

Unsolved Episode 306 – Birthday Boy Murder / Anaheim Confidential

Announcer

KFI-AM 640, heard everywhere on the iHeartRadio app.

Steve Gregory

On any given day in Southern California, hundreds of investigators are working more than 10,000 unsolved cases. That's hundreds of friends and families who have lost loved ones, hundreds of people who got away with a crime, and hundreds of murderers who still walk the streets. Killers who may be your neighbor, go to your church, or could be dating a close friend. For the next two hours, we'll highlight cases that have gone cold, baffled investigators or just needs that one witness to speak out. This is Unsolved with Steve Gregory.

Steve Gregory

Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Cold Case Number 079-06941-1613-011 The murder of 13-year-old Timothy Troutman. I'm back at the Sheriff's Department's Homicide Bureau, this time a sad and heinous case of a young boy murdered on his birthday while his two close friends frantically tried to call for help. I connect with detectives Sean McCarthy and Rich Tomlin two retired homicide detectives turned cold case investigators. We meet inside the Bureau's large conference room, Detective McCarthy begins with an overview of the case.

Detective McCarthy

Okay, approximately 6pm on that date, May 14, 1979, Timothy Troutman and two 11-year-old companions were walking to a recreation center on the campus of California State University at Dominguez Hills. Timothy was celebrating his 13th birthday, and they were going to go to the recreation center. The three had just left the residence of one of the two 11-year-old companions and they had to navigate a large field that had overgrown grass and vegetation to get to the recreation center. At the time, in 1979, Cal State Dominguez Hills was still relatively new. There was a lot of temporary buildings there, it wasn't the completed campus that it is today and there was a lot of open field in that area. So while enroute, they they had been in this field several times in the past. It was a shortcut to get to the campus and to get to one of the other companions residence, and they they entered a strip mall which paralleled the this field. It contained a pharmacy, a burger stand, it's still there today and there was a path behind this strip mall that they would enter and go into this field which would take them to the campus and the recreation center.

Steve Gregory

Now, had they been on this route before?

Detective McCarthy

Yes.

Steve Gregory

This wasn't new to them?

Detective McCarthy

It was not new, they had been there several times. In fact, one of the surviving companions told us that they would occasionally ride their dirt bikes on the trails in this field.

Steve Gregory

So this is familiar territory.

Detective McCarthy

Familiar to them, but this companion made it clear to us that they rarely saw other people in this field when when they were in it, so they were familiar with it, but it was rarely used by other people.

Steve Gregory

Okay.

Detective McCarthy

They entered the pathway, they got about midway into the field, and they come upon a male African American adult who is standing near a large dirt berm, they described it as approximately four feet high. And one of the surviving victims described this male as thin, approximately 5'7" to 5'10" He was very specific as to his hairstyle. He said that he had a large half afro and that was very common back in the 70's.

Steve Gregory

You said a large 'half afro.'

Detective McCarthy

I'm sorry, he had a large afro...

Steve Gregory

Okay.

Detective McCarthy

...hairstyle...

Steve Gregory

Okay.

Detective McCarthy

That was parted in the middle.

Steve Gregory

Parted in the middle. Got it. Got it.

Detective McCarthy

He said he was wearing blue Lee Jeans, a brown windbreaker, and was very specific it had a white zipper. Brown, and I'm not familiar with these shoes, Kroeker Sheck shoes, he was very specific about that, and blue dress socks. He also said that this male's clothing was very soiled and gave the appearance that he was homeless. He also said that this male was holding a whiskey bottle and smoking what he believed to be was a cigarette, but later was not sure if it was a cigarette, or what's called a blunt, a PCP cigarette, because he said even at the age of 11, he was very familiar with the odor of PCP, and he said this person had the distinct odor of PCP on his person.

Steve Gregory

This is, I mean we're talking about at the time, the two companions are 11-years-old, right?

Detective McCarthy

Correct.

Steve Gregory

That's pretty remarkable. That kind of a detailed description for 11-year-olds.

Detective McCarthy

I agree.

Steve Gregory

And so you've recently talked to one of them.

Detective McCarthy

One of them, and just for the sake of clarity here, we're not going to use their real names.

Steve Gregory

That's fine.

Detective McCarthy

And, and he is Richard.

Steve Gregory

Okay.

Detective McCarthy

Richard is in his 40s now, we interviewed him approximately, three months ago, and he was still very detailed about his description of this male.

Steve Gregory

Do you find that unusual, in all your years that an 11-year-old boy has such an amazing photographic memory like that? Especially, which turned out to be a very traumatic experience.

Detective McCarthy

And you said the key word in my opinion, Steve, sometimes when you're traumatized, your memory is somewhat clouded. But I also find sometimes your memory is more precise sometimes when, when you're traumatized like that.

Steve Gregory

Interesting.

Detective McCarthy

And in this case, I'm going to assume that his trauma made him more, there was more clarity, that's just my opinion.

Steve Gregory

Okay. So go ahead, I'm sorry. I just I just wanted to make a point that I thought that was very unusual for an 11-year-old boy to have such a memory and especially all these years later.

Detective McCarthy

And I do agree with that.

Steve Gregory

Yeah, okay, great.

Detective McCarthy

But at some point, this male approached them, engaged them in small talk. Things such as he offered them his cigarette, which we now believe was probably a marijuana cigarette or a PCP blunt street term. He offered them some of his whiskey and basically engaged them in small talk to keep them interested in staying with him. At one point during the conversation, he asked Richard, he offered him a \$10 bill. And he said, 'Look, I want you to go and check at the pharmacy across the street in a strip mall. I have a friend supposed to be over there and he's working there. He's wearing a blue jacket and I'll give you I'll give you \$10 if you go to check to see if he's there.' He took the \$10. If I said Richard, I meant Marcus.

Steve Gregory

Okay. Okay.

Detective McCarthy

Marcus took...

Steve Gregory

...the other friend.

Detective McCarthy

The other friend, the other 11-year-old companion. Marcus took the \$10 and he and Richard walked across Avalon and into the strip mall to look for this male. Timothy stayed in the field with this male. They went and checked, could find nobody with a blue jacket, returned to the field several minutes later and advised the male that his companion was not there. At that point, Richard became extremely concerned, fearful, felt like this is this isn't right, something bad's about to happen. And he encouraged Timothy and Marcus to leave the field with him.

Steve Gregory

Much more on the case of Timothy Troutman, but first, this is Unsolved with Steve Gregory on KFI-AM 640, time now for a news update.

Steve Gregory

KFI-AM 640, live everywhere on the iHeartRadio app. I'm Steve Gregory and this is Unsolved. If you're listening on the app, you can send us a tip about a case, a story idea, or a comment about the show, just tap the red microphone on the app and record your message. Welcome back, we are at the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, Homicide Bureau we're talking about the case of Timothy Troutman, 13-year-old boy, who was killed back in May of 1979. Joining us are Detectives Sean McCarthy, Rich Tomlin, and before the break, Detective McCarthy, you were talking about the fact that the two friends of Timothy, you described as Richard and Marcus to protect their names, they had come upon this other this adult, and they were all together in this field by Cal State Dominguez, and you were saying that the the the two boys, the friends of Timothy went to go look for a friend of the adult. They didn't find him, came back. But one of the two friends of Timothy started to have this really uneasy feeling, right?

Detective McCarthy

Correct.

Steve Gregory

So what happens next?

Detective McCarthy

So he tried to encourage Timothy and Marcus to leave the field with him because he felt something bad is going to happen if we stay here. He could not convince them to leave with him and he stepped back, and he said he did not leave the field because he wanted to monitor his friends to make sure they were going to be okay. Marcus and Timothy were with the male, and at some point, the male suddenly grabbed Marcus by the arm and Timothy by the hair, and Timothy had long hair below the shoulders. Marcus was able to pull free and run towards Richard. Timothy was not and to make matters worse, according to Richard the male, pulled out a, he described it as a 6-10 inch knife, butcher's type knife, put it up to Timothy's throat and basically threatened to kill him if he didn't cooperate. Marcus ran to Richard, Richard was conflicted on what to do, whether to go and try to help Timothy or to run to the strip mall and ask for help. And as he's talking with Marcus, Marcus says, 'He's going to kill Tim and he's going to kill us too.' And at that point, Richard said, we made the decision to run across the street and ask for help. The last they saw Timothy was this male leading him deeper into the field. And he described the area as near a chain link fence by the Velodrome on the campus, they ran across Avalon, they ran into the pharmacy, it

was Crown Pharmacy. They asked, they frantically asked the employee to call the police, and Richard told us that it was his opinion that they didn't take him seriously, and the employee made a comment to another employee, that I think these kids are on drugs. They realized they weren't going to get help from the people in the pharmacy, so they ran out of the pharmacy to a burger stand that was also in the strip mall, and there was a woman employed there that took him seriously and call 911.

Steve Gregory

How much time has gone by by now?

Detective McCarthy

From the from the time that they left the field?

Steve Gregory

Thing went sideways to the time 911 was called.

Detective McCarthy

I would say 15 to 20 minutes.

Steve Gregory

Really?

Detective McCarthy

Yeah. And we'll get into that more as we go on.

Steve Gregory

Okay, sure, sure.

Detective McCarthy

Because we're talking 1979, so investigations weren't done the same that they are in 2022. Policy is different as it relates to containing a potential crime scene with a possible suspect and in that crime scene that we would handle in 2022, vastly different policy has changed over the years and we have to take that into consideration in this case. So deputies respond, they interview the two 11-year-olds and for whatever reason, they decide to call in more resources. And I'm only going to make an assumption here is you've got this large field with overgrown vegetation, you have a potential suspect in there with a knife and, and has already made overtures to use it on a 13-year-old that this is at least part of the reason why they they called in additional resources. The unfortunate thing about it, and this is coming from the 11-year-old survivor, he said in his estimation, by the time they called in additional resources, which included helicopters, horses, an hour and a half to two hours went by. Now clearly, Steve, that isn't the way it would be handled in 2022. But again, we have to go back to 1979, and take that into consideration.

Steve Gregory

And one of the biggest I think one of the biggest things to consider also is today 11-year-old and 13-year-old children have cell phones...

Detective McCarthy

Yes.

Steve Gregory

...they would have been able to already call for help. Now...

Detective McCarthy

A lot, a lot different.

Steve Gregory

...do me a favor real quick before we take a break describe that field again, how large is was that field and how high was the grass or the shrubbery?

Detective McCarthy

It's tough for me to say, say because the land has been developed now so it's not likely to go down there and get a perspective.

Steve Gregory

Okay. So was there any notes in the case files, of how large of a field that was.

Detective McCarthy

No, and that's another problem with a 40 year old case. You look at a case file, and again, how it was investigated 43 years ago may not be the way it would be investigated. Over time that case was taken out of our library looked into by other investigators, and the reality is, Steve, is things come up missing in case files that old, and unfortunately, in this case, there was photographs in this case of people that we have no idea why their photographs are in this case file. That's the problem with 43 year old cold cases.

Steve Gregory

Sure. Well, listen, we're going to talk more about this case we'll also bring detective Tomlin into the conversation. But first, this is Unsolved with Steve Gregory on KFI-AM 640, time now for news update.

Steve Gregory

KFI-AM 640, live everywhere on the iHeartRadio app. I'm Steve Gregory and this is Unsolved. To reach the Unsolved team through the iHeartRadio app, press the red microphone and leave us a story idea, tip or comment or press #250 on your cell phone and say the key word Unsolved.

Steve Gregory

Welcome back, we're at the Los Angeles County Sheriff's department's homicide bureau in Montebello. Joining me now, detectives Sean McCarthy and Rich Tomlin and we're discussing the case of Timothy Troutman, he was a 13-year-old boy who was killed May 14, 1979. We've been going back all these years, and before the break, Sean McCarthy was talking to us a little bit about how things have changed, how

times have changed. You know, a lot has been made about the delay in response. You want to talk a little bit more about that?

Detective McCarthy

Yeah, the delay was, I mean, and I'm making a big assumption here is you had this large field, you had overgrown vegetation, you had a suspect in there who had a knife and was apparently willing to use it, and they were using they were going to use extreme caution. When in when, when entering the fields, so they called for additional resources. I'm not defending the actions, I'm just giving you my opinion.

Steve Gregory

Just perspective, just giving us perspective. Sure, sure. I get it.

Detective McCarthy

And once they did, ultimately start searching, it wasn't very long, where they found Timothy and it was in the exact location where Richard had last seen. It was up against the chain link fence next to the Velodrome and he was already deceased.

Steve Gregory

Had he been stabbed?

Detective McCarthy

He had been stabbed, and a post mortem examination done a few days later, indicated that he was stabbed 40 times.

Steve Gregory

40 times.

Detective McCarthy

40 times.

Steve Gregory

That poor kid. And you were talking about Timothy's friends, which you have called Richard and Marcus to protect the names, the real names. Where were the two boys, the two 11-year-old boys when the search was going on. Were they still in the area?

Detective McCarthy

They were taken to the Carson station, they were briefly interviewed at the strip mall when deputies first arrived, a broadcast was put out and then they were transported to Carson's sheriff's station.

Steve Gregory

I hate to ask this question, but he was stabbed 40 times, this poor boy, was there any evidence of any sexual contact?

Detective McCarthy

Per the coroner's report, No.

Steve Gregory

Okay. Thank you for that.

Detective McCarthy

Now that doesn't mean for sure he wasn't sexually abused in some way. But there was no forensic evidence that indicated that he was sexually assaulted.

Steve Gregory

Okay, very good. So Detective Tomlin, you know, we're talking 1979, Detective McCarthy sort of outlined the challenges, getting a case file like this and having pictures you don't even know who the folks are in the pictures. Information is kind of sparse and scarce. Why do you think all these years later that there might be a chance you can solve this case?

Detective Tomlin

The main reason why we think there is a chance it's going to be solved is, the city of Carson itself is a middle class bedroom community. A lot of the residents have grown up in Carson, they've stayed in Carson and now their children are there and growing up in Carson. During our investigation, we talked to numerous people who still remembered Timothy being stabbed.

Steve Gregory

Really?

Detective Tomlin

They heard about it, it was unbelievable how many people still remembered the incident itself and obviously they were traumatized, they were young at the time, and now they're grown and they have children. So what we're hoping for is, as I said, we've come across people who knew about it. We we're hoping that somebody who has specific information will now step forward. Unfortunately, Marcus, we couldn't talk to him, he's deceased. Richard is still there. Richard is still adamant that he remembers what happened, and we touched on it earlier, how some people it will phase out. In his mind, things slowed down, and it was like it was slow motion, so he remembers minute details about this individual. At the time of the murder, a sketch was created. Shaun, who did they talk to?

Detective McCarthy

Richard is the one created the... So Richard the one who had the vivid description, the specific description of his clothing the suspects clothing also, they were able to create a composite sketch of the of the, of the suspect from his description.

Steve Gregory

So that was done by one of your sketch artists.

Detective McCarthy

Yes, back in 1979.

Steve Gregory

Wow.

Detective McCarthy

And then....

Steve Gregory

So what about what you're showing me is this, the sketch which has got great detail on it, even a little bit of a goatee, and mustache? Do you think that's a pretty accurate description? I mean, it looks like, sketch artists have a tough job. You know, they have to take information, very little bits and pieces of information. But it seems like the based on what that child was able to tell you about what he was wearing the clothes, the smells. So it would lead you to believe that's a pretty accurate description. Right?

Detective McCarthy

I'll tell you this, Steve. Prior to our interview with Richard, an in-person interview, we interviewed him over the phone. And I asked him if he if he remembered creating the sketch and he said yes. And I said to him, is is that what the suspect looked like to your recollection? And he says, that is exactly what the suspect looked like. We then brought him in a few days later any any confirmed that he created this, and believed it was accurate.

Steve Gregory

After all this time, that's amazing.

Detective Tomlin

Now one thing, we strongly believe the suspect lived in the area of Carson, where the incident happened was, it was isolated area, where is anything possible? Yes. But a transient wouldn't just happen upon that area, know where to he he'd come across people, children, and where to dump the body. So we have a strong belief that this individual lives lived in the area Carson, we believe that someone that still lives in the area of Carson knows who did it, or at least has heard rumors of a name of someone who has done it.

Detective McCarthy

And one other one other thing is another reason we strongly believe that the suspect was from the area is, I know that I indicated that there was a delay in the search, but there was a broadcast put out very early on after they briefly interviewed the two surviving victims at the strip mall. And deputies were searching the area outside of the containment, in case the suspect got out of the containment, for a person with the description that Richard gave. Now, just logically thinking if you stab somebody 40 times at close range, what was the most likely thing that would be a red flag for deputy driving down the street? What What would you expect?

Steve Gregory

I think someone covered in blood.

Detective Tomlin

Exactly. And there was never anybody, and keep in mind the broadcast was moments after they interviewed these kids not when they found the body two hours later, you would think that the suspect would be easily visible. And so then logically thinking again, is if he lived in the area..probably got to his residence...

Steve Gregory

He could have retreated home.

Detective McCarthy

...he got home and changed clothes, or stayed in his house. That's why we, and based on the suspect description what he was doing at the time, in my opinion, and I think Rich agrees with me. This is clearly somebody from the area

Steve Gregory

More with Detectives McCarthy and Tomlin. But first this is Unsolved with Steve Gregory on KFI-AM 640, time now for a news update.

Steve Gregory

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Steve Gregory

Well, welcome back. We're at the Los Angeles County Sheriff's department's homicide bureau in Montebello, talking with Detectives Sean McCarthy and Rich Tomlin about a cold case, 1979 the stabbing death of Timothy Troutman, he was actually killed on his birthday, he and two friends were celebrating the birthday, Timothy was stabbed by a man that now detectives have said they believe lived in the area. Detective Tomlin before the break what I was going to ask you is, a lot of the interviews I've done over the years with detectives, when you get someone who stabbed 40 times, they usually say it seems personal, and but it looks like this guy didn't really know, Timothy. So what would you attribute that many stab wounds to?

Detective Tomlin

Richard stated that he believed the suspect was under the influence of PCP...

Steve Gregory

Okay.

Detective Tomlin

...and that alone would explain someone blacking out acting totally irrational. Because you yes, you're totally correct, usually, someone being stabbed that many times it is up close and personal, they know the person, we don't believe, obviously, Timothy, Marcus, or Richard knew this individual.

Detective McCarthy

Based on the description, and the actions given by the surviving victims. To go along with the PCP and and, and, obviously, we're in law enforcement and we've seen people under the influence of PCP, and it's one of the most violent, bizarre behavior caused by PCP. But also, we believe based on the description, the appearance of being homeless, and in today's world homelessness is, is is a hot topic, and we believe, based on description, this guy being homeless, he probably had mental illness, also, that would be likely, which would also explain the violent nature of the attack.

Steve Gregory

And as a man in what was described in his mid 20s, back at the time, that's usually around the age, those kinds of things start to surface, the bipolarity, schizophrenia, that kind of, those kinds of things and if you take that add to it the PCP or any other drug like that...

Detective McCarthy

Yeah, yes. And PCP was a very popular drug in the late 70s, it was very common, it's not nearly as common in 2022. But the surviving victim who, who told us this said, Look, 'I was only 11-years-old at the time, but PCP was so prevalent in the neighborhood that I knew what PCP smelled like at a very young age.'

Steve Gregory

Was that common back then back that time? Was PCP, was that the drug of choice?

Detective Tomlin

I wouldn't say drug of choice, but it was common to dip a cigarette into PCP and smoke it.

Steve Gregory

So what happens now? I mean, all these years later, you said yourself Detective Tomlin, which still baffles me now you've got so many people who still live in that area. Presumably, if this guy is was in his mid 20s, back then he'd been it's been 60s Today, correct?

Detective Tomlin

Correct. At this point, we really would like to solve this for Timothy's family. They still grieve heavily, they still think about him, we're in constant contact with one of his sisters, and our hope is to bring them some type of peace on that end, about knowing exactly who did this heinous thing to their brother.

Steve Gregory

When you were talking about the neighbors down there, and a lot of people still living in the Carson area. How old would they have been? They had to have been pretty young right to remember were they were also children at the time?

Detective Tomlin

Yes, the people we are talking to they were children at the time also. But they were at the age where they could remember 10-15, 10-17 years of age, and again, something like this in your neighborhood, one of your peers, one of your classmates being stabbed to death found in the bushes, that that would make an impact and that is something that you would not forget.

Steve Gregory

And so, this was May, school still wasn't out yet, was it?

Detective McCarthy

You know that's a good question. I don't know, back in '79, it's changed so much, I know when I was a kid, that was a long time ago, that we got out of school at the end of May. And we would go back to school sometime after Labor Day or, or right after Labor Day. My kids, they get out in second week of June, and they go back in the second week of August, and then they have more time off during the year for holidays during the year. So I'm not quite sure back in 1979, whether this was pre school being out or post school being out.

Detective Tomlin

Actually, they were still in school, because Richard talked about having to go to school after this happened, and how scared he was wondering would this person appear out of the bushes, or waiting for him as he walked out of the classroom, believing that he was a witness and that they the guy would attack him, to eliminate him if you will.

Steve Gregory

Any idea then detective, I don't know if it's in the notes or whatnot in the case file, any idea if other classmates were interviewed and or teachers or anybody in that area?

Detective Tomlin

Unfortunately, the case file is very thin. And so we don't know.

Detective McCarthy

And another problem with this case, Steve, this is why we're, we're speaking to you right now on seeking KFI's help is, 1979 DNA wasn't even on the radar, or if it was on the radar, it was still a long ways away from reality. So they didn't process a crime scene, like we do today, with the with the mindset of possible DNA evidence, right. So nothing was done in '79, if this was a DNA case, this happened today, I think the likelihood of solving this case would go astronomically high.

Steve Gregory

Sure.

Detective McCarthy

But we're talking 1979. Then you're talking about 43 years that the case has sat cold. And the reality is, is that case files, things come up missing because they're looked at by multiple detectives over multiple generations, evidence comes up missing. It's just the reality, it's not an excuse, I'm not making excuses, it's just reality. So we're down to this case, number one goal, identify who did this, number two goal is proof that he did it. We don't have forensic, much forensic, if any in this case. So it's down to one surviving victim being able to identify the offender if we're able to identify him and that's a long shot at best. 43 years later, although we are hopeful based on Mark, oh I'm sorry, Richard's vivid memory of what happened that day.

Steve Gregory

We're talking with detectives Sean McCarthy and Tich Tomlin about the death of Timothy Troutman May 14, 1979. More on the case, but first, this is Unsolved with Steve Gregory on KFI-AM 640, time now for a news update.

Steve Gregory

KFI-AM 640, heard everywhere on the iHeartRadio app. I'm Steve Gregory and this is Unsolved. We're in Montebello, at the homicide bureau of the LA County Sheriff's Department. This is where Detectives Sean McCarthy and Rich Tomlin have invited us inside the Bureau's large conference room. We've been talking about the case of Timothy Troutman, he was a 13-year-old boy killed on May 14, 1979, it was actually his birthday. He and two of his buddies were celebrating when they were met by an adult male and moments later, moments after this encounter, Timothy ended up stabbed 40 times in an open field near Cal State University, Dominguez Hills. Gentlemen, before the break, we were talking a lot about the sketch that you got that was provided, I believe, by Richard, right? You said Richard kind of give you a description. And I'm still I'm still fascinated by the fact that they had such great memories for being 11-year-old boys. He and his friend Marcus, those were the two 11-year-old boys that were friends of Timothy who's 13. And you said that you've been able to speak with Richard today, and I mean, just recently, who is now in his 40s. Was he able to give you Detective McCarthy was Richard able to tell you anything new that was not in the file?

Detective McCarthy

Not really.

Steve Gregory

Really?

Detective McCarthy

Not really. It was, his statement was documented pretty well in 1979, he confirmed most of it. The description, the sketch, he confirmed the his belief that that's what the suspect looked like. I mean, there was there was small details that he provided us that we didn't know. But I don't believe it was anything that was going to lead us to a suspect. He was pretty thorough in the original investigation.

Steve Gregory

So Detective Tomlin when that sketch came out, and I suspect it went.... did it go city wide just in Carson, or did it go county wide? How does that work? Or would you know?

Detective Tomlin

We would not know.

Steve Gregory

What would you do? How would you do it today?

Detective Tomlin

We would go county wide.

Steve Gregory

County wide. Okay.

Detective Tomlin

But usually, or how it's done today, you would have a prepared flyer and you could be able to refer to that...

Steve Gregory

Which we've featured many times. Yes, Right.

Detective Tomlin

Again, in this case, unfortunately, we did not see one in the file.

Steve Gregory

Was there any indication that you got any tips back then that were fresh, any fresh tips?

Detective McCarthy

There was actually a person arrested early on in this case. In my opinion, he wasn't a viable suspect based on my review of the case file, but he was arrested, he was eliminated as a suspect, and from our review of the file, there was really no other serious suspects in this case, until recently.

Steve Gregory

Until recently? So you have is he suspect or a person of interest or what how would you classify it?

Detective McCarthy

I classify him as a person of interest. And what I mean by that is, we have reason to believe that this person could be the suspect, but we have very limited evidence to prove that he's the suspect. And we can theorize all we want and we can see things, similarities in in the sketch. But we we need a whole lot more evidence before we would ever consider taking this to the district attorney.

Steve Gregory

May I ask how you came about this person of interest? Or at least can you give me a generality?

Detective McCarthy

It started with a telephone call. And the telephone call was from a person that had a very passionate interest in this case. But as we talk to this person, he or she didn't appear to know the victims in this case, the families of the victims in this case, and I would call it an unhealthy, passionate interest in this case. And I actually asked this person what is your interest in this case? And he or she said they wanted to get justice for Timothy and they were in the process over the last three months of interviewing 100 over 100 people that they tracked down through the internet and whatever. Classmates of Timothy, and they were going to ultimately, they believed they were going to ultimately identify the suspect, and potentially possibly write a book on it.

Steve Gregory

So, are you telling me that this person that you spoke with has been conducting their own investigation into this?

Detective McCarthy

Yes. He made that very clear.

Steve Gregory

Did they provide any information to you that might be helpful?

Detective McCarthy

No.

Steve Gregory

Okay. So Detective Tomlin, you talked about a sister in this case. There is a sister that you have spoken with, right?

Detective Tomlin

Yes. Kathy Jones,

Steve Gregory

Kathy Jones. How old was Kathy when Timothy died?

Detective Tomlin

I believe Kathy was 16 at the time.

Steve Gregory

Okay, so she'd be in her late, I don't know she'd be 50s, 60s.

Detective McCarthy

I think early 60s...

Steve Gregory

Early 60s, yeah.

Detective McCarthy

But I don't want to be wrong about that. Because people are sensitive.

Steve Gregory

Well sure, but I guess her perspective.

Detective Tomlin

Yes, and so she's she remembers the day clearly. And obviously, she's never forgotten her brother, she and other family members are very passionate about getting answers, even after all these years. And aside from her, I'd like to mention a little bit about Richard, if you don't mind.

Steve Gregory

Sure.

Detective Tomlin

Speaking with Richard, who's who by the way, is very successful, he is well adjusted, when you consider what he went through personally. And one of the major things in talking to him where I felt sad, to this day, although he didn't verbalize it, you can tell he's still ponders, did he make the right decision by leaving...

Steve Gregory

Or staying and helping...

Detective Tomlin

...or staying and helping, and as you see what happened, Timothy, one would say he made the right decision, because this person who did this obviously, was not in their right state of mind whether they were mentally ill or under the influence or both. And being an 11-year-old, I don't think...

Steve Gregory

...he might have been killed as well.

Detective Tomlin

Absolutely, 100%.

Steve Gregory

Well, listen, guys, when we come back, we'll wrap up this case and also a final plea to the public. But first, this is Unsolved with Steve Gregory on KFI-AM 640, time now for news update.

Steve Gregory

KFI-AM 640, live everywhere on the iHeartRadio app. I'm Steve Gregory and this is Unsolved. To learn more about this case and others just go to our website at KFIAM640.com/unsolved. That's KFIAM640/unsolved.

Steve Gregory

Welcome back. We're at the Los Angeles County Sheriff's department's Homicide Bureau talking with detectives Sean McCarthy, Rich Tomlin. We're wrapping up the case of Timothy Troutman, he was a 13-year-old boy, May 14, 1979, he was stabbed 40 times on the day of his birthday, while two of his friends, two 11-year-old boys were running to try to get help. One of them has since passed away, the other one who's now in his 40s has been spoken to by both detectives McCarthy and Tomlin. And it's so interesting to me after all these years later, that the guy that you refer to as Richard, who was the one of the 11-year-old boys at the time, that he still remembers it, and remembers the detail and the trauma and you know Detective Tomlin, one of the things I wanted to ask you because you were you were talking a lot about, about the trauma and about what they might have been going through back in the day. There wasn't nearly the sort of Victims Assistance kind of setup back then that there is today and there was never really the push for wellness back then there is today. So how do you suppose an 11-year-old boy, back then that just found out that his friend was stabbed 40 times, what's your experience tell you with, because I know you've been doing this for a lot of years, what's your experience tell you with how kids back then might have been dealt with trauma like that, or how they've been handled?

Detective Tomlin

Back then as you as you stated, I don't think really, there was no counseling setup, per se, there was no making sure that they speak to a therapist, making sure that they go to a doctor just to get a physical just to make sure along with with their mental state. And as far as Richard's concerned, he said he had a very strong family and that helped him. And along with a strong family, he had a good group of friends, and that helped him through this. But as we were talking to him, you could see he was literally replaying it in his mind, I hope he doesn't mind, he got very emotional, he started tearing up, and you could see that he was back in 1979, and he was back in that field. And it was a very intense, very intense interview. And one thing that was I did not one thing that was we went to put him at ease is he felt helpless. He felt like he should, even today, I could have done more or, or we showed him a group of photographs and he did not select anyone. Not that we know if anyone was in that group of photographs we showed him. But he just you could see that he wants some answers.

Steve Gregory

He still feels helpless all these years later.

Detective Tomlin

Absolutely.

Steve Gregory

So Detective McCarthy, you talked about the fact that you had a person of interest, now, you know, it's funny, we're almost at the end of this show into the segment, and you're just now talking about Person of Interest. I mean, you should have led with that. We call that burying the lead. But that's okay, at least we're going to talk about it a little bit. So, but just to clarify, when you talk about the person of interest, was the caller your person of interest? Or was that or did that person lead you to someone you believe is the person of interest?

Detective McCarthy

The caller was not a person of interest, he had a passionate interest in the case and quote, unquote, getting justice for Timothy.

Steve Gregory

Did the person that called you, are they the Person of Interest? Or did they lead you to a person of interest.

Detective McCarthy

They are not a person of interest. They had a passionate interest in the case and getting justice for Timothy. But during our interview, they provided information that indirectly led us to a person of interest. I don't even think that person is aware that he provided us with information that led us to our suspect or person of interest.

Steve Gregory

Really? So it's kind of like an accidental or happenstance that led you...

Detective McCarthy

He said something in the interview that at the time, we didn't think was going to lead us to any anybody. And then we continued our investigation based on what he told us, and we were ever able to come upon a person of interest, I believe, a strong person of interest. But for the sake of the integrity of the investigation, I can't get into any further detail.

Steve Gregory

Understood. Detective Tomlin, you said that you when you were talking to people down in the city of Carson, about this even all these years later, and that you were you still ran into people who remembered this case, like it happened yesterday, or it was still pretty fresh in their mind. Did you get a sense from these people that they just had a memory of it, or did you get a sense from anybody that they might actually know what happened?

Detective Tomlin

Unfortunately, the people that we spoke to, they just had a memory of it. But because so many people had a memory of it, we are hoping that there are people out there that have more, and they have solid information that can help lead us to the actual killer.

Steve Gregory

Are you closer today to solving this crime than detectives were 43 years ago?

Detective Tomlin

We believe so. And the reason, obviously, we cannot speak to those investigators, they're no longer around. But just in the interviews that we have conducted, we have a better sense of Timothy, we have a better sense of Richard and Marcus. And why is that important? Because we know now what type of individuals they were meeting that they were just little kids, they were just 13-year-olds out playing in the

fields, and that they were not involved in any type of negative criminal activity. And the description provided by Richard increases the, our, our our belief that this is someone from the area, that he was drug induced, and probably suffering from psychological issues. And, and just that alone narrows a very, very broad scope. Obviously, we could be wrong, but we really believe that based on them, based on the people we talked to, that that individual lived in Carson at that time, and that somebody some family member, or some neighbor, or just some friend knows what happened. And we really strongly are urging them to please make a phone call, please. After 43 years, we want everyone to know that Timothy is not forgotten, and this is a solvable case.

Steve Gregory

Detective Tomlin, Detective McCarthy Always a pleasure, thank you so much. Good luck to you in this case. I certainly hope someone comes forward and least jogs a memory or two. Coming up, we head to Anaheim where homicide detectives are discussing murder cases for charity. But first, this is Unsolved with Steve Gregory on KFI-AM 640, time now for a news update.

Steve Gregory

KFI-AM 640, live everywhere on the iHeartRadio app. I'm Steve Gregory and this is Unsolved. To leave us a comment, hit #250 on your cell phone and say the key word Unsolved, or press the red microphone button on the iHeartRadio app. Joining us now is Jeff Mundy. He's a Sergeant with the Anaheim Police Department, and he's going to talk to us about something that we've never really done here on Unsolved, we're going to take a little bit of a twist, but I like this event, I like what it's doing, and it's connected to the homicide investigators with the Anaheim Police Department. And Jeff is going to tell us all about it. First of all, Sergeant, thank you for joining us really do appreciate it.

Sgt. Jeff Mundy

Thank you for having me.

Sgt. Jeff Mundy

Okay, so first of all, Anaheim Confidential. This is a primary fundraiser for the Anaheim's Cops for Kids nonprofit program, and we'll get into all that in a moment. But Anaheim Confidential, kind of kind of started out as sort of this little quiet private thing about five years ago, now it's starting to get some attention. Tell us all about it.

Sgt. Jeff Mundy

Yeah, so about five years ago, the idea was kind of born to host this event where as a fundraiser for Cops for Kids, where there would be food and drinks and then I guess, for lack of a better word, a show. And that show being a real presentation of a homicide case.

Steve Gregory

Really? I mean, like an active case or a solved case?

Sgt. Jeff Mundy

All of the ones that we present are solved cases that have been through through trial, that way, we're not jeopardizing any kind of investigation or, or jury pool or anything like that. So the cases tend to be at least a few years old, so that they've they've run through the legal system.

Steve Gregory

You know it's funny is that, in my experience, detectives don't like to talk a lot, and they don't like to talk about their work a lot, they like to talk amongst themselves. How did you guys convince a bunch of detectives to sit in front of a bunch of total strangers and open up about a case?

Sgt. Jeff Mundy

Yeah, I mean, none of us are. none of us became homicide detectives, because we're professional presenters or entertainers or anything like that. I think that, you know, I can I guess I can speak for me personally, the reason that, that I find it beneficial in that I've chosen to be involved in it is that a portion of the proceeds do go to our, our victim families through the Orange County Homicide Investigators Association. So I guess for me, that's something that makes it worthwhile to step out of my comfort zone and be in front of that audience like that and talk about the work that we do, knowing that it's not only benefiting Cops for Kids, but also the family and loved ones of our actual homicide victims in our in our own cases.

Steve Gregory

And do they come to the event, sometimes, these these families of victims?

Sgt. Jeff Mundy

Yeah, in fact, last year, there was the case that we presented was a serial killer case that from 2014, where multiple women were murdered by two guys, and the family members of some of those victims actually attended the event. And I think what they find beneficial from it, on a personal level is when cases are presented in court, obviously family typically attends the trial for that. But what what is shown in court is a very legalistic view of the case and it doesn't necessarily show all of the, all of the facts that are gathered, it's just what's being presented in court.

Steve Gregory

It's being sanitized by attorneys. It's being sanitized by attorneys and legal precedent. Yeah.

Sgt. Jeff Mundy

Right, yeah. So I think this kind of presentation, it gives them an opportunity to see, you know, to see the facts and the truth about what happened, as difficult as that I'm sure that is. I think it offers maybe a different kind of closure than than they otherwise get.

Steve Gregory

And it's really interesting. Do you remember the five years ago the very first case you did?

Sgt. Jeff Mundy

So, I actually do not I've only been involved in it for the past three years.

Steve Gregory

Oh okay, so what tell me about the first case you were involved with me? Have you actually been a participant and actually presented from the stage?

Sgt. Jeff Mundy

Yes, for the past two years, I was one of the presenters. Two years ago, it was a tragic case involving it was a domestic violence case. And the the man in the relationship, stabbed his, his wife and not only his wife, but also their their baby, both of them to death, and leaving behind a number of family members, but quite significantly was a mother slash grandmother of the two victims, and she actually participated in the presentation in the form of a pre-recorded video that we used, and I think it's just very powerful to show try to focus that presentation on on the victim side of it. And on the people who are left behind when, you know, when, when a loved one has murdered.

Steve Gregory

The choice of cases, how does that come about? How do you guys select which cases will be highlighted?

Sgt. Jeff Mundy

So a couple of requirements that I have, as the supervisor of the unit, one is, like we just discussed that it has to be in adjudicated case, and secondly, the the victim's family has to be okay with it. So before we do anything, we reach out to the victim's family and make sure that they that they support it and that they know what it's about. And if if they're not on board with board with it, then it's a deal breaker. And so then beyond that, we try to select faces that the general public would identify with. You know, I don't want to get into what this year's case is, but I can tell you that it's the kind of case where anyone that sees it, they would they would think to themselves, this could have happened to me.

Steve Gregory

Yeah, a relatable case.

Sgt. Jeff Mundy

Yeah.

Sgt. Jeff Mundy

So, how can I, I don't want to be rude here, you just said yourself earlier, that you guys aren't storytellers, but you have a great story to tell. So what was the biggest challenge for you to sit up there on stage and become a storyteller and keep the audience engaged with what you're doing.

Steve Gregory

Yeah, I think there's this kind of weird dichotomy maybe that exists in our, you know, within us where, you know, we go and do these things. And, you know, they're the types of stories that people, you know, they make TV shows about them, there's countless TV shows about homicide and homicide detectives. And so obviously, the content is something that's interesting to people, but then I think at the same time, we're, you know, personally, we're filled with self doubt, or, you know, the idea that people aren't going to find this interesting or, you know, people might be critical or, you know, that kind of thing. And, and I think in spite of the type of work that we're doing, and the importance of I think that I think that a lot of us tend to be introverts. And so to step out of a comfort zone and, and be on your show, or stand in front of a crowd and talk about, you know, kind of expose yourself in that way is, is quite challenging.

Steve Gregory

We're talking with Jeff Mundy, he's a detective supervisor with the Anaheim Police Department and when we come back, we're going to talk more about Anaheim Confidential, it's a fundraiser for the department's Cops for Kids program, and a portion goes to the Orange County Homicide Investigators Association, we'll talk more about that as well. But first, this is unsolved with Steve Gregory on KFI-AM 640, time now for a news update.

Steve Gregory

KFI-AM 640, live everywhere on the iHeartRadio app. I'm Steve Gregory. and this is Unsolved. You can always contact the team on the iHeartRadio app through the talkback feature, just press the red microphone and record your message, tip or show idea. We're talking with Jeff Mundy, he's a detective supervisor with the Anaheim Police Department and we're discussing Anaheim Confidential, a really cool fundraiser, an event that's been going on about five years now. And they're getting basically they get some detectives together talk about old cases that have already been adjudicated, so they're cleared to be discussed publicly, they get the permission of the family of the victims, and they grab a bunch of people together, and they go through these cases, these really cool cases that they've solved over the years, and with all the graphic parts of it, the stuff that may not have been discussed in court, and detective before the break, we were talking about, you know, you coming out of your comfort zone and kind of getting used to doing this publicly. What's been the audience response to this? How do they respond and react when you guys present these cases,

Sgt. Jeff Mundy

Um, it's it, I mean, that these are all the people that are there, they're people that have you know, they've purchased a ticket to be there, they want to be there, they're very interested in it. So, you know, right off the bat, I think it's, it's generally a supportive crowd that definitely, you know, has a strong interest in what it is that we're going to talk about. And I think one of the things that surprised me the most the first time that I did it, we you know, we played the 911 call, and, you know, there's, I don't know, a thousand people in the room, and you can hear a pin drop, and to have a story that commands that kind of attention, is, uh, you know, it definitely gets the butterflies going.

Steve Gregory

Yeah, you know, when you when you play some sort of realism when they get to hear the realism, and the call that started the whole ball rolling. And it's funny in, you know, when, when these people, and I'm assuming a lot of these folks are probably associated with the police department, and they're probably friends of police, and they probably understand it and get it. So the percentage of that audience, it's probably complete strangers, or they're really into the true crime genre. The you know, that's one thing I've learned over the years when they hear the realism, and when they hear gunshots, and when they hear and they know that that's real stuff, that's not TV, and that's not fake, it really impacts people. And I just think it's really cool that you guys been able to make a live stage version out of your real world out of your real life and everyday life. So let's talk a little bit about where the money goes, and who benefits from it. So first of all, it's the Anaheim Police Department's Cops for Kids, nonprofit youth program. Do you know a little bit about that? Tell us a little bit about Cops for Kids.

Sgt. Jeff Mundy

Yeah, so it is a it's a nonprofit, supporting year round youth programs for junior high and high school kids. The goal of the program is to mentor and guide these kids toward success academically and socially. preparing them for college and job opportunities. And the fundraising supports academic, cultural, recreational and occupational excursions. And there's a bit of a pipeline where, you know, we're trying to offer alternatives to maybe some of the criminal element elements that exist out there for kids. And this pipeline introduces them to the police department and there's, there's a number of kids that have been in

this program who are no longer kids anymore, and are actually police officers now. And so it's it's a way of kind of connecting with the community early on, especially with that that youth community and then introducing them to, you know, more of more positive interaction with police.

Steve Gregory

It also benefits the Orange County Homicide investigators Association. What's that?

Sgt. Jeff Mundy

So the Orange County Homicide Investigators Association, or OCHIA, as we call it, I happen to be the president of that organization. and its purpose is to connect homicide investigators across the county with each other, whether that's for discussing cases or networking, or discussing investigative tactics. It just kind of it connects the various investigators with each other. And then, in addition, the association offers both a scholarship as well as a victim assistance program to again to family members of homicide victims here in Orange County.

Steve Gregory

So, are you pretty well funded? I mean, do people donate and I mean, do you guys do pretty well?

Sgt. Jeff Mundy

We have enough to kind of do what it is that we're trying to do. And for us, this has become the biggest fundraiser just kind of by default. When, when Cops for Kids asked us to participate in this, we asked if if they'd be willing to support OCHIA and the goals that we have and they're very enthusiastic about it, and engaged in this partnership with us, and as a result of this event, this Anaheim Confidential event. It finds most of what we're trying to accomplish with OCHIA.

Steve Gregory

Whose idea was it to do Anaheim Confidential, where did it start?

Sgt. Jeff Mundy

It started with a sergeant who was assigned to Cops for Kids, five years ago, or five plus years ago, he came up with this idea, and his name was Sergeant Ray Greybeck, and he had this idea to put this thing together. And it's, it's really, every year it's become more and more of an attraction to people. Like each year, the the attendance grows, and it's really kind of taken off. And there's you know, through community donations, like the the food and the drinks and the venue, and my understanding is that it's all donations.

Steve Gregory

It's just, it's just a program for all ages, and audiences are just an adults only thing?

Sgt. Jeff Mundy

No, it's, it's open to I mean, I guess parents should use their discretion as far as who they bring, because it is it, it is a true look at a real homicide case, you know, here in Anaheim, but yes, it's, I think that it's appropriate for, you know, teenagers can go, you know, depending on their maturity level, and you know, there have been teenagers that are in the past.

Steve Gregory

Okay, so let's run this down. Your next Anaheim Confidential is Friday, October 14, is that correct?

Sgt. Jeff Mundy

Yes.

Steve Gregory

Okay. So give us the give us all the details.

Sgt. Jeff Mundy

So tickets are available on Eventbrite.

Steve Gregory

We'll put a link on ours too, as we'll put a link on our site too.

Sgt. Jeff Mundy

Okay, cool. So yeah, the tickets are available on Eventbrite. And what happens is people show up, it's almost like an outdoor street fair, where there's vendors, there, food and drinks, it's all included in your ticket. And after a couple hours hanging out kind of outside, people go inside, and then that's when the presentation starts. And the presentation runs about an hour and a half to two hours.

Steve Gregory

Intermission.

Steve Gregory

No.

Sgt. Jeff Mundy

No, really. So that's it's it. You keep them grabbed for two hours. That's great. And is it it's an indoor, what is it auditorium? How's the setup?

Sgt. Jeff Mundy

It's at the River Arena, which is a church in downtown Anaheim. And yeah, it's so it's an indoor venue. The stages kind of in the center of like a circular arena seating.

Steve Gregory

Oh cool.

Sgt. Jeff Mundy

There's plenty of seats. There's not a bad seat just based on the way that that the venue is set up.

Steve Gregory

Cool. Well, it is Friday, October, 14 4pm-9pm at 201 East Broadway, you said it was the River Auditorium?

Sgt. Jeff Mundy

Yes

Steve Gregory

River Auditorium in Anaheim. Tickets are available at eventbrite.com, we'll also have it on the KFIAM 640.com website slash Unsolved, and we'll help you as well on that. But Detective Mundy thank you so much. This is really cool, I really enjoy that, I really appreciate that you guys are doing this for a good cause. And I wish you all the success.

Sgt. Jeff Mundy

I really appreciate you having me on the show.

Steve Gregory

Absolutely detective, take care and good luck.

Sgt. Jeff Mundy

Thank you.

Steve Gregory

And that's going to do it. Unsolved is a production of the KFI News Department for iHeartMedia Los Angeles, Robin Bertolucci Program Director, Chris Little News Director. The program is produced by Steve Gregory and Jacob Gonzalez. Our field engineer is Tony Sorrentino, our technical director is David Calloway. Our digital producer for this episode is Michelle Kube, our social media producer for this episode is Lena Chappelle. Coming up, it's Coast to Coast, but first, this if KFI-AM 640, time now for a news update.