

Marshall County John Doe identified as 20-year-old California man

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MARSHALL COUNTY, Ala. ([WHNT](#)) — 26 years after a Marshall County teen stumbled across a decomposing body on Eagle Rock Drive in Union Grove, authorities say they can finally give John Doe his name back.

The Marshall County Sheriff's Office identified those remains as 20-year-old [Jeffrey Douglas Kimzey](#) from Santa Barbara, California.

April 15, 1997, marked the [beginning of a mystery](#) that no one could have predicted would take this long to solve, but the Marshall County Sheriff's Office now says they have answers to some of the questions.

Chief Investigator Keith Wilson said the head and hands were cut off with "[some type of saw](#)," while the feet were gnawed off by animals. The heart and spleen had been removed with [surgical-type skill](#), leading investigators to believe they may have held evidence.

"Someone went to great lengths to hide the identity of our victim and the cause of his death," Wilson said.

They called the body "moderately decomposed," and believe he was either stabbed or shot in a separate location before being dumped near the Marshall/Morgan County line where his remains were discovered.

"The victim's feet were bound by rope and then around the scene, they found other pieces of rope," Wilson said.

Investigators initially believed he was between 20-30 years old, about 5'9, weighing around 150 pounds, and possibly a "strawberry blond." They added that he was dressed in a *Faded Glory* short-sleeve pullover shirt with blue, green and gray vertical stripes, and 32×30 *Levi Strauss* 501 jeans.

A handful of air fresheners were also found near the body.

In 2021, authorities [released an image](#) of what they believed the victim looked like, including he may have been light-skinned with blue eyes, with dark blond or light brown hair and likely had freckles.

Snapshot Prediction Results
Phenotype Report

Snapshot
DNA ANALYSIS
Case #970400317

Contact: Marshall County Sheriff's Office
Tip Line: 256-571-7851
Main: 256-582-2034 <https://www.marshallso.org/>

Sex: Male ♂
Age: Unknown
(Shown at age 25)
Body Mass: Unknown
(Shown at BMI 22)
Ancestry: North European

Region

Region	Percent
Europe - North	95.42%

Snapshot
DNA ANALYSIS

Skin Color 14.8
Light Brown / Fair (77.4% confidence)
NOT: Brown / Dark Brown (98.3% confidence)

Eye Color 6.0
Blue / Green (98.7% confidence)
NOT: Hazel / Brown / Black (98.7% confidence)

Hair Color 23.4
Brown / Blond (97.9% confidence)
NOT: Black (97.9% confidence)

Freckles 59.7
Few / Some (50.0% confidence)
NOT: Zero (91.3% confidence)

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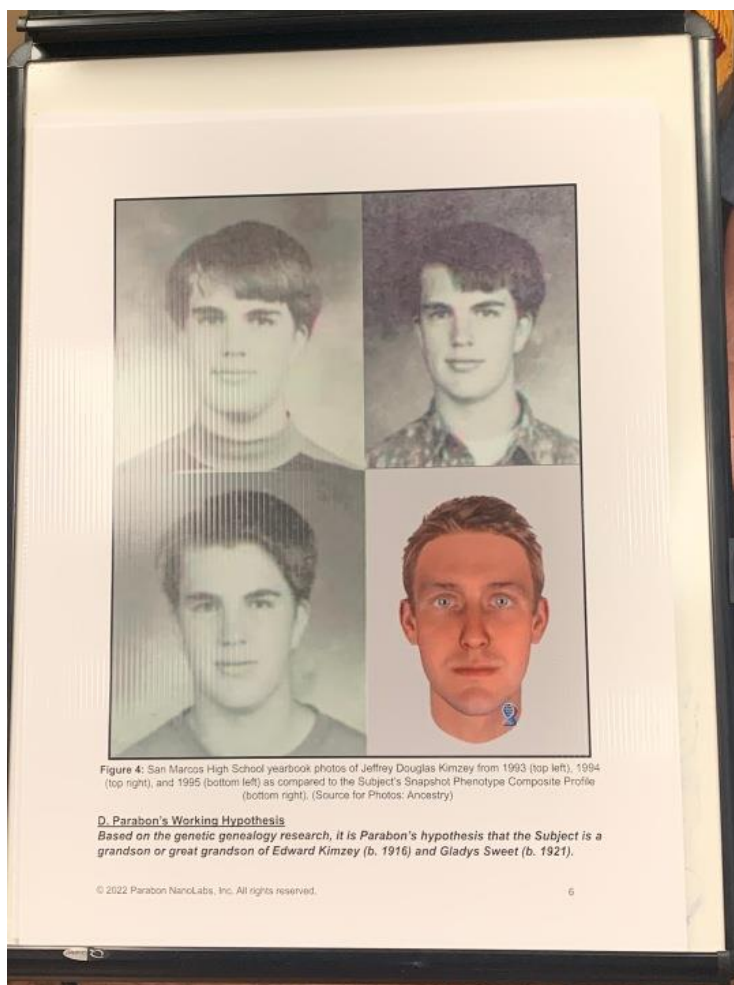
Marshall County Authorities released this Snapshot DNA analysis image of a murder victim found in 1997

That photo rendition was made possible by [Parabon Nanolabs](#), which also began using more of its resources to find genealogical matches to the victim. Wilson said there have been some distant relative connections in South Alabama, Virginia, and Texas.

In August 2022, investigators spoke with Parabon Labs who said they had a “close match” to a related individual who lived in Madison, Tennessee. This sent authorities north to speak with that relative, who said Kimzey’s biological parents were in California.

DNA from both parents was tested, which eventually led to the positive identification of Jefferey Kimzey as the remains.

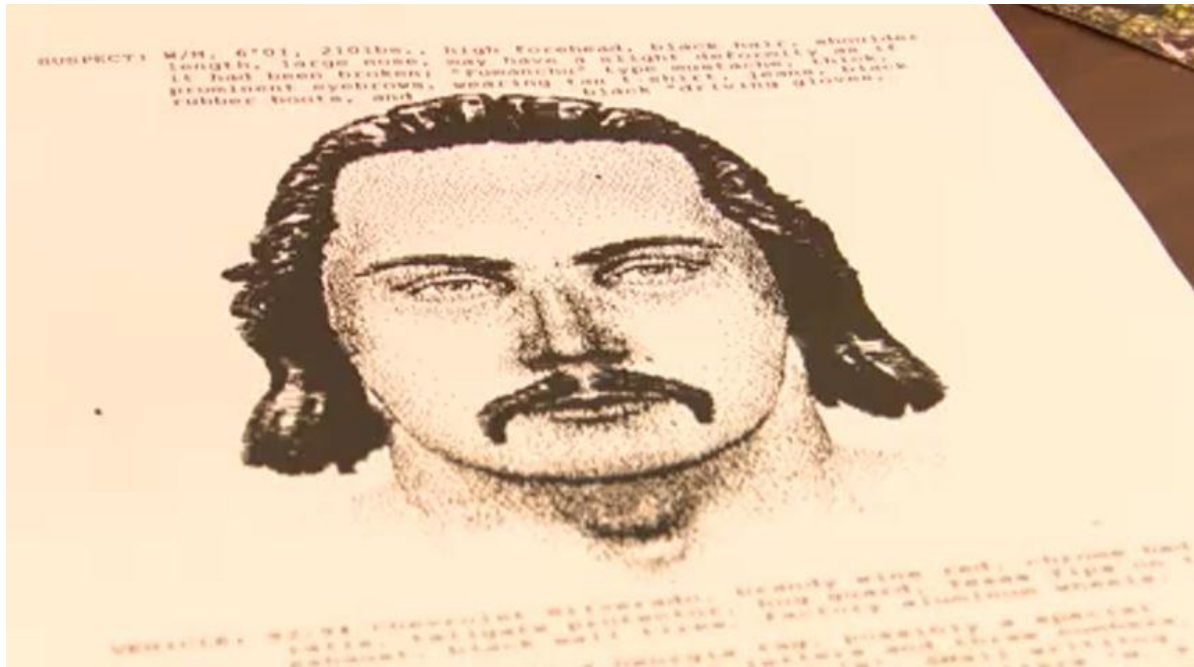
Investigators also spoke with the Santa Barbara County Sheriff’s Office’s Detective Alegria, who told them that Kimzy found an incident report filed on May 8, 1997, listing Kimzey as a possible offender in that case.



Yearbook photos of Kimzey

Wilson said tips came in from the public that just a few days before the body was discovered, witnesses saw an early 90s model maroon Chevy truck with tinted windows that had been in the area. Witnesses also said the man was “acting nervous.”

A Caucasian man was seen driving the truck, but despite a composite sketch being released, there were no suspects in the case.



Composite sketch of the man witnesses saw in the area around the time the remains were discovered. (WHNT photo)

Authorities said there have been “many investigators who have worked on this case over the course of many years,” adding, “I know they would like to see this case solved, but having a positive identification will help us get closer to solving this case.”

The Marshall County Sheriff’s Office thanked all the investigators, the Marshall County Coroner’s Office, Parabon Labs, the Alabama Department of Forensic Science and “everyone involved.”