

Woman found murdered in Ada identified nearly 25 years later

A maintenance worker located the bones of a young woman at a roadside park east of Ada in 1997. She was finally identified nearly 25 years later.

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KENT COUNTY, Mich. — Remains found in Ada nearly 25 years ago have finally been identified as a Grand Rapids woman.

A maintenance worker located bones at a roadside park east of Ada on July 31, 1997, and called the Kent County Sheriff's Office. The death was quickly ruled a homicide.

Police say her remains were sent to the University of North Texas to extract the DNA from the bones, but the sample did not result in any matches.

In partnering with the DNA Doe Project, however, the Sheriff's Office was able to view the DNA profile. The woman was identified as Stephanie Renee Judson, born on Jan. 22, 1966.

Police discovered Stephanie was born in Benton Harbor and moved to Grand Rapids in the late 1980s.

Kent County detectives have investigated the case for decades. They sent DNA samples to databases, created digital and forensic sketches and made a clay model of the victim based on the skull in hopes of identifying her.

Detectives were able to learn the victim was a black female who stood between 5'2" and 5'8" and was 18 to 25 years old at the time of her death.

The Kent County Sheriff's Office is still investigating the murder and asks anyone with information regarding Stephanie Judson to contact Silent Observer or Detective Dustin Cook at 616-632-6136.