al.*, No. 24-5196, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit (published opinion, July 7, 2025)
- **URL:** <https://cdn.ca9.uscourts.gov/datastore/opinions/2025/07/07/24-5196.pdf>
- **Verification:** PRIMARY — Published federal appellate opinion.
- **Key quote / Direct text:** The panel affirmed sanctioning attorney Philip Brumley under 28 U.S.C. § 1927 for “submitting a signed affidavit that demonstrated a reckless disregard for providing an accurate and truthful accounting of facts.”
- **Note:** The district court (Judge Susan Watters) imposed sanctions of \$154,448.11 — the figure the video rounds to “\$150,000.” The matter arose in two Montana child sexual abuse cases (Caekaert/Mapley and Rowland/Schulze). Advocacy coverage: <https://avoidjw.org/child-sexual-abuse/philip-brumley-courts-appeal-csa-fined-lawyer/>

SECTION 6: The Outcome

Claim: Because Dawes could never be served, the lawsuit against her individually was dismissed, and her former employees — along with other creditors — were left unable to collect.

- **Source:** *Winstead v. Brookhaven Retreat* docket (dismissal order, Jan. 28, 2020); WBIR, “lawsuit...dismissed” (Feb. 2020)
- **URL:** <https://www.wbir.com/article/news/investigations/lawsuit-against-elusive-operator-of-womens-treatment-center-dismissed/51-c1127810-c73b-437c-98ca-99e9f5de2451>
- **Verification:** PRIMARY — Federal court docket; SECONDARY — WBIR reporting summarizing the outcome.
- **Note:** WBIR summarized that the former employees could refile “some day — if they can find her to serve her legally.” The video's account of uncollected judgments (including attorney Nichols's statement that she never recovered a dollar) reflects the public record; the video makes no claim about Dawes's current whereabouts beyond what that record supports.

SECTION 7: Companion Case Referenced in the Video

Claim: In a separate matter, attorneys alleged that a Jehovah's Witness defrauded a 97-year-old fellow member, Frank Pavlis, of nearly \$10 million, and that the Watch Tower organization — positioned to inherit Pavlis's estate — was involved in the resulting federal litigation, including an email from a Watchtower attorney citing scripture to an opposing witness.

- **Source:** *Skeans / Pavlis* federal litigation; covered in detail in the creator's video “\$7 Million and a Letter From Watchtower's Lawyer”
- **URL:** <https://www.courtlistener.com/>
- **Verification:** PRIMARY — Federal court filings in that case (complaint, pre-trial order, hearing transcripts, the attorney email entered into the record).
- **Note:** This case is referenced at the end of the video as a related example and is documented in full in the companion video. The fraud figure (“nearly \$10 million”) is an allegation in the federal complaint; the consent judgment ultimately entered was for \$7 million.

SECTION 8: Additional Supporting Sources

U.S. Government Publishing Office — case record portal for *Winstead v. Brookhaven Retreat*

- **Source:** GovInfo / U.S. Government Publishing Office
- **URL:** https://www.govinfo.gov/app/details/USCOURTS-tned-3_19-cv-00162
- **Verification:** PRIMARY — Official government case-record portal.
- **Contains:** Official docket reference for Case No. 3:19-cv-00162.

WBIR-TV / 10News — “Bank forecloses on pricey former Blount County women's treatment center”

- **Source:** WBIR-TV / 10News (Knoxville NBC affiliate)
- **URL:** <https://www.wbir.com/article/news/bank-forecloses-on-pricey-former-blount-county-womens-treatment-center/51-466e5f96-8579-4d30-a8d9-d84bc8b8dcd7>
- **Verification:** SECONDARY — Regional NBC affiliate investigative reporting.
- **Contains:** Foreclosure details, the Riccochet promissory note, and the daily-interest figure.

WBIR-TV / 10News — “Clients, families praise shuttered women's center”

- **Source:** WBIR-TV / 10News
- **URL:** <https://www.wbir.com/article/news/local/clients-families-praise-shuttered-womens-center/51-0b14ddb4-e357-49e0-8d0a-2da286bee2c9>
- **Verification:** SECONDARY — Regional NBC affiliate reporting.
- **Contains:** Closure-day account, monthly cost, and client/family perspectives.

AvoidJW.org — Philip Brumley sanctions coverage

- **Source:** AvoidJW.org
- **URL:** <https://avoidjw.org/child-sexual-abuse/philip-brumley-courts-appeal-csa-fined-lawyer/>
- **Verification:** SECONDARY — Established Jehovah's Witnesses research and advocacy resource.

- **Contains:** Background and analysis of the Ninth Circuit's affirmance of sanctions against Watchtower's General Counsel.

All sources above are publicly accessible. Federal court filings can be retrieved through PACER or the free CourtListener mirror; news reporting is available directly from WBIR-TV / 10News. Where this document cites a figure that appears differently across sources, the discrepancy is noted so that viewers can weigh the record for themselves.