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NEWS RELEASE
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**VICTIM IN 1994 COLD CASE DEATH
IDENTIFIED THROUGH FORENSIC GENEALOGY**

RIVERSIDE – The victim in a 1994 cold case death has been identified through a DNA sample.

On Oct. 24, 1994, an elderly female was found partially buried in the desert in the Thousand Palms area in eastern Riverside County. The Riverside County Sheriff's Department and the county Coroner's Office responded to the scene to investigate.

The Coroner's Office used all available resources at the time to identify the woman, including having her DNA entered into the California Department of Justice Missing and Unidentified Persons System. Unfortunately, no identification was made.

Because authorities were unable at the time to identify the victim and due to a lack of leads into what may have happened, this became a cold case.

In 2021, the Riverside County DA's Regional Cold Case Homicide Team had a DNA sample created for the purposes of forensic genealogy. That sample was obtained using the services of a private lab, Texas-based Othram Inc. Using genetic matches, the Cold Case Team was able to locate a potential match. A biological child was found, and a DNA sample was submitted to the state Missing and Unidentified Persons System.

In mid-December 2021, the Cold Case Team was notified that the state Department of Justice had issued a final report showing strong support that the victim in the 1994 death was Patricia Cavallaro, with a birthdate of March 22, 1937.

The Cold Case Team has notified Patricia Cavallaro's next of kin.

Without the use of forensic genealogy, this victim may have never been identified.

The cold case investigation into her death is on-going.

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 investigate cold case homicides for all Riverside County law enforcement agencies.

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