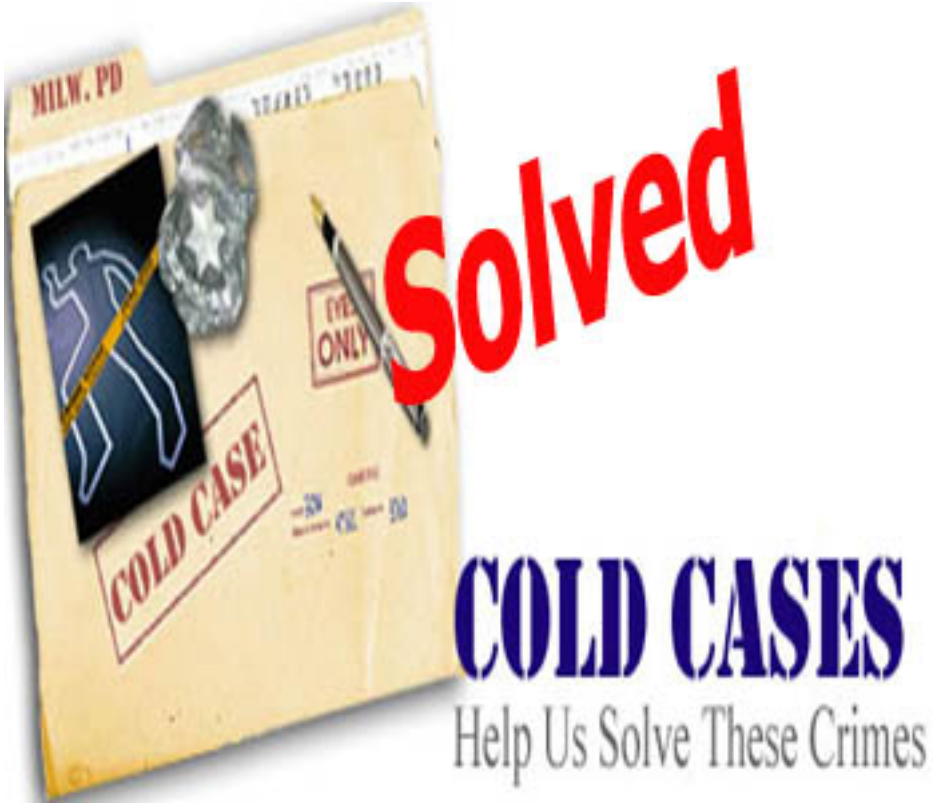

Great work by Cold case unit

1989 Aggravated Murder and 2006 Aggravated Murder solved

CLEVELAND- Cuyahoga County Prosecutor Timothy J. McGinty announced that the Office's Cold Case Unit has solved the 2006 murder of 68-year-old Mary Hudson and the 1989 murder of 34-year-old Armond Earl. The investigation has resulted in an indictment against Jerome Wade, now age 63 and Eric Register, now age 49.

On September 6, 2006, the body of Mary Hudson was found lying on the bedroom floor in her

East Cleveland apartment by a repairman and security guard. East Cleveland Police reported to the scene and observed the victim had been strangled and hog-tied with a stocking and a telephone cord. There were no signs of forced entry and the door to the residence had been locked. The residence was ransacked and the music system and sofa cushion cover were stolen. The Cold Case Unit began investigating this case along with several others in December 2009 as part of the “Sowell Surge”.

The investigation by the Cold Case Unit as well as East Cleveland Police Department led to a match of Jerome Wade’s DNA located in the victim’s body, under her fingernails and on the stockings used to hog-tie her. Additionally, Wade’s fingerprints had been recovered on a drinking glass inside of the victim’s apartment. Wade was indicted on the following seven counts: aggravated murder (x2), aggravated burglary (x1), kidnapping (x3), and aggravated robbery (x1). Wade is scheduled to be arraigned on December 6, 2012.

On July 19, 1989, a family member of Armond Earl contacted Maple Heights Police to report him missing. Maple Heights Police proceeded to the victim’s apartment located in the 5300 block of Lee Road. After several attempts to see if someone was home, officials knocked down the apartment door and observed the victim’s nude body lying on the living room floor. The bloody crime scene demonstrated the vicious nature of the murder. It was determined that the crime had occurred several days prior to locating the body. Officers noticed four wounds: two in the forehead area, and two in the chest area. The Deputy Coroner determined the stab wounds had possibly been made by a screwdriver.

One of the items the police had preserved from the crime scene was a bath tub drain. The bath tub drain was recently tested at the Regional Crime Lab. A DNA profile was developed which also matched to blood found on a screwdriver left at the scene. The DNA was matched to Eric Register. Register’s DNA also commingled with the blood of the victim. The assailant had also left a bloody fingerprint impression on a fan found lying next to the victim. For over 20 years, police attempted to determine whose bloody fingerprint was left at the scene. The Cold Case Unit submitted a request to BCI to compare the fingerprints of suspect Register to this bloody print found at the scene of the murder. This bloody fingerprint was made by Register.

Working with the Maple Heights Police Detectives, the Cold Case Unit reopened the Armond Earl murder case in February 2010. Register was indicted on six counts: aggravated murder (x1), murder (x1), aggravated burglary (x2), and felonious assault (x2). Register is scheduled to be arraigned on December 11, 2012.

The Cold Case Unit was formed in 2005 with a Grant from the Department of Justice. Prosecutor McGinty has continued the Cold Case Unit which consists of a Director (Criminal Investigations Division Chief), an assistant major trial prosecutor, a paralegal, the Chief Investigator of the Prosecutor's Office, and two retired Homicide Detectives. The Cold Case Unit works with local police departments from the Homicide and Sex Crimes Division Detectives, BCI and the Medical Examiner's Office.