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District Attorney

STANISLAUS COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY

AND

MODESTO POLICE DEPARTMENT

JOINT PRESS RELEASE



Roy Wasden
Chief of Police

For Immediate Release

Date: February 3, 2009
Re: Buddy Ray Gary
Cold Case "Hit" Leads to Murder Charges

For More Information Contact:

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The Stanislaus County District Attorney's Office and the Modesto Police Department announced today that the 1976 rape and murder of Florence Millard has been solved and that First Degree Murder charges have been filed against Buddy Ray Gary who is currently incarcerated at Mule Creek State Prison in Ione, CA.

On August 30, 1976, 81-year-old Florence Millard was attacked and left to die in her home in the 600 block of Third Street in Modesto. Evidence at the scene suggested that Ms. Millard had been beaten and sexually assaulted. Ms. Millard was a widow and lived alone. She succumbed to her injuries from the violent attack and died on September 11, 1976.

Detectives had few leads in the case and it remained unsolved for over 30 years. The case is one of several "Cold Cases" assigned to Detective Craig Grogan of the Modesto Police Department. Detective Grogan submitted a piece of evidence to the Department of Justice that had been seized from the crime scene in 1976. An initial hit was made linking the evidence to Buddy Gary, a convicted felon whose DNA had been submitted to the State's data base of felony offenders following his last conviction. A confirmatory test was finalized on January 16, 2009.

Buddy Ray Gary was last sentenced in 2008 after a jury convicted him for a felony assault on his ex-girlfriend. He was sentenced to 25 years to life under California's "Three Strikes" law. Gary's prior convictions included two rapes, one of a 66-year-old woman in 1985, the other of an 83-year-old woman in 1971.

An arrest warrant has been obtained and Gary will be transported back to Stanislaus County to face the charges.

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