

New DNA evidence leads to arrest in Council Bluffs cold case

Written by Lauren Horsch

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An arrest has been made in a 10-year-old cold case from Council Bluffs thanks to new DNA evidence found by the Iowa Department of Criminal Investigations lab.

Thomas Sanchez, 47, of LaVista, Neb. was arrested on Jan. 23 after the Council Bluffs Police Department re-opened the July 2003 murder of Alvarez-Hernandez Nelson, 32, according to a Council Bluffs Police Department release.

Sanchez is in custody at the Pottawattaimie County Jail with a \$1 million bond. He is charged with first-degree murder.

During the original investigation detectives found DNA evidence from an unknown male at the scene. When it was sent through the Iowa Forensic Casework and Convicted Offender Indices, there was no match.

The murder investigation went cold in 2003.

Then in September the Council Bluffs Police Department was notified by the DCI lab had a match to the unknown DNA. The case was re-opened and police followed the new lead which led to Sanchez's arrest.

The investigation into the murder is still open.