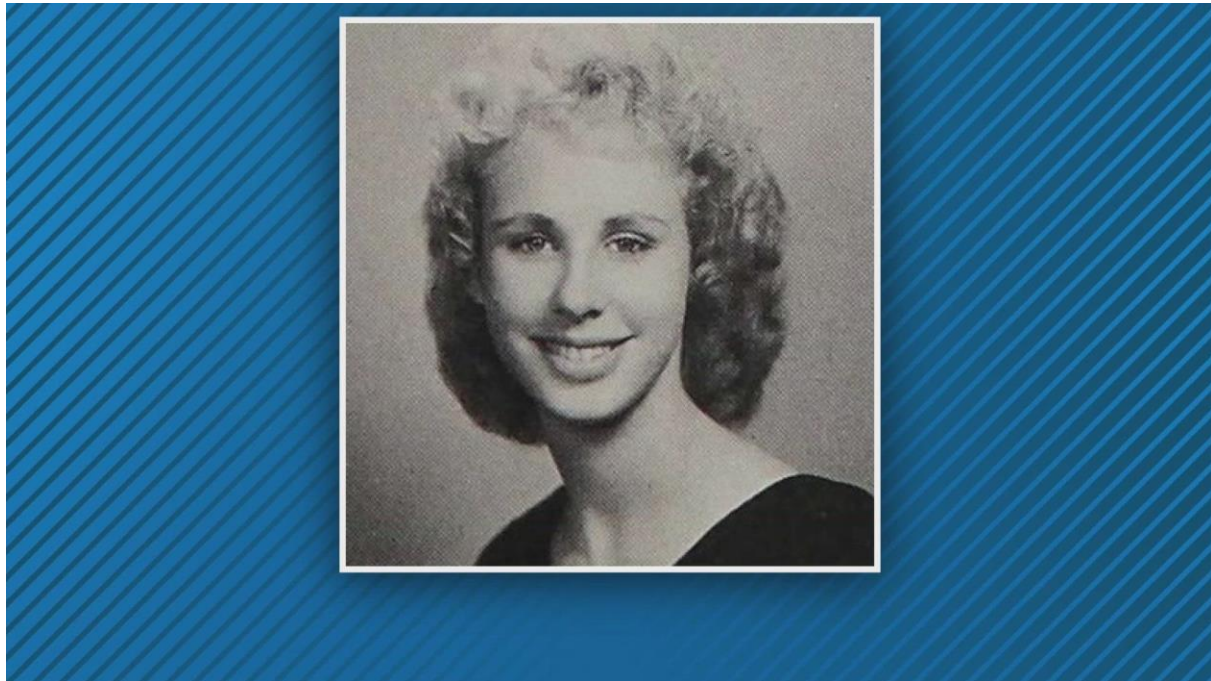


# Remains found on Crescent Beach identified 39 years later

The bones of a homicide victim were found on Crescent Beach in 1985. The St. Johns County Sheriff's Office announced Thursday that they identified the victim.



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ST. JOHNS COUNTY, Fla. — Thirty-nine years later, remains discovered on [Crescent Beach](#) have been identified.

Wednesday, the St. Johns County Sheriff's Office announced the victim was identified as **Mary Alice Pultz**, last seen by her family in 1968 -- when she was 25. According to SJCSO, she left home with her boyfriend, John Thomas

Fugitt. Detectives in the investigation learned that Fugitt died in prison while on death row, related to a separate murder in 1981.

Evidence shows that Pultz was alive after 1968, SJCSO said. Her remains showed three surgical burr holes in her skull, which are used to help relieve pressure on the brain during a brain bleed or build up of fluid. Her family said this would have occurred after 1968, because they didn't know about it.

Several other injuries that were likely to require hospitalization were found on Pultz's remains, which her family also did not know about. SJCSO said that these facts were provided for historical purposes and aren't related to the cause of death.

Pultz's death was a homicide, police said. They are actively investigating, despite how much time has passed.

Her remains were found on April 10, 1985, when a group of construction workers found the remains in a shallow grave on Crescent Beach. Police were able to determine that the woman's age was between 30 and 50 when she died.

The case then grew cold. In 2011, Pultz's skull was sent to the University of South Florida for facial reconstruction. The image generated some leads, but they didn't amount to an identity.

In 2023, the FDLE Forensic Services Regional Laboratory in Jacksonville decided to send the remains to Othram, a private lab in Texas.

An investigation was launched based on Othram's DNA findings. Police were able to meet with potential relatives and take DNA samples to compare. In January 2024, Pultz was identified.

"This investigation is a powerful example that we will never give up. The combination of highly skilled detectives and advanced DNA technology has given Mary Alice's family some answers about her disappearance close to 40 years ago. Our Major Crimes detectives are some of the best in the business and I am proud of their dedication to be a voice for homicide victims and their families as we seek closure for loved ones," St. Johns County Sheriff Rob Hardwick said.