

# Beth Doe identified, man charged in 45-year-old Carbon cold case

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**BY MARTA GOUGER MGOUGER@TNONLINE.COM**

ABronx, New York, man is being charged in a nearly 45-year-old cold case in Carbon County.

According to court papers, Luis A. Sierra is being charged with one count of criminal homicide in the East Side Borough case.

On Dec. 20, 1976, the Pennsylvania State Police were contacted to investigate human remains found on the riverbank of the Lehigh River in East Side Borough, Carbon County. The investigation revealed two separate sets of human remains, one being a female and the other being a near full-term fetus. The young female was referred to as Beth Doe.

After 44 years Beth Doe's remains were identified as Evelyn Colon, 15, Jersey City, New Jersey. Numerous interviews and investigations were conducted following her identification, which led to the development of a suspect.

The remains were identified through DNA samples.

## **The cold case**

Parts of her body and her fetus were packed into several suitcases and tossed from an Interstate 80 bridge. They landed 300 feet below at the edge of the river, where some broke open.

Her body was discovered at about 4:30 p.m. on a cold, rainy December day.

A Weatherly High School freshman Kenneth Jumper Jr., who was 14 at the time, was walking along the river where he used to do some trapping when he saw a human head next to a piece of luggage.

He had just been there a week earlier and the suitcase wasn't there. He raced home and told his big brother, Richard, who was 19 at the time. They called the state police.

The coroner at the time, the late Robert G. Deibert, had the body transported to the Gnaden Huetten Memorial Hospital in Lehighton, where an autopsy was performed.

Their bodies were preserved in Philadelphia's city morgue.

On Aug. 18, 1983, nearly seven years after being found, Beth Doe's body and fetus were buried next to each other in Carbon County Potter's Field, off Laurytown Road near Weatherly. The Rev. John A. Naegele of Lansford conducted the ceremony.

The two graves are marked by white crosses.

In 2007, her remains were exhumed to obtain forensic evidence and to create a new facial reconstruction.

The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children released two reconstructions, the latest in May 2015.

On Wednesday, one count of criminal homicide was filed by Fern Ridge State Police against Sierra, 63, who was age 19 in 1976. Sierra is in custody in New York and will be awaiting extradition.

### **Family reaction**

Colon's family started a GoFundMe page to give her a proper memorial.

"Beth Doe has a name. She is Evelyn Colon," they posted.

"After 45 years of desperate searching, our beloved Evelyn and her baby girl have been found through her nephew's DNA match. The hopes of one day reuniting with her were long etched in our hearts. She was taken from a family who loved her and a family longing to meet her and her child for the first time."

The family said they are deciding names that Evelyn would have given to her baby girl.

"A special thank you to all of the people in Carbon County, Pennsylvania. You have loved Evelyn as much as we do for all 45 years," the post reads.

"Thank you to the Pennsylvania State Troopers for their continued tireless effort and investigations."

State Police and the Carbon County District Attorney's Office, will be providing updates on the case.

Amy Miller and Ron Gower contributed to this report.