

Retiring Boone County deputy still looking for murder suspect

AMES (AP) — Boone County Sheriff's Deputy Jim Lukawski retires at the end of the month, but he can't close the book on a 17-year-old murder case.

"Over the years, we've chased down numerous leads, made a trip or two to Minnesota or Nebraska, but nothing has ever developed out of it," said Lukawski, who has spent 25 years with the sheriff's department. "We just haven't had any luck on this one — nothing has gone our way."

Jim Lukawski
Retiring Boone County sheriff's deputy

Arnold Sansgaard, a 58-year-old farmer, was found dead in his living room on July 22, 1984, by relatives, who had been notified by Sansgaard's mail carrier that the mail was piling up at his rural Story City home.

Dr. Thomas Bennett, the state medical examiner at the time, said Sansgaard died of multiple stab wounds to the chest, probably a week before.

Sansgaard had lived on the farm with his 87-year-old mother, Della. She was visiting his sister in Nashua at the time, according to Tribune archives.

Police believe the attacker left the farm in Sansgaard's blue 1977 Datsun 210. It was found abandoned at a Catholic church in Effingham, Ill., about 100 miles northeast of St. Louis, Mo., the day after Sansgaard's body was found.

Authorities had stopped the Datsun for a registration check in a small town northeast of the Minneapolis-St. Paul area on July 15. The driver was allowed to continue. The car had not been reported missing because Sansgaard's body had not been found yet.

Later, the deputy said the driver, a slender, dark-haired man in his 30s, appeared to

have a mental condition or was under the influence of drugs. He said he spoke slowly with a possible southern accent and talked about visiting the Veterans Administration Hospital in Madison, Wis.

"I think he is long gone," Lukawski said. "There are too many people and officers around here that know what we're looking for. He'd stick out like a sore thumb."

Lukawski said the man has severe burn scars on his arms and portions of his neck, supposedly from a flame-thrower

in Vietnam. "I always keep my eyes open for him," Lukawski said. "If I see someone that looks like him, I always take that second look."

"It's frustrating that we haven't brought this to a just conclusion," he said.

Steven Conlon, assistant director of the Division of Criminal Investigation, said unsolved homicides always are kept open. He said cases much older than Sansgaard's have been solved, many because of new technology.



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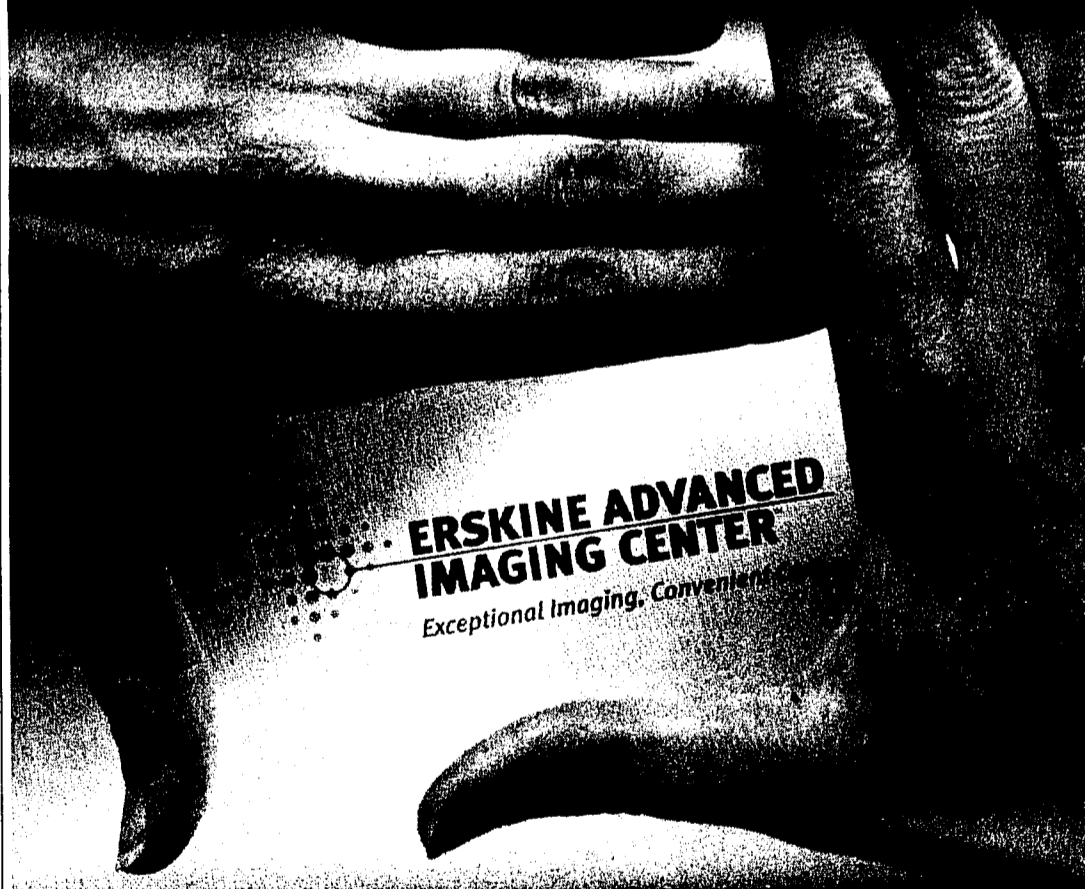


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