

# Lake County Sheriff's Office Teams with Othram to Identify a 1984 Homicide Victim

After 40 years, the remains of a murdered woman found in Altoona, Florida, has been identified as **Rebecca Sue Hill**, who was missing from Arkansas.

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## Summary

In April 1984, the remains of an unidentified individual were located in Altoona, Florida. The discovery was made near a dirt road in the Ocala National Forest's Lake Dorr Recreation Area. It was determined that the remains were that of a female between 17 and 20 years old, who stood 5'0" to 5'1" tall and weighed approximately 100 pounds. Upon investigation, it was estimated that the young woman had died several weeks prior to the discovery of her remains and her death was likely due to homicide. With no leads about her identity, the woman could not be identified and she became known as "Judy Doe."



A facial reconstruction was completed and released to the public in hopes that it would generate leads about Judy Doe's true identity. Details of the case were entered into the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUs) as UP6037. Multiple efforts were made to identify Judy Doe based off of skeletal recreations, dental records, and DNA testing. Despite investigator's efforts, Judy Doe's case has been listed as a cold case by the Lake County Sheriff's Office and has been reviewed and investigated by numerous detectives for 40 years.

In 2023 the Lake County Sheriff's Office teamed with Othram to determine if advanced DNA testing could help to provide new leads in the case. Forensic evidence was sent to Othram's laboratory in The Woodlands, Texas where Othram scientists successfully developed a DNA extract and built a comprehensive DNA profile for the unknown woman using Forensic-Grade Genome Sequencing®. Othram's in-house forensic genetic genealogy team used the profile to conduct genealogy research, providing new investigative leads to law enforcement.

A follow-up investigation was launched, leading detectives to potential relatives of Judy Doe. The DNA profile of a potential relative was compared to Judy Doe's DNA profile using KinSNP® Rapid Relationship Testing. This investigation led to the identification of the woman as Rebecca Sue Hill. In the course of the investigation, detectives established that Rebecca has been missing from Arkansas since 1981, which would make her 16 or 17 years old at the time of her disappearance. In 1981 or 1982, the remains of an unidentified individual were found in Little Rock, Arkansas. At that time, Rebecca's family misidentified those remains as belonging to Rebecca, and therefore Rebecca was not listed in any missing persons database.

Detectives with the Lake County Sheriff's Office continue their investigation into the circumstances of Rebecca's disappearance and death. Her death is a suspected homicide and it's the hope of the Lake County Sheriff's Office to bring the investigation to a resolution. To report any information you may have about this case to the Lake County Sheriff's Office Cold Case Team, please call [352-343-](tel:352-343-)

9529 or email [ColdCase@lcso.org](mailto:ColdCase@lcso.org). You may also call Crimeline at 800-423-8477 (TIPS) to report any crime tips anonymously.

The identification of Rebecca Sue Hill represents the 35th publicly-announced case in the state of Florida where investigators used technology developed by Othram to identify an individual. To read about other cases in Florida, [visit DNASolves](#).