

Case Study: Black Hawk County MEI & Waterloo PD

LT. ROB DUNCAN
TARA DUNCAN MEI



Background information:

- Rob is the Lieutenant over the Investigations and Lab Division for the Waterloo Police Department.
- Tara is the Nurse Manager for the MercyOne Cedar Falls Emergency Department and works part time as a Medical Examiner for Black Hawk County.
- Sometimes when Rob gets a call Tara tags along. Sometimes when Tara gets a call Rob tags along.
- June 23, 2019 Rob gets a call from the Watch Commander requesting Investigations and Lab assistance for a suspicious death. The information at that time was that there was an anonymous 911 call made to dispatch telling them where they would find a dead body in an apparent abandoned house.

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911 Call to Dispatch



123 St. Albans

The arrival



Waterloo Police discover now a potential crime scene



Investigations and Lab are called in

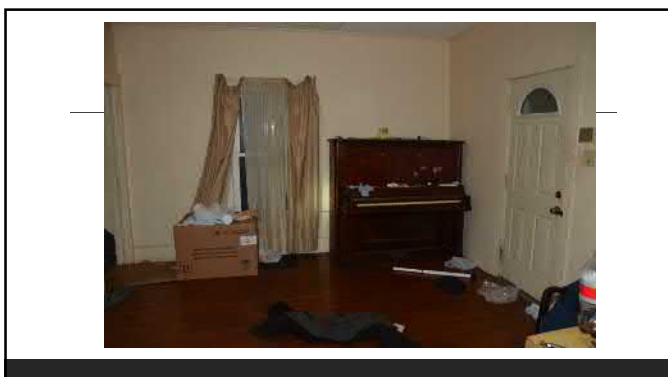
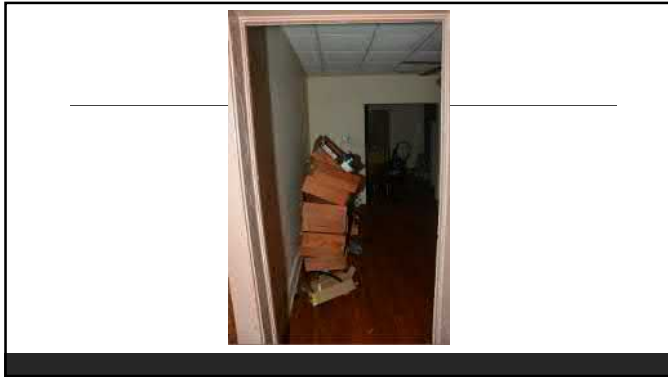
WPD calls for Investigations and Lab due to the circumstances thus far:

- * Anonymous 911 call
- * Condition of the body
- * House found unlocked with door open

Once the scene has been investigated the MEI is then typically called











Dated 1/1/19 at 0406



Best if used by
1/2/19

Bats located not too far from the body.



Lawn chair set up in the basement.



Broken basement window.





Not a single drop
of blood on any of
the tennis shoes.



12/16/18
Withdrew \$60.00
Remaining balance:
\$81,266.55



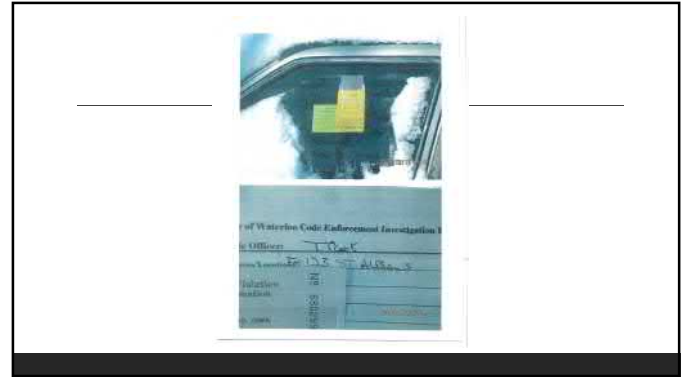
Recap of findings: (Besides the condition of the house):

- Concerning notes on the door. Enemies?
- Door found unlocked and opened.
- Decaying, naked, body found in living room.
- Bats near the body – potential weapons?
- New snowblower in the living room- not the garage. Question if stolen and being hidden there?
- Respirator masks found throughout the house. Squatters staying there?
- Receipts found dating back to December 2018 and January 2019.
- No electricity.
- Broken window in the basement.
- Lawn chair set up in basement. Someone sleeping down there?
- Clean, white tennis shoes clearly had been moved after he had died and the blood had dried in the basement.



Notes Listin
Case: 11/10/18 - 11/10/18
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The investigation:

- Police were called to the home for a welfare check in **January**. The officer that responded was at the house when he was called away for shots fired nearby.
- Family lived only a few blocks away, but had not checked on him in a while due to he had mental issues and was hard to cope with.
- The City of Waterloo had his car towed away in **February**- Cadillac that been parked in the street during snow removal times. Police found out about the Cadillac when the daughter asked about it. It was located at a local auto salvage.
- MidAmerican energy shut his heat off in **April**, after so many months of unpaid bills.
- **June**- Police located the 911 caller who then gave the name of her friend that found the body.
- He confesses to breaking into the house thinking it was abandoned. This is how the window got broken and the shoes in the basement got moved. He then found the body, got nervous, and fled the house, leaving the door open and unlocked on his way out. He was charged with 3rd degree burglary.
- Police obtain records showing deceased had over \$90,000 in his bank account. Last bank activity was January 3, 2019 to Home Depot.

State Medical Examiner autopsy findings were.....

Natural Causes

Take away from this case:

- Never judge a book by it's cover
- Important to work collaboratively with police and fire.
- Pay attention to the clues. Everyone has a story to tell- even when they are dead.
- Let your imagination run wild- but don't let it over run the facts. More heads together is better.

Pearls of wisdom:

Always keep an open mind.
Let the case facts guide you,
not the personal opinion. It is
okay to have theories as you
survey the scene, but don't let
the theories become "fact"
until you have the actual proof
to back them up.