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OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY

Press Releases

1991 COLD-CASE MURDER OF SEASIDE RESIDENT VICKI JOHNSON HAS BEEN SOLVED; SUSPECT DECEASED

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Monterey County District Attorney Jeannine M. Pacioni and Seaside Police Department Chief Nicholas Borges announced today that DNA testing has solved the 1991 murder of Vicki Johnson, a 34-year-old mother of three children from Seaside. No criminal charges will be filed because the suspect in Johnson's murder is now deceased.

In the early morning hours of January 3, 1991, Johnson's body was found in the park on Darwin Street and H Place in Seaside. She had been strangled, asphyxiated, and her body had been set on fire. The physical evidence indicated that Johnson had struggled with her killer. No eyewitnesses to the crime could be located, and no significant suspects were developed.

The initial investigation did not result in any arrests, and Johnson's brutal murder went unsolved for more than 32 years. In 2021, investigators with the Monterey County District Attorney's Office Cold Case Task Force worked collaboratively with Seaside Police Department to reopen Johnson's case and submit items of evidence from the case for DNA testing.

In July 2023, criminalists with the California Department of Justice Crime Laboratory matched DNA found beneath Johnson's fingernails to a man named Frank Lewis McClure. McClure, age 46 at the time of Johnson's murder, died in 2021 at the age of 77. McClure's DNA profile was in the Combined DNA Index System (CODIS) database as a result of a previous felony conviction for assault with a deadly weapon. McClure had not been a suspect in the original investigation. The motive for the crime is unknown.

According to a *Monterey Herald* article from January 5, 1991, Johnson was one of 10 children. She lived in Seaside for 31 years prior to her murder. She left behind three sons.

The Monterey County District Attorney's Office Cold Case Task Force was established in 2020 to investigate, solve and prosecute cold-case homicides in Monterey County. For more information, please visit <https://www.co.monterey.ca.us/government/departments-a-h/district-attorney/cold-case-task-force>.

Anyone who has additional information about Frank Lewis McClure or the homicide of Vicki Johnson is encouraged to contact the Seaside Police Department.

[Return to full list >>](#)