



NEWS RELEASE

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Contact: Anne Murphy-Public Affairs Officer
Northern District of Ohio
(216) 276-7505



NEW DNA EVIDENCE DISCOVERED IN 60-YEAR OLD COLD CASE MURDER OF YOUNG GIRL

Cleveland, Ohio– United States Marshal Pete Elliott announces new information in the cold case fugitive investigation into Lester Eubanks. Since 2016 the United States Marshals Service (USMS) in the Northern District of Ohio has been on the hunt for Eubanks.

On November 14, 1965, 14-year-old Mary Ellen Deener was walking to the laundromat to help her family with laundry when she was brutally murdered by Lester Eubanks. At that time, Eubanks was out on bond for an attempted rape which had occurred only three months prior. Eubanks was convicted of Mary Ellen Deener's murder but escaped from jail in 1973 and has been on the run since.

Over the past several months, the USMS Cold Case Unit has worked closely with the Mansfield Police Department and the Cuyahoga County Medical Examiner's Office in an attempt to extract DNA from the clothing worn by Eubanks on the night of the murder. Through meticulous work by the Medical Examiner's Office under the direction of Dr. Nasir Butt, Eubanks' DNA was able to be extracted and has been entered into the Combined DNA Index System (CODIS). CODIS is a computer software program that operates local, state, and national databases of DNA profiles from convicted offenders, unsolved crime scene evidence, and missing persons.

With this newly obtained evidence, the USMS Cold Case Unit is again seeking any information the public may have regarding Eubanks. Since the case was turned over to the USMS Cold Case Unit for investigation in 2016, the USMS has been diligently working on locating Eubanks, following up on hundreds of leads and conducting dozens of interviews, not only throughout the country but internationally as well. On December 7, 2018, exactly 45 years after his escape, Eubanks was officially listed as a USMS Top 15 Most Wanted Fugitive with a reward available of up to \$50,000 for information leading to his location.

In addition to the positive recovery of Eubanks' DNA, the USMS recently worked with the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) on an updated age progression photo of Eubanks. An age progression photo was previously completed in August 2019 and over the past several months the USMS Cold Case Unit has worked alongside NCMEC on meticulously updating these pictures to show what Eubanks may look like now at age 81.

The last known sighting of Eubanks was in southern California in the 1970's. He was going by the alias of "Victor Young" and was known to be in the area of Gardena, South Central, Long Beach and North Hollywood. It is also believed that Eubanks was working as a janitor at St. Francis Medical Center in Lynwood, California in the late 80s or early 90s.

A reward of up to \$50,000 is available to anyone who provides information that leads to the location of Eubanks and the closure of this decades-long case.

U.S. Marshal Pete Elliott stated, "We will not rest until this case is closed. This new evidence is directly due to the perseverance of our two Cold Case Investigators who are continuously looking for new routes to pursue, and to the diligence of Dr. Nasir Butt and the Cuyahoga County Medical Examiner's staff who took the time to re-examine old evidence and were able to extract Eubanks' DNA that we believe will lead to his arrest."



Anyone with information concerning a wanted fugitive can contact the Northern Ohio Violent Fugitive Task Force at **1-866-4-WANTED (1-866-492-6833)**, or you can [submit a web tip](#). Reward money is available, and tipsters may remain anonymous. Follow the U.S. Marshals on Twitter [@USMSCleveland](#). 

The Northern Ohio Violent Fugitive Task Force Teams & Specialized Units– Akron, Canton, Cleveland, Lorain, Mansfield, Painesville, Toledo, Youngstown, Sex Offender Investigations, Missing Child Unit and Cold Case Unit.

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