

Monroe County Sheriff's Office Teams with Othram to Identify a 1986 Homicide Victim

After almost 40 years, a murdered man whose remains were found in Ida, Michigan in 1986 has been identified as **Shaun Daniel Brauner**.

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Summary

In October 1986, the Monroe County Sheriff's Office was alerted to skeletal remains in a wooded lot on Lewis Avenue in Ida, Michigan. Ida is an unincorporated community in Monroe County, southwest of Detroit. A citizen directed detectives to partially decomposed human remains in the woods. Detectives treated this incident as a homicide and the remains were sent for an autopsy. The Monroe County Medical Examiner determined the remains belonged to a white male between the ages of 35 and 45 years old. The cause of death was ruled blunt force trauma to the head and the manner was homicide.

Despite an exhaustive investigation detectives were unable to identify the remains and details of the case were entered into the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUs) as UP8379. Detectives with the Monroe County Sheriff's Detective Bureau sent samples of the remains for traditional DNA analysis and upload to CODIS, but a familial match could not be confirmed.

In 2024, the Monroe County Sheriff Detective Bureau teamed with Othram to determine if advanced DNA testing could assist with identifying the unknown man. Evidence was submitted to Othram's laboratory in The Woodlands, Texas. Othram scientists successfully developed a DNA extract from the forensic evidence and used Forensic-Grade Genome Sequencing® to build a comprehensive DNA profile for the unknown man. During the course of the investigation a potential relative was identified. The comprehensive profile for the John Doe was then compared to the potential relative using KinSNP® Rapid Relationship Testing. The KinSNP® analysis confirmed the relationship and helped investigators confirm the identity of the man as Shaun Daniel Brauner, of Detroit, MI.

Detectives later learned that Brauner was believed to have been a victim of a homicide in Wayne County, Michigan. The homicide case was adjudicated in Wayne County in the summer of 1990. Due to the outcome of the criminal adjudication in 1990, Monroe County Sheriff Troy Goodnough is announcing that the Monroe County Sheriff's Homicide investigation is closed. Brauner's remains were returned to his family for a memorial service.

The services provided by Othram for this case were funded by the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUs). NamUs is a national program funded and administered by the National Institute of Justice and managed through a contract with RTI International that assists the criminal justice community with the investigation and resolution of missing, unidentified, and unclaimed persons cases across the United States and its territories. Sheriff Goodnough and Othram are grateful to RTI, NamUs, and the NIJ for the support and assistance they provided the Monroe County Sheriff's Office in the successful identification of Shaun Brauner.

The identification of Shaun Brauner represents the 17th case in the State of Michigan where officials have publicly identified an individual using technology developed by Othram. [Visit DNASolves](#) to learn about other Michigan cases.