

DNA leads to arrest in 1991 case

An Omaha man is charged with murdering a deaf woman in Council Bluffs.

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Police say substantial improvements in DNA testing led to the arrest Friday of an Omaha man who is accused of murdering a deaf Council Bluffs woman 10 years ago.

James Derrick Dove, 33, was arrested on a warrant for first-degree murder and sexual abuse for his alleged involvement in the murder of Marcia Crouse, 28, of Council Bluffs.

Crouse was found dead in her home in September 1991.



Investigators concluded that someone entered Crouse's apartment, sexually assaulted her, stabbed her 16 times and bit her twice, according to a court affidavit.

"We had indication that he was a suspect in 1991, but the fact of the matter was without any witnesses and virtually no circumstantial evidence, we couldn't move forward," said Capt. Lindsay Andersen of the Council Bluffs Police Department. Andersen said Dove lived across the hall from Crouse at the time of the killing.

After the murder, police interviewed Dove several times and gathered a voluntary blood sample from him in 1993. The sample was sent to a crime lab, along with vaginal swabs and a known bloodstain from Crouse, but the results came back inconclusive.

The case was suspended until a new lead was discovered last month.

When police got the new lead, they questioned and took samples from another man thought to be a suspect. The results proved he was not connected to the case. The crime lab then decided to use the new DNA techniques to retest Dove's samples with those found at the crime scene.

Dove's DNA matched, Andersen said.

"We asked the criminalist why he was connected now and not then, and she said technological advances in DNA profiling have just advanced leaps and bounds,"

Andersen said. "We're seeing more and more of this. This same thing is getting people out of prison that were put there before because of circumstantial and some prejudicial reasons."

Crouse's parents, Lucille and Richard of rural Nodaway, said they were happy to know that the Council Bluffs Police Department did not give up on their daughter's case. They would not comment specifically on their daughter, saying a formal statement would be made in the future.

"We are very thankful to the police department," Lucille Crouse said Friday. "It's been a long time."

Dove was being held Friday at the Douglas County Correctional Center. His bond had not been set.

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Dove