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NEWS RELEASE
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**HUMAN REMAINS FOUND IN THERMAL 31 YEARS AGO
HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED AS BALDWIN PARK WOMAN**

RIVERSIDE – Through the use of forensic genealogy, the Riverside County Regional Cold Case Homicide Team – which is led by the DA’s Bureau of Investigation – announced today, Aug. 23, 2022, that they have identified a woman whose remains were found in Thermal more than 31 years ago.

On Jan. 22, 1991, human remains were found in a wash area at the base of a hill in the area west of Avenue 62 and Madison Street in Thermal. Only bones were found and appeared to have been in the desert for a lengthy amount of time.

The subsequent investigation by the Riverside County Sheriff’s Department unfortunately produced no leads and the case, believed to be a suspicious death, went cold.

Earlier this year, a forensic genetic genealogy investigation started, and the remains were tentatively identified as Kathryn Coffey, DOB: 1-8-54, of Baldwin Park.

In June 2022, Cold Case Homicide Team investigators met with Kathryn’s sister and obtained DNA for further analysis. Then, on Aug. 8, 2022, the California Department of Justice lab confirmed that the remains were Kathryn’s, and her family was notified of the positive identification.

According to her family, Kathryn was last known to be in the Indio area around 1989-1990. They also told investigators that she graduated in the mid-1970s Phi Beta Kappa from Scripps College with a degree in English literature.

The Riverside County Regional Cold Case Homicide Team is asking that anyone who may have any information about the victim or who may have seen anything suspicious in that area of Thermal in late January 1991 contact the team by calling (951) 955-2777.

The Regional Cold Case Homicide Team is comprised of members of the DA’s Office Bureau of Investigation, the Riverside County Sheriff-Coroner Department, the FBI, and the Riverside Police Department. The team is available to assist in the investigation of cold case homicides for all Riverside County law enforcement agencies.

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