



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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1990-91 Cold Case Murders Solved – Multiple Warrants Issued

On October 4, 1990, the decomposed body of Brenda J. Pruitt, age 27, was found stuffed into a trash can that had been placed in the 12400 block of Basston Drive in Maryland Heights. The Major Case Squad of Greater St. Louis was activated to assist with the investigation and it was later determined that this murder was linked to at least two other murders in eastern Missouri, one in Lincoln County (Robyn J. Mihan in 1990) and one in O'Fallon (Sandra S. Little in 1991). Despite thousands of hours of investigative work over a period of several years, the murders remained unsolved.

Over the years, Maryland Heights and O'Fallon detectives have continued to follow up on leads and resubmit evidence from these cases for DNA analysis. A major break came earlier this year when a suspect was identified through DNA analysis by the St. Charles County Police Criminalistics Laboratory. That suspect is currently in prison serving a life sentence for another unrelated murder, and he has been incarcerated since 1993. Investigators from Maryland Heights, O'Fallon and the St. Charles County Prosecuting Attorney's Office interviewed the suspect in prison, and he ultimately confessed to several murders, including the Maryland Heights case. In addition to the three murders already mentioned, the suspect also confessed to an additional murder (Donna F. Reitmeyer in 1990).

It should be noted that advances in DNA technology have allowed investigators to do types of analysis that could not be done 20 or 30 years ago. Our detectives never gave up on this case and always maintained hope that it would be solved one day. These cases have been reviewed by St. Louis County Prosecuting Attorney Wesley Bell, St. Charles County Prosecuting Attorney Tim Lohmar, and Lincoln County Prosecuting Attorney Mike Wood. It was determined that murder charges would be filed in all three counties, and those charges have been announced today.

The suspect, Gary R. Muehlberg, age 73, an inmate at the Potosi Correctional Center, is being charged with four counts of First Degree Murder; with two counts in St. Louis County, one count in St. Charles County and one count in Lincoln County.

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