



COLD CASE INVESTIGATIONS

Unsolved Murder Near Aloha, Oregon in 1988 Deborah Lee Atrops

CRIME STOPPERS



DEBORAH LEE ATROPS
Killed three weeks ago

Reward offered in murder case

A reward of up to \$1,000 has been offered for information leading to an arrest in connection with an investigation involving the body of a 30-year-old former Sherwood woman who was found in the trunk of her abandoned car.

Deborah Lee Atrops, who lived in Salem, was last seen about 7:10 p.m. Nov. 29 when she left a hair salon in the Tigard Fred Meyer complex. She was reported missing when she failed to pick up her 9-month-old child later that day.

About 9 a.m. Dec. 1, construction workers found Atrops' car on a road near the intersection of Southwest Murray Road and Old Scholls Ferry Road in the Beaverton area. Police were called and found Atrops' body in the trunk. An autopsy showed she had been strangled.

Anyone with information may call the Crime Stoppers Inc. program at 248-HELP. Callers' names and information will be kept confidential upon request, or information may be called in anonymously.

On November 29, 1988, at 5:00 p.m., Deborah Lee Atrops left work at Wellons Inc., a metal fabrication company in Sherwood. She arrived on time for her 5:15 hair appointment at the Razz Ma Tazz hair salon in the Tigard Fred Meyer complex on Pacific Highway and left at about 7:00 p.m. From there, she planned to pick up her 9-month old baby around 7:00 p.m. at the home of her estranged husband, Robert Atrops, on Conzelman Road near Sherwood.

At 9:00 p.m. Robert Atrops notified police that Deborah failed to pick up the baby. The next morning, construction workers spotted her black 1988 Honda Accord next to a wooded area at the end of the dead-end extension of Murray Boulevard, south of Old Scholls Ferry Road. The keys were in the ignition and the license plates had been removed. Investigators discovered her body locked in the trunk.

An autopsy revealed that Deborah died of strangulation. Several witnesses came forward with information at the time, but detectives hope someone will come forward now with information that will help them make an arrest.

Deborah was 29 years old at the time of her death. She was last seen wearing a red dress with a black leaf design, a royal blue coat, and black heels.

If you have any information about this or any Cold Case, please contact Sheriff's Office Detectives at (503) 846-2500 or via e-mail to sheriff.web@co.washington.or.us. In the meantime, you can help by sharing this article with anyone you know who might know about the Deborah Atrops case from 1988.



Car trunk yields body of woman

Police find vehicle south of Beaverton; autopsy due Friday

An autopsy is scheduled for Friday morning to determine the cause of death of a Salem woman whose body was found Thursday in the trunk of her car, parked on a dead-end dirt road south of Beaverton.

Eugene Jacobus, Washington County medical examiner, said there "are no obvious causes for the death" of Deborah Lee Atrops, 29, who had been missing since Tuesday night.

Jacobus said the autopsy would be performed by Dr. Edward Wilson, assistant state medical examiner. He said it appeared the victim was dead at the time she was stuffed into the trunk of her car, but added that there was no way to tell in his investigation if her death occurred where her car was discovered.

Atrops was supposed to have picked up her 9-month-old child after leaving work at Wellers Inc., a Sherwood metal fabrication company, and getting a haircut Tuesday night at a Tigard salon.

She never arrived at the home of her estranged husband, Robert E. Atrops of Sherwood, to get her child, according to Sherre Calouri, a spokeswoman for the Washington County sheriff's department.

She was driving a 1988 black, four-door Honda Accord. The car — with the keys still in it — was discovered Thursday morning next



The Oregonian/ROBERT BACH

Washington County sheriff's deputies and investigators from the Oregon State Crime Laboratory crowd around the back of a car containing the body of a 29-year-old Salem woman.

to a wooded area at the end of a dead-end extension of Murray Boulevard, south of Old Scholls Ferry Road. The car was parked at the end of the paving on a block-long extension of Southwest Murray Boulevard. About 100 feet beyond the car, in a wooded area, is a swampy, algae-covered pond.

Beaverton police discovered the car about 8:45 a.m. while on patrol in the area. The license plates had been removed, and the car was identified as that of the missing woman through a check of the serial numbers.

Sue Franck, a resident of Scholls Landing apartments bordering the road extension, said she was walking her dog about midnight Tuesday near the apartments when she

heard running footsteps.

"I didn't see anyone, but my dog barked, and I decided I had better go inside," Franck said.

Debbi Wells, manager of the apartments, said she was showing an apartment that night on the side toward the dead-end road extension and heard what might have been a scream. She dismissed it at the time as possibly a child yelling, she said.

Workers on a storage facility being built across the road extension from the apartment complex said they noticed the black Honda parked at the end of the road when they arrived at work Wednesday morning but had no reason to suspect that it was involved in a crime.



DEBORAH LEE ATROPS
Missing since Tuesday

Police have no leads in strangulation death

By **MATT BUCKINGHAM**
Of the Times

BEAVERTON — Frustrated Washington County investigators have no solid leads and no suspects in the strangling death last week of a 29-year-old Salem woman.

Deborah Lee Atrops was found dead last Thursday in the trunk of her black 1988 Honda Accord abandoned at the dead end of the Murray Boulevard extension south of Old Scholls Ferry Road. She had been missing since the previous Tuesday night.

Atrops was last seen leaving the Razz Ma Tazz hair salon in the Tigard Fred Meyer complex on Pacific Highway at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 29. A Tigard couple who were videotaping their son skateboarding outside the Tigard Fred Meyer shortly thereafter came forward this Tuesday morning to hand over the tape.

The couple told investigators they had delayed com-

ing forward because they had viewed the tape and couldn't see anything that might be of interest to the investigation, said Sherre Calouri, spokeswoman for the Washington County Sheriff's Department.

Calouri said an initial screening of the tape Tuesday afternoon didn't reveal any startling clues in the case, but investigators are still looking. "We have to scrutinize the tape for background details, which is what we're interested in anyway," she said.

Atrops left work at Wellons Inc., a metal fabrication company in Sherwood, at 5 p.m. Nov. 29 to have her hair cut at the Tigard salon before picking up her 9-month-old baby at the home of her estranged husband, Robert Atrops of Sherwood.

A close friend and co-worker who asked not to be identified said, "She was a very nice person. She was in a very cheerful mood. She just lived for time with her baby."

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Deborah Atrops



Officers discovered Atrops' body in the trunk of her car

Death

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Atrops had been working in Welions' accounting department for about a year and a half. "She was very reliable, so when she didn't show up for work the next day it was a shock," the friend said.

A spokeswoman for Razz Ma Tazz at 11573 S.W. Pacific Highway in Tigard said Atrops was on time for her 5:15 p.m. hair appointment and left at about 7 p.m.

Calouri said Robert Atrops notified the police at about 9 p.m. that his wife had not arrived to pick up the baby. The sheriff's department issued an information alert shortly before midnight, she said.

After interviewing friends and relatives who described Atrops as a dependable worker and good mother, the sheriff's department issued an all-points bulletin that Wednesday for the black two-door Accord.

Beaverton police discovered the car at 8:45 a.m. a day later, Dec. 1, with the keys still in the ignition. The car's license plates had been removed, but police identified the vehicle by its serial numbers.

Police discovered Atrops' body in the trunk at about 10 a.m. after ob-

taining permission from Robert Atrops to search the vehicle. Nearby construction workers said the car had been there since at least 7 a.m. the previous morning.

Sue Franck, a resident of the Scholls Landing apartments just south of the road extension, said she first saw the car a few minutes before midnight Tuesday while she was walking one of her dogs. She said she didn't see anyone but ignored the car because she thought someone had stopped it there for a tryst.

Franck said she heard running footsteps on the pavement a few minutes later as she walked her second dog by a garbage dumpster near the mouth of the road extension.

The manager of the apartment, who asked not to be identified, said she heard what might have been a scream that Tuesday night but she declined to specify at what time.

Sgt. Charles Leutwyler of the sheriff's department said an autopsy Friday revealed that Atrops had died of "asphyxiation by manual strangulation." He said there was no evidence that Atrops had been sexually assaulted.