

Sheriff



Larry Ashley, Okaloosa County Sheriff

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August 5, 2014

OCSO SOLVES 16-YEAR OLD CRESTVIEW MURDER



Two suspects in the 1998 homicide of Jewel Summerlin Melvin are being charged by the Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office with first degree murder and burglary with assault or battery but the investigation is not over.

On May 15, 1998 the Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office (OCSO) and the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) responded to the home of Jewel Summerlin Melvin at 2345 West James Lee Boulevard in Crestview. Mrs. Melvin's son Eddie had discovered her body on her bedroom floor around 5:15 p.m. The 71-year old victim was positioned between her bed and the doorway with the top mattress pulled off the bed to partially conceal her. In addition to OCSO and FDLE sworn personnel, OCSO and FDLE crime scene personnel were also sent to the scene.

Mrs. Melvin appeared to have been severely beaten in the facial area in addition to being strangled. She had distinctive ligature marks around her neck. The bedroom had been ransacked with several drawers pulled open. In addition, Mrs. Melvin's blue four-door Mercury Marquis was missing from the driveway.

Investigators determined that the motive appeared to be theft or robbery.

On Saturday, May 16, 1998 Associate Medical Examiner Dr. Michael E. Berkland performed an autopsy on Jewel Melvin's body. The autopsy revealed her manner of death was homicide by Asphyxia secondary to strangulation. In addition, Mrs. Melvin suffered severe blunt force trauma to the face, head and abdominal area.

On Monday, May 18, 1998, Mrs. Melvin's vehicle was located in a rural area west of Crestview. The vehicle was abandoned off Suzanne Circle, near Hwy. 90 and Wilkerson Bluff Road in Holt. The location is approximately (7) seven miles from Mrs. Melvin's home. The rural area where the vehicle was located mainly consisted of sandy soil along with logging debris. The area had recently been logged and or clear-cut with the timber removed. The car was discovered by a realtor who was looking at property in the surrounding area. It appeared to have been stuck in sand and or timber debris.

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The Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office is accredited by the
Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation.

"The Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office provides equal access and equal
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Michael McCombs

Beginning on or about May 28, 1998 Michael Lynn McCombs became a person of interest in this investigation based on a witness who placed McCombs in the Baker community shortly after the discovery of Mrs. Melvin's body. The Baker community is relevant to this homicide investigation because of the short distance between where the victim's vehicle was recovered and the location of where Michael McCombs was spotted and or seen. On January 29, 1999, additional information was received that implicated Michael McCombs and "the Kimmons brothers" as the persons involved with the murder of an "Old Lady" in Crestview. The information also identified the "Kimmons brothers" as being Steven and Timothy Kimmons who reside in East Milton.

Over the course of this sixteen year investigation, numerous witnesses were located and subsequently interviewed. The information provided by these witnesses further implicated and or identified Michael Lynn McCombs and Steven Earl Kimmons as the persons responsible for the murder of Jewel Melvin. The information provided by the said witnesses also coincided with the crime scene and or the methodology leading to Mrs. Melvin's death.

Beginning on July 30, 2014, the information developed as a result of this investigation was presented to a Grand Jury in and for Okaloosa County. On August 1, 2014, a "True Bill" indictment was returned for Michael Lynn McCombs and Steven Earl Kimmons for MURDER-FIRST DEGREE AND BURGLARY OF DWELLING WITH PERSON ASSAULTED RESULTING IN DEATH. This investigation remains ongoing.



Steven Kimmons

50-year old Steven Earl Kimmons of Milton is currently being held in the Santa Rosa County jail with no bond on unrelated charges.

50-year old Michael Lynn McCombs, also of Milton, was also being held without bond in the Santa Rosa County jail and is currently being transferred to Okaloosa County.

It is the goal of the Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office to continue to investigate all homicide cases that have occurred within Okaloosa County. Prior to these two latest indictments, the efforts of OCSO Investigators led to resolutions in five previously unsolved cold case murders in the last three years; those include the deaths of Catherine Ainsworth in 1975, Donald Tidwell in 1985, Pluma Bell Sanford in 1987, Ulai Sookruetai in 1988 and Leonard

"Buddy" Phelps in 1981.

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COPY

WARRANT/OTTIC ACTIVE

OKALOOSA CO SHERIFF'S OFFICE

REPORT NO: OCSO14ARR008132

Melvin's body. The autopsy revealed that Mrs. Melvin's manner of death was a homicide by Asphyxia secondary to strangulation. In addition, Mrs. Melvin suffered severe blunt force trauma to the face, head and abdominal area.

On Monday, May 18, 1998, Mrs. Melvin's vehicle was located in a rural area west of Crestview. The vehicle was abandoned off Suzanne circle, which is near Highway 90 and Wilkerson Bluff Road in Holt, Florida. The location is approximately (7) seven miles from Mrs. Melvin's home. The rural area where the vehicle was located mainly consisted of a sandy soil along with logging debris. The area had recently been logged and or clear-cut with the timber removed. The vehicle was discovered by a realtor who was looking at property in the surrounding area. The vehicle appeared to have been stuck in sand and or timber debris.

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Over the course of this sixteen year investigation, numerous witnesses were located and subsequently interviewed. The information provided by these witnesses further implicated and or identified Michael Lynn McCombs and Steven Earl Kimmons as the persons responsible for the murder of Jewel Melvin. The information provided by the said witnesses also coincided with the crime scene and or the methodology leading to Mrs. Melvin's death.

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Based on the aforesaid facts, I have reason to believe that Michael Lynn McCombs did commit the offense of MURDER-FIRST-DEGREE AND BURGLARY OF DWELLING WITH PERSON ASSAULTED RESULTING IN DEATH to wit: knowingly and intentionally entering the home of Jewel Summerlin Melvin with intention of committing theft or some other offense therein and while engaged in the commission of said felony, Jewel Summerlin Melvin was intentionally killed by asphyxia secondary to strangulation. These offenses did violate Florida State Statute 782. 04(1)(a)1 and 810.02(2)(a). Both offenses did occur in Crestview, Florida, Okaloosa County.

RDG

Signature (Arresting Officer) _____ Name _____ ID/SSN _____

Subscribed and sworn to (or affirmed) before me this 5 day of August A.D., 2014 by _____ who is personally known to me or has produced _____ as identification.

Signature _____ Notary Public _____ LEO _____ CO _____

Commission No: _____ My Commission Expires _____

Supervisor Signature _____ Date _____ Supervisor Name (Please Print) _____ Rank _____

IN THE CIRCUIT/COUNTY COURT IN THE FIRST JUDICIAL CIRCUIT IN AND FOR OKALOOSA COUNTY, FLORIDA

COPY

WARRANT/OTIC ACTIVE

OKALOOSA CO SHERIFF'S OFFICE

REPORT NO: OCSO14ARR008132

[PHYSICAL EVIDENCE] [NO PHYSICAL EVIDENCE LISTED]

[ARREST INFORMATION]

Arrested	Residency Within state	Injured	Extent of Injury	Resist
		Arrested Prior	Arrest Jurisdiction	Alcohol
				Drugs
No.	Di Street	A/L	City	ST Zip
				Lat / Long
Arresting Officer		Unit	(GEO) - - -	Officer Type
Reporting Officer		Unit		Original Offense Jurisdiction
061 GARRETT, RALPH D		OCSO/FSV/INV/CID		OCSO
Forward to for approval				
OCSO/FSV/INV/CID				

Bond Set by LEO at Time of Arrest & Booking: \$0.00

- None
- ROR
- Cash
- Pro

Bond Set by Judge	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> None	<input type="checkbox"/> ROR/Sign
	<input type="checkbox"/> Cash	<input type="checkbox"/> PTR
	<input type="checkbox"/> Any	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Pro	
	<input type="checkbox"/> PtIQ	

Purge SCANNED

SC

Return Court: CIRCUIT COURT: FELONY Date: _____ Time: _____

Instructions: _____

[COURT INFORMATION]

Court	Judge	Date
Sent CIRCUIT		
Rcvd CIRCUIT	FLOWERS	8/4/2014

Court Case Number **98-21764**

Assigned To:

[DISPOSITION]

<u>Disposition Type</u>	<u>Release Type</u>	<u>Other Desc</u>
<u>Release Date</u>	<u>Release Time</u>	<u>Release Officer</u>
		<u>Printed</u> <u>Printed By</u>
		No
<u>Released To</u>		

COPY

COPY

WARRANT/OTIC ACTIVE

REPORT NO: OCSO14ARR008132

Court DispositionType

Court Disposition Description

[ADDITIONAL PERSONS]

COURT DISPOSITION: _____

(right index)

- No Bill / Petition
 Issue Warrant
 Prosecution Approved

Signature of Assistant State Attorney

Date

COPY