

The Missoula County Sheriff's Office Partners with Othram to Identify Christy Crystal Creek

Janet Lee Lucas, formerly known as Christy Crystal Creek, was a 23-year-old woman from Spokane, Washington last seen in 1983



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Summary

In September 1985, a local hunter was tracking a bear he had shot in the woods south of Missoula, MT when he came upon human skeletal remains. An initial investigation revealed that the remains belong to a female homicide victim. The cause of death was two close range 0.32 caliber bullets to the skull. Investigators determined that the woman was likely between 20 and 35 years of age and around 5 ft and 100 pounds. Her hair was described as wavy, thin and brown. The female victim was known in the area as "Jane Doe 3UFMT" and "Christy Crystal Creek" and is one of the three Jane Doe victims of suspected serial killer, Wayne Nance. Nance was killed in 1986 during one of his home invasions so he was never arrested, tried, or convicted of these crimes, but investigators suspect that he might be responsible

for the homicide. The other two Does were identified through genetic testing nearly 15 years ago. However, despite decades of work with forensic anthropologists and a forensic odontologist, and hours of research scouring missing persons databases here and in Canada, her identity remained a mystery.

In 2021, with financial assistance from Montana Department of Justice's Sexual Assault Kit Initiative (SAKI) program, the Missoula County Sheriff's Office Cold Case Unit partnered with Othram to use advanced DNA testing to generate more leads as to who this female victim might be. Othram used Forensic-Grade Genome Sequencing® and a proprietary human enrichment process to produce a genealogical profile for Christy Crystal Creek. This profile was returned to Special Deputies Susan Lane and Diana Parker, with the Cold Case Investigations Team. After weeks of intense genealogy research, they were able to identify DNA relatives and family trees which led them to the Lucas family in Spokane. After conducting numerous interviews and confirming their conclusions with additional DNA testing of relatives, they conclusively identified Christy Crystal Creek as Janet L. Lucas.

After speaking with her family and friends it was determined that she was last seen in the summer of 1983 in Sandpoint, Idaho. No records have been found showing Janet living in, or spending time in Montana, so investigators are now appealing to the public, in hopes of finding anyone who may have known or seen Janet in Missoula in the summer of 1983 and into 1984.

About Othram Inc.

Othram is the world's first private DNA laboratory built specifically to apply the power of modern parallel sequencing to forensic evidence. Othram's scientists are experts at recovery, enrichment, and analysis of human DNA from trace quantities of degraded or contaminated materials. Founded in 2018, and located in The Woodlands, Texas, our team works with academic researchers, forensic scientists, medical examiners, and law enforcement agencies to achieve results when other approaches fail. Follow Othram on Twitter @OthramTech or visit Othram.com to learn how we can help you with your case. Visit dnasolves.com to learn how anyone can make a difference in helping solve the next cold case.