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Iowa City now focus of Wieneke murder

An acquaintance likely committed the brutal killing, say authorities

Dave Gosch Gazette staff writer

The person who brutally beat Corey Wieneke to death with a softball bat one year ago may be from Iowa City. "We think the person responsible is not from West Liberty and possibly from Iowa City," said Division of Criminal Investigation Special Agent Ken Sandy.

Wieneke, 22, was found dead in his rural West Liberty home on the evening of Oct. 13, 1992. He died of blunt trauma to the body.

The aluminum softball bat was discovered by a television news reporter on the gravel road leading to Wieneke's home on the morning of Oct. 14. The bat was later identified as being the murder weapon.

Sandy said the bat isn't helping authorities with the investigation right now.

"Once we identify the person responsible for his death, the bat will be valuable evidence," he said.

There is no evidence to believe it was a random killing, he said.

"There's nothing at the crime scene to suggest that it is an unrelated incident. It would be our belief that the person responsible for Corey's death either knew him or knew someone who knew Corey."

Sandy does not believe the murder was drug-related. Rather, it could be connected to a relationship that Wieneke had with a woman. He said authorities are interested in information on any such relationship.

"A lot of people in the West Liberty area think we know of all those. That's not necessarily true," said Sandy.

Sandy said authorities would also like to know of Wieneke's whereabouts approximately one week before he was murdered.

"Corey was returning home from Iowa City around 7 a.m. If anyone knows where he would be returning from in Iowa City, we'd be interested in knowing that," said Sandy.

People with information about the murder should contact the Muscatine County Sheriff's Department at (319) 263-6055, said Sandy.

Muscatine County Sheriff Ron Hazen said his department is currently preparing for an upcoming murder trial involving another, unrelated bludgeoning death.

Joseph Brockert, 19, of Muscatine, and Shane Fonner, 17, a resident in the Louisa Trailer Courts in Louisa County, are

accused of murdering Paul W. Lanfier, 25.

Hazen said the investigation into Wieneke's murder will resume after the suspects' trial, which is scheduled for Oct. 25.

Hazen said authorities have interviewed more than 150 people concerning the murder, but nothing new has cropped up lately.

"Everyone who we thought had a connection passed a polygraph," he said.

Hazen also said it was possible that the murder could have been a result of a relationship Wieneke had and that he may have "stepped on somebody's toes."

"He was a young man. He was in with a crowd," said Hazen.

Wieneke worked at Wink's Tap, which is owned by his grandmother, Betty Wieneke. She wonders if authorities will ever solve her grandson's murder.

"The later it gets, the less we're going to know because someone is feeling comfortable with the way they did it," she said.

Wieneke said Corey's family has had a difficult time the past year in dealing with his death. His parents are James and Susan Wieneke of West Liberty.

"It's such a brutal way to kill somebody," she said. "It's been real hard, even on his cousins that were close to him. It's been a tough time on our whole family."

Illustration: PHOTO

MAP

GAZETTE MAP

Corey Wieneke Died one year ago

MURDER SIET West Liberty Corey Wieneke

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