



PENNSYLVANIA STATE POLICE
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NEWS RELEASE – PA24-835276 – CRIMINAL HOMICIDE

On 06/25/2024 at approximately 1431 hours, Sharon Police Department took a report of a 14-year-old missing juvenile (Victim).

On 06/25/2024, Hermitage Police Department was dispatched to respond to the area of Shenango Lake in Clark Borough, Mercer County. Dismembered human remains were recovered in and partially in the water. This investigation was referred to the Pennsylvania State Police, Troop D Major Case Team.

Over the course of the next week, various dismembered human remains were recovered in the area surrounding Shenango Lake at various remote locations. Evaluation and analysis of the human remains by the Mercer County Coroner have confirmed the remains to be that of the Victim. Evaluation by a forensic pathologist indicates that the victim was dismembered by some type of cutting instrument. Upon completion of the autopsy of several of the recovered remains, the Coroner's Office has ruled the cause of death to be sharp force trauma to the head and the manner of death is homicide.

The last known in-person contact was to be on 06/22/24 at approximately 2100-2130 hours.

Information from the Victim's cellular provider, social media records, and multiple points of video surveillance indicated that the Victim walked to the area of the Budd Street Public Park and Canoe Launch located near to Budd Street at SR 62 and remained there for some time on 06/23/24 between the hours of 0300 – 0340 hours. The Victim appears to be on the phone and waiting to meet someone near the canoe launch area.

During the time of the Victim being present at the canoe launch area, numerous video surveillance systems from nearby locations were used to develop a suspect vehicle which returns to Riverwalk Apartments.

Video surveillance footage was recovered the Riverwalk Apartments depict an individual (identified as DaShawn WATKINS) to leaving and then returning to his apartment consistent with the vehicle movement. Upon his return he is struggling to carry a large duffel bag. On 06/24/24, WATKINS makes several trips out his apartment carrying multiple bags and garbage bags. Positive preliminary test for blood were discovered at multiple locations in WATKINS's apartment including under the bathroom flooring.

WATKINS was charged with Criminal Homicide through District Court 35-2-01. He is currently lodged in the Mercer County Jail.

Refer to the Attached Media Release from the Mercer County Coroner's Office.

All media inquiries should be directed to the Troop D Public Information Office.

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Ann Coleman, Chair
William Finley, Jr.
Timothy M. McGonigle



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY CORONER

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Media Release

Date: July 3, 2024

From: John A. Libonati
Mercer County Coroner

To: Media Distribution

RE: Golden Run Wildlife Area investigation update

It has been determined through forensic comparison and evaluation that the remains discovered during the course of the recovery effort are that of a missing juvenile from Sharon, Pennsylvania.

Paul A. Likens, Jr (14 years old) was reported to have been missing since Saturday June 22, 2024.

Notification to the family was performed earlier today by members of the Pennsylvania State Police and the Mercer County Coroner's Office.

Based upon the forensic autopsy and studies performed, the Mercer County Coroner has determined the cause of death to be sharp force trauma to the head in a manner ruled homicide.

Any information regarding the circumstances surrounding the initial disappearance of Paul A. Likens, Jr, or information that may be relevant to the ongoing investigation, should be immediately reported to the Pennsylvania State Police.

No further information will be released at this time and additional information will be provided when it is available and appropriate.