

# Mosquito Lake remains belong to Youngstown man

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Photo by [Robert K. Yosay](#) | A bust constructed in 2010 provides a likeness of the man whose remains were found near Mosquito Lake in July 2006. Dr. Humphrey Germaniuk, Trumbull County coroner, right, tells the media he does not know what caused the death of Gregory L. Griffin, but he has ruled it a homicide, as Bazetta Police Chief Mike Hovis looks on.

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By ED RUNYAN

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## BAZETTA

After 12 years, a tip finally allowed investigators to identify the skeletal remains of a man found along the south end of Mosquito Lake as those of Gregory L. Griffin of Willis Avenue on Youngstown's South Side.

Dr. Humphrey Germaniuk, Trumbull County coroner, says he does not know what caused Griffin's death, but he has ruled it a homicide. Griffin was 47.

Bazetta police received a tip in February 2017 that led them to submit Griffin's DNA to a crime lab that matched the DNA found in the bones. Police only received the match about two weeks ago, Bazetta Police Chief Mike Hovis said after a Monday news conference at the Bazetta police station.

The DNA match provides an answer police have been seeking since fishermen found skeletal remains near Mosquito Lake July 23, 2006. The remains were found in a marshy, high-grass area just north of the state Route 305 dam.

To determine the identity of the deceased, Dr. Germaniuk submitted the remains to the FBI, which constructed a bust meant to show what scientists thought the victim looked like.

The FBI also provided investigators and the public with estimates of the victim's age and height that turned out to be quite accurate — a man about 50 years old and about 5-foot-8-inches tall.

Nonetheless, the bust and other data, released to the public in September 2010, did not produce the tip police needed until 2017. The man's DNA was not on file in the state's database of convicted felons.

Hovis said the bust is a pretty good reflection of what Griffin looked like. Dr. Germaniuk said he doesn't know why the family or friends of Griffin did not come forward earlier.

Bazetta Township Detective Shawn Rentz said he could not discuss what finally caused someone to come forward. Dr. Germaniuk said he would not identify the person who provided the tip.

Hovis said the department is working with other agencies, and Dr. Germaniuk described the investigation as being "at square one."

Dr. Germaniuk said he believes Griffin's body was "dumped" at the location months before it was found.

The remains did not suggest gunshots or a stabbing, but the "circumstances" suggest homicide, the coroner said. Griffin could have died from asphyxia, for example, he said.

"By the very fact that he was put in a secluded area and the body was hidden ... pretty far off found by two fishermen tells you you are probably dealing with a homicide."

Griffin did not appear to have had any felony record in Trumbull or Mahoning counties, though he does show up in misdemeanor records from Youngstown Municipal Court and Mahoning County Area Court in Boardman. He had several theft cases in Boardman from 1998 to 2002 and about a dozen misdemeanor criminal and traffic cases through Youngstown Municipal Court from 1994 through 2006.