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### **47 Year Old Mystery Resolved by Jefferson County Sheriff's Office, Cold Case Squad**

On June 12, 1968 21 year old David C. Corak, a resident of Tacoma in Pierce County, stopped at the Hamma Hamma Ranger station north of Hoodspout in Mason County and reported that he was going to go camping in the Boulder Creek area. He appeared to have appropriate camping equipment and had a "Tote Goat" to carry his equipment. Other hikers in the area reported seeing Mr. Corak at the Boulder Creek trailhead heading into the national forest.

A few days later an automobile registered to Mr. Corak was found at the Boulder Creek trailhead by Forest Service personnel. Mr. Corak's wallet and other personal items were found in the vehicle. The Ranger contacted the Mason County Sheriff who in turn contacted Mr. Corak's family in Tacoma and learned that Mr. Corak had not returned from his camping trip and was missing.

An extensive search in the area was conducted and no trace of Mr. Corak was found.

On October 1, 1975 a group of hikers came across a set of human skeletal remains in an off-trail area above Cliff Creek in the Duckabush River drainage in the Brothers Wilderness Area in Jefferson County. A .22 cal. rifle was found with one discharged casing in the chamber. The skull bore evidence of a single gunshot wound consistent with a .22.cal. bullet. The arrangement of the rifle supported by a stick with a string used to pull the trigger strongly suggested the manner of death to be suicide.

The hikers notified the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office and a deputy accompanied them back to the site. Found with the remains was clothing in new condition at the probable time of death. A nylon comb, a pocket knife, and approx. two dozen .22 cal. shells were found at the recovery site. No identification of any kind was located, nor was any evidence of a camp or camping equipment found.

A pathologist estimated the probable date of death to have been six to nine months prior to discovery.

A complete dental exam revealed some extremely fine dental work and some older dental work by another dentist. Dental charts were circulated to the Washington State Dental Association and the American Dental Association for a possible identification without success.

In April 2000 the unidentified remains were delivered to Dr. Kathy Taylor at the King County Medical Examiner's Office to complete an osteological exam of the remains. She contacted Natalie Murry, a forensic artist, to prepare artistic sketches of the unidentified remains based upon the actual skull. Her two sketches were incorporated into a bulletin that was circulated among law enforcement agencies and other recipients via the internet.

On May 10, 2010 a woman in Whittier, Alaska contacted the Jefferson County Prosecuting Attorney's Office with information regarding a member of her husband's family who disappeared in 1968. She had seen the information on the Internet regarding the unidentified remains and expressed hope that the mystery of what happened to her husband's relative might be resolved. She identified the missing man as David Charles Corak. A check of all the available data bases could not locate any information regarding a Missing Person Report for Mr. Corak.

Using information supplied by this woman, the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office, Cold Case Squad, contacted the three surviving brothers of Mr. Corak and obtained family reference DNA samples which were compared with the DNA profile produced by the National Missing Persons Program at the University of North Texas in Fort Worth Texas. Unfortunately, due to the condition of the remains and other factors, a positive match could not be made.

Cold Case detectives learned Mr. Corak had been in the U.S. Navy in the mid-1960's. Forensic Dentist Dr. Richard Scanlon, a consultant for NAMUS, a national missing persons website and database, obtained Mr. Corak's dental records from the National Archives in St. Louis, Missouri and compared them to the dental charts from the unidentified remains. He was able to make a positive match. The same charts were then examined by Dr. Gary Bell, the Washington State Forensic Odontologist. He verified Dr. Scanlon's findings that the unidentified remains were those of David Charles Corak.

Mr. Corak's surviving brothers were notified by Cold Case detectives of this positive identification 47 years after their brother disappeared.