

C.R. police proud of record in solving homicides

Arrests made in 35 of 37 cases, with only 3 acquittals

Cedar Rapids police are proud of their record when it comes to solving homicides during the past 10 years.

Arrests have been made in all but two of 37 slayings investigated during that period. And of those arrested, all but three were convicted.

Violent death statistics include two murders involving Cedar Rapids couples last year.

ONE OF THE TWO unsolved killings still haunts police detectives.

Officers in the detective bureau still occasionally discuss the Michelle Martinko case. They all remember long hours and hundreds of interviews that went into the futile search for the person or persons who stabbed her to death.

The case began when police received a call from Mr. and Mrs. Albert Martinko, 4312 Woodfield Lane NE. They told officers that their 18-year-old daughter had gone shopping at Westdale Mall and had not returned home by 2 a.m. on Dec. 20, 1979.



Assistant Police Chief Jim Barnes:

Martinko, Chafee cases are only ones unsolved and open.

Barnes said as he picked up the one-inch-thick file on the Chafee case. "No comment," was his reply when asked if an arrest will be made soon in the murder.

A THIRD CASE remains a puzzle; Barnes and Linn County Medical Examiner Dr. Percy Harris disagree on whether the death was suicide or murder.

The body of Dennis Stastny was pulled from the Cedar River on Aug. 11, 1977. Stastny died of a stab wound to the heart, but opinions differ on whether the wound was self-inflicted.

Although Stastny's death is listed as "undetermined" in police murder files, Barnes maintains the stab wound was self-inflicted and that someone dumped the 30-year-old man's body in the river.

He believes Stastny's death was a suicide, based on a check into his background and detectives' findings at the time of the investigation. He declined to elaborate, but police said at the time of the investigation that Stastny's death possibly was drug-related.

Barnes said an anonymous caller telephoned him at home after Stastny's body was discovered. The caller told him that Stastny had committed suicide and his body was dumped in the river by unknown individuals.

However, Dr. Harris said at the time the body was found and says today that Stastny's stab wound "was not a self-inflicted wound."

Barnes said the Stastny case is not considered open, but it will be reopened if police receive new information about the death.

IN THREE OF the cases considered closed by police, the persons charged were found innocent after jury trials:

• Michael Rohn of Cedar Rapids was acquitted in May of charges stemming from the stabbing

deaths of Jacalyn May and her two sons. Although another Cedar Rapids man, Bruce Farris, later was convicted in the murders, Rohn's acquittal still ripples police detectives.

Rohn had testified that his actions were taken in fear of Farris. Under Iowa law, a person is not responsible for committing a crime if he is compelled to act by threats of serious injury.

• A former Cedar Rapids man was acquitted in 1975 after he was charged with murder in the shooting death of Cedar Rapids auctioneer Donald Van Steenis. The victim disappeared Feb. 12, 1974, and his body was not found until later that month.

While investigating his death, Linn County sheriff's deputies found two sets of footprints leading down to the Cedar River, but only one set returning from the riverbank. His body was recovered from the river east of Cedar Rapids. Van Steenis died after being shot four times in the back.

The jury acquitted the defendant after defense attorneys argued that the evidence pointed to another suspect and that their client was at a relative's house at the time of the killing.

• In another death, a Marshalltown man was arrested and subsequently found innocent in the robbery-shooting of James Ashlock, a Cedar Rapids bartender, on Sept. 14, 1979.

Ashlock was shot in the head while tending bar at Sammy's Lounge, then located at 5525 Center Point Road NE. He died two days later.

The jury returned an innocent verdict after only two hours of deliberation and one vote. The jury foreman said jurors were impressed that "nothing really bothered (the defendant) while he was testifying. He was not nervous; he was cool. He appeared like he had not done it."

Although convictions were not obtained in these cases, Barnes said he considers the slayings solved. Police arrested the right suspects, he said, but once someone is arrested and the evidence given to prosecutors, "the case is out of our hands."

He said the cases will remain closed unless new information is received.

Missing persons pose different kind of puzzle

At least three cases of people disappearing under unusual circumstances remain on Linn County records, but no arrests have been made in these cases, because law officers are not sure that crimes were committed.

The cases are officially filed under "missing persons," and remain a puzzle despite extensive searches and investigations.

The disappearance of Naomi Wilson two years ago is the most recent case. Wilson, who was 32 at the time, left her house, car, job and family, never to return. The woman, who had a reputation for reliability, was last seen on April 12, 1981.

Her name is among 26 on a recent police computer printout of missing persons. The list, compiled over the past three years, includes the names of 16 teenagers. Police said it changes almost daily as missing persons are found or return home.

TWO OTHERS, Guy Heckle and Lynn Schuller, do not appear on recent police missing persons lists because they disappeared more than 10 years ago.

An 11-year-old Cedar Rapids boy, Heckle was on a Boy Scout outing near Toddville on Feb. 3, 1973, when he disappeared. The only clue came when his coat was found caught on a log in the

Cedar River a few days after he vanished. Despite searches from the air, horseback and on foot, no other traces of the boy have been found.

Lynn Schuller was 26 when she disappeared from her southeast Cedar Rapids home on Aug. 7, 1972. Her parents, Harry and Eloise Tickner of Minneapolis, were convinced that Mrs. Schuller was dead and that foul play was involved.

Despite an extensive search of the woods near the Schuller home, no trace of her was ever found.

WITHOUT EVIDENCE of foul play, said Assistant Police Chief Jim Barnes, there is not much police can do. Even if police find someone, adult or juvenile, who has been reported missing, there is little officials can do except advise them that their relatives are worried about them, he continued.

Many "missing persons" turn out to be juveniles who have run away or adults who have chosen to "drop out," he said.

Police officials will not comment publicly on the disappearances, but privately they indicate they believe both Lynn Schuller and Naomi Wilson are dead. They won't comment on whether they believe the women were murdered.



Mark Glenn

Gazette staff writer

Police found the Kennedy High School senior's fully clothed body in a family car parked in the mall's parking lot two hours later.

"It's still open," Assistant Police Chief James Barnes said of the Martinko case. In the nearly four years since her body was discovered, police have built a file on the case three inches thick. They have called in psychics and run down hundreds of leads, but no arrests have been made.

"We used to get information (about Martinko's death) around the anniversary of the murder," said Barnes, who heads the detective bureau. Police have received no new tips in the case for about a year, he added.

POLICE HAVE YET to make an arrest in the death of Dennis W. Chafee, 33, the city's most recent homicide.

Chafee's body was discovered July 18 in the basement of his home at 914 28th St. SE. He had been shot at least three times.

"The case is open. We're working on it,"

GNC General Nutrition Centers

America's Best Nutrition Value At GNC.

500 mg. VITAMIN C 100. REG. \$3.49. **99¢** SAVE \$1.80. EXPIRES 9-25-83.

500 mcg VITAMIN B-12 100. REG. \$3.49. **\$3.69** SAVE \$1.80. EXPIRES 9-25-83.

TOTAL B COMPLEX 100. REG. \$3.49. **\$2.99** SAVE \$2.50. EXPIRES 9-25-83.

Nearly 1100 Stores Coast To Coast.

400 I.U. VITAMIN E 100. **\$1.99** LIMIT ONE.

AT GNC, QUALITY IS NOT EXPENSIVE!

SALE VITAMIN SALE

10 MG. ZINC 100. REG. \$1.99. **29¢** SAVE \$1.70. EXPIRES 9-25-83.

GARLIC CAPSULES 100. REG. \$2.49. **49¢** SAVE \$2.00. EXPIRES 9-25-83.

ALFALFA TABLETS 100. REG. \$1.49. **49¢** SAVE \$1.00. EXPIRES 9-25-83.

10 GRAIN KELP 100. REG. \$1.29. **29¢** SAVE \$1.00. EXPIRES 9-25-83.

10,000 I.U. VITAMIN A 100. REG. \$1.99. **99¢** SAVE \$1.00. EXPIRES 9-25-83.

50 mg VITAMIN B-6 100. REG. \$2.59. **99¢** SAVE \$1.60. EXPIRES 9-25-83.

COD LIVER OIL CAPSULES 100. REG. \$3.49. **\$1.99** SAVE \$1.50. EXPIRES 9-25-83.

99 mg. POTASSIUM 100. REG. \$2.99. **\$1.99** SAVE \$1.00. EXPIRES 9-25-83.

HEALTHY FOODS • DIET PRODUCTS

NO CHOLESTEROL FRESH GROUND PEANUT BUTTER 1 lb. REG. \$1.49. **99¢** SAVE 50¢. EXPIRES 9-25-83.

NO FAT LARGE PRUNES 1 lb. REG. \$1.39. **69¢** SAVE 70¢. EXPIRES 9-25-83.

THE FABULOUS UNIVERSITY "MILKSHAKE" DIET! LOSE UP TO 20 lbs. IN 4 WEEKS!

- Four luscious flavors.
- Limit your intake to as few as 1000 calories per day with FREE enclosed diet plan.
- Replaces 21 meals.
- SAFE, EASY...you can do it!
- IF NOT SATISFIED, we'll refund your purchase price.

REG. \$14.99. **\$13.99** SAVE \$1.00. EXPIRES 9-25-83.

HIGH FIBER BROWN RICE 1 lb. REG. 79¢. **49¢** SAVE 30¢. EXPIRES 9-25-83.

HIGH FIBER PURE MILLER'S BRAN 1 lb. REG. 69¢. **39¢** SAVE 30¢. EXPIRES 9-25-83.

SALE COSMETICS SALE

LOW SALT WATER PACK 6.5 OZ. REG. \$1.59. **89¢** SAVE 70¢. EXPIRES 9-25-83.

HIGH POTASSIUM BANANA CHIPS 8 OZ. REG. \$1.19. **59¢** SAVE 60¢. EXPIRES 9-25-83.

LOW CALORIE GOLDEN HARVEST RICE CAKES 4.25 OZ. REG. 99¢. **69¢** SAVE 30¢. EXPIRES 9-25-83.

NO FAT THOMPSON RAISINS 1 lb. REG. \$1.85. **99¢** SAVE 86¢. EXPIRES 9-25-83.

SALE COSMETICS SALE

GOLDEN HARVEST COMPLEXION BAR 3 OZ. REG. \$2.50. **99¢** SAVE \$1.51. EXPIRES 9-25-83.

SKIN GEL 2 OZ. REG. \$2.49. **99¢** SAVE \$1.50. EXPIRES 9-25-83.

ROLL-ON DEODORANT 3 OZ. REG. \$2.49. **\$1.29** SAVE \$1.20. EXPIRES 9-25-83.

GENTLE GOLDEN HARVEST ALOE VERA MOISTURE CREAM 2 OZ. REG. \$2.75. **69¢** SAVE \$2.06. EXPIRES 9-25-83.

GNC General Nutrition Centers

SOME LOCATIONS MAY BE TEMPORARILY OUT OF STOCK IF SO, RAINCHECKS WILL BE GLADLY ISSUED.

LINDALE MALL • WESTDALE MALL In Cedar Rapids
OLD CAPITOL MALL In Iowa City

FARMERS STATE BANK

"Salutes the American Farm Family"

Come spend three days with some Farm Families . . . Appreciate how hard they work For America.

Attend the Farm Progress Show
"The World's Fair of Agriculture"
September 27, 28 & 29
Marion, Iowa

FARMERS STATE BANK

Right On The Money

Marion • Alburnett • Hiawatha and Lindale Mall, Cedar Rapids member FDIC