

Coffee cup leads to arrest in 1972 cold case murder in Snohomish County

Detectives made an arrest in the 1972 murder of 20-year-old Jody Loomis in Snohomish County. DNA found on a discarded coffee cup cracked open the cold case investigation.

Author: KING Staff

Published: 7:08 AM PDT April 11, 2019

Updated: 11:28 PM PDT April 11, 2019

Thursday brought the news that authorities and family members waited nearly 47 years to hear.

Snohomish County detectives arrested a 77-year-old Edmonds man they believe is responsible for the 1972 murder of Jody Loomis.

Terrence Miller was arrested Wednesday morning at his home and has been charged with 1st degree premeditated murder. He is being held on \$1 million bail.

"Today, we're one step closer to finding justice for Jody Loomis," said Captain Robert Palmer, Snohomish County Sheriff's Office investigations commander.

WATCH: [Detectives announce arrest in 1972 cold case](#)

On August 23, 1972, Jody Loomis was biking to a horse stable near what is now Bothell-Everett Highway and 164th Street in Mill Creek. She was last seen about 5 p.m. riding up a hill on Penny Creek Road, which is now called Mill Creek Road.

Miller is accused of taking Loomis down a dirt road into a wooded area, then raping and shooting the 20-year-old in the head.

Two people found her body about 30 minutes later in the woods. Loomis died en route to the hospital.

Detectives believe Miller was living in Edmonds at the time of the murder, about five miles from where Loomis' body was found. However, Miller didn't know Loomis prior to the day she was murdered, according to Captain Palmer.

Miller is a lifelong resident of Snohomish County. For decades, he has lived with his wife in Edmonds, where they sell pottery on weekends.

Investigators identified Miller through genetic genealogy, which uses DNA testing in combination with traditional genealogical methods to determine a relationship between a person and their relatives.

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In 2008, detectives sent DNA samples from the crime scene to a lab for testing. A partial DNA profile was found on a semen sample on Loomis' boot and was uploaded into the Combined DNA Index System (CODIS) database. However, there wasn't ever a hit on the sample.

Fast forward to July 2018, and investigators sent the sample to Parabon NanoLabs for analysis. In August, detectives received the results, which named possible relatives of the suspect. Investigators then worked with a genetic genealogist, who built a family tree and helped identify a possible suspect.

"This is where Terrence Miller's name first came to our attention," Palmer said.

When prosecutors charged Miller on Thursday with first-degree murder, they also revealed a 1968 arrest for indecent exposure to a young girl, along with accusations that he molested several family members. No molestation charges were ever filed.



Terrence Miller circa 1972.
Courtesy Snohomish County Sheriff's Office

Detectives trailed Miller to a casino where they collected a used coffee cup that Miller discarded. The DNA on the cup matched the semen sample from the crime scene.

"Without the determination of our department, and advances in DNA technology we would not be here today," said Palmer.

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This is the second arrest in a Snohomish County cold murder case that has been aided using genetic genealogy.

"It's exciting for us to have this opportunity and ability to solve cases and resolve questions that have been around for a long time," said Palmer. "It definitely gives us an advantage in coming up with suspect profiles in ways that we don't have another method to do."

Loomis' case is [one of many](#) the Snohomish County Sheriff's Office Cold Case Unit is working to solve. However, it is the department's oldest cold case.

Chuck Wright volunteers with the Snohomish County Sheriff's Office Cold Case Unit and has carried a card in his wallet with information about Loomis' case for the past 10 years. He has a column in the Mill Creek Beacon and said he's kept Loomis' name in the headlines because he wanted to see the homicide solved.

"I wanted people to hang on, and maybe somebody had some information," said Wright. "Some cases just grab you."

Wright said he's relieved some decades-old questions are finally being answered.

Investigators said they are still trying to find out more about a horse bridle missing from the victim.

If the public has any information about Loomis' murder or Miller's past, including any guns he owned, where he worked, what car he drove, and if he ever owned a horse bridle, they are urged to contact the sheriff's office at (425) 388-3845.

Man guilty of 1987 murders solved with genetic genealogy

In an unprecedented trial, a jury convicted William Talbott in the slayings of a young Canadian couple.

by [Caleb Hutton](#)

Saturday, June 29, 2019 7:24am

EVERETT — For three decades, the families of Jay Cook and Tanya Van Cuylenborg had only questions and fleeting memories.

On Friday morning, one long-awaited answer arrived.

A jury found William Talbott II guilty of two counts of aggravated murder in a trial that was the first of its kind.

The truck driver, 56, of SeaTac, had been identified in a pioneering investigation led by the Snohomish County Sheriff's Office.

A genealogist used a public DNA site, GEDMatch, to help build a family tree for the suspect based on DNA from a crime scene. Her research pointed to Talbott.

Since then, dozens of arrests have been made in cold-case crimes nationwide through a forensic method known as genetic genealogy, stirring a heated debate over police use of public ancestry databases.

Many suspects, including the former cop accused of being the Golden State Killer, await trial.

Talbott's case marked the first time that the technique had gone before a jury.

Other than semen at two crime scenes, little else tied the defendant to the killings. His defense argued the semen was the result of a consensual act.

He grew up seven miles from a third crime scene south of Monroe, where Jay Cook had been bludgeoned with rocks, strangled with twine and left dead under a bridge in 1987.

Talbott did not testify.

He walked into the courtroom Friday dressed in dark gray. After a law clerk read the jury's verdict — guilty as charged — he flinched and gasped.

"No," he said, quietly. "I didn't do it."

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Moments later his head lolled back and forth, as his attorneys put their hands on his neck and back.

Jail guards pushed him out of the room in a wheelchair.

Family and friends of the victims embraced.

Judge Linda Krese set sentencing for July 24. There is only one possible sentence: life in prison.

“While the main interest on this case has been focused on the use of genetic genealogy, we’ve been trying to find a killer,” said Capt. Rob Palmer, head of investigations for the Snohomish County Sheriff’s Office, after the verdict. “It’s an amazing tool, and we’ll be using it again.” Added Laura Baanstra, the sister of victim Jay Cook: “This would not have been solved if it had not been for the DNA evidence. The use of GEDMatch — I hope more and more people will be willing to allow their DNA on these sites so that this world can be safer.”

“Our family is very grateful for all the people that helped bring this to fruition,” said John Van Cuylenborg, brother of Tanya Van Cuylenborg. He thanked the Snohomish County Sheriff’s Office and its cold case team, as well as those involved in the genetic genealogy analysis that led to Talbott’s arrest.

Jay and Tanya

Cook stood a stalky 6-foot-4.

At age 20, he hadn’t beefed out.

He’d learned to play rock ’n’ roll bass guitar with friends in his hometown on Vancouver Island. He worked at a pizza parlor for a while. One night after a shift, he rode his bike three hours through rain and darkness to a cabin where friends were staying for a weekend, balancing a pizza the whole way to bring them food, recalled his sister.

The family of 1987 murder victim Jay Cook talked about their feelings after the trial of William Talbott II during an interview Tuesday, June 25, 2019, at The Daily Herald in Everett. (Chuck Taylor / The Herald)

He had a bizarre habit of losing his clothes, she said. Sometimes after school he’d come home without his jacket, with no idea where it ended up. One day the family packed for a ski trip, about a four-hour drive.

“We get there — snow on the ground, right? — and Jay only had one shoe,” Baanstra said.

He had a sweetness about him, taking his younger sister out for dinner and, once, for high tea with the good money he’d earned on a fishing boat.

One uncle coined a phrase about his nephew: “Jay had no rough edges.”

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“It’s really no wonder that Jay ended up with someone like Tanya,” Baanstra said. “Tanya was very sweet and caring, and they looked up to each other.”

She was 18.

Much like the Cooks, her family loved long boating trips around the Salish Sea. Van Cuylenborg played tennis at her family’s home on an acre, and led a student push for a girls’ basketball team at her high school, her brother said.

For years she lobbied her parents, too, to get a dog. Her mother gave in around 1982. The Golden Retriever, Tessa, became first and foremost Tanya’s pet.

She hoped to work with animals one day, maybe as a veterinarian. Cook’s dream was to be a marine biologist. Neither had concrete plans. They were young. They started dating in the summer of 1987.

Cook’s father ran a furnace business with a man named Spud, whose last name, Talbot, ended in one T. Jay Cook didn’t have a job at the time. So his father asked him to run an overnight errand to pick up about \$750 in parts from a company called Gensco, in south Seattle. He had cash for a hotel but planned to sleep in the van outside the business.

His girlfriend was invited to come along. They set out on Nov. 18, 1987, in a bronze Ford Club Wagon van. Their ferry from Vancouver Island docked in Port Angeles around 4 p.m., a half-hour before sunset. Perhaps an hour later on Highway 101, they missed the exit to the Hood Canal Bridge. They stopped in Hoodsport for snacks.

Store clerk Judith Stone testified that they wanted to know how close they were to the bridge. “Oh, you’re a little past that,” Stone recalled saying. “A long way past that.”

She told them how to reroute to Seattle.

A deli clerk spoke with them in Allyn. They did not seem distressed, and it didn’t seem like anyone else was traveling with them.

Exactly how they encountered the killer remained a mystery, even through the trial.

Prosecutors suggested they may have pulled over for directions again.

Days later police found a ticket for the Bremerton-Seattle ferry inside the abandoned Ford van. The ferry docked in Seattle around 11:35 p.m.

That’s where the couple’s path went cold.

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The case

Almost a week later, a passerby collecting cans found Van Cuylenborg dead against a rusty culvert, on Nov. 24, 1987, off Parson Creek Road in Skagit County.

She was nude from the waist down. She'd been shot in the back of the head with a .380-caliber bullet.

The next day, police learned her wallet, ID, a box of .380-caliber ammo and surgical gloves had been picked up 20 miles north in downtown Bellingham under a tavern's back porch. The bronze van sat parked around the corner, next to a Greyhound station.

The money order was still inside, unused. There was blood on a comforter, a used tampon on the floor and orange Camel cigarette butts in an ash tray.

Pheasant hunters stumbled on Cook's body on Thanksgiving Day under the High Bridge over the Snoqualmie River, south of Monroe.

A blue blanket covered his head and torso. Investigators peeled it back to find he'd had been beaten around the head and strangled with twine tied to two red dog collars. Tissues and a pack of Camel Lights had been shoved down his throat. Days later police seized bloody rocks from the grass nearby.

The crime scenes were scattered over three counties. At each site, police found interlocked zip ties. Neither of the victims had obvious marks on their wrists or ankles.

A generation passed.

For Cook's parents and sisters, the gaping wound began to heal. They talked often about Jay, but in happy, friendly, joking terms.

"For us, I think we put Jay's tragic death behind us a long time ago," Laura Baanstra said in an interview. "We all assumed that whoever did it was either dead or in jail. I don't think I ever thought the guy had gotten away with it, because I just assumed he would've done something else."

John Van Cuylenborg, Tanya's brother, said his parents were never the same after her death.

When his father died in the 1990s, John became the one who kept in touch with the sheriff's office in Snohomish County.

"What I've had to live with for 31 years was just no answers to anything, in this case, other than you had a couple of dead bodies," he said.

John, his sister's only sibling, is now a civil attorney in Victoria. He was forced to accept that there was a good chance the murders would never be solved.

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“You kind of had to,” he said. “You needed to have some perspective on it, and be able to focus on other things in life, rather than continuing to wait day after day, week after week, for a resolution.”

He never gave up hope, though. He knew there was evidence that could, someday, implicate somebody. His sister’s Minolta camera body had gone missing from the van, and detectives had the serial number.

A jacket and a backpack had gone missing, too.

He knew the sheriff’s office had a suspect’s DNA.

He couldn’t have predicted how police ended up using it.

Detectives had built a list of hundreds of potential suspects. Many were ruled out through DNA tests.

Semen was found both on Van Cuylenborg’s body and in the van, on the hem of her pants. The sample was sent to Parabon NanoLabs, a private lab offering a new service to help police to build a rough digital sketch of a suspect’s face, through DNA.

Behind the scenes Parabon was working on another project, using public genealogy databases to identify suspects through their family ties. Quietly, the lab uploaded the genetic profile to GEDMatch.

By chance, second cousins on both sides of Talbott’s family had uploaded genetic profiles to the database.

A genealogist, CeCe Moore, traced the family lines to Talbott’s mother and father. He had sisters. But he was the only son. The data report returned to the lab on a Friday in late April 2018. By that Monday, the genealogist had identified who it belonged to.

Until then, police had no reason to suspect Talbott.

He was a short-haul trucker with no felony record. In his spare time, he rode motorcycles, and he was well liked in his circle of friends.

Plainclothes officers put Talbott under surveillance on his driving routes for days. A paper cup fell from his work truck on May 8, in south Seattle. It was tested by a state crime lab. His DNA matched the semen. Talbott was arrested and charged with two counts of aggravated first-degree murder.

John Van Cuylenborg had been in touch with Snohomish County cold case detective Jim Scharf over the preceding months about the work Parabon was doing. Scharf called him in May 2018 with news of the arrest. Van Cuylenborg had many questions.

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“And I said, ‘Well, where is he?’ And he said, ‘In the back seat.’ A shiver went down my spine, thinking Jim’s riding in the same vehicle as this guy, after 31 years, you know?” he said. “It’s just phenomenal.”

Later, detectives took a swab from Talbott’s cheek.

Again, the DNA matched.

The trial

Defense attorneys did not challenge the legality of police using genetic databases to identify a suspect.

Instead, at least in this trial, the genealogy work was treated like any tip that police might follow.

Jurors listened to 1½ weeks of witness testimony: retired police officers who uncovered evidence in 1987; the bird hunter who found Cook’s body; the Bellingham bartender who gave Van Cuylenborg’s ID to the cops; the store clerks, the last people known to have seen the couple alive; and detective Scharf, who fought tears on the witness stand as he recalled receiving word of a DNA match.

According to Talbott’s defense, the detectives had tunnel vision.

“They never stopped to consider that perhaps the person who left the DNA was not the murderer,” defense attorney Rachel Forde said during the trial.

In her closing argument, Forde said semen could’ve been the result of a consensual act. It only showed, she said, that Talbott had sexual contact with her. It didn’t prove Talbott was guilty of murder, Forde said.

The deputy prosecutor, Matt Baldock, fired back in his rebuttal.

He asked the jury if it was plausible that a teen girl would have sex with a stranger — on an overnight trip with her boyfriend? In the midst of the AIDS crisis? When she was on her period? Attorneys clashed over the credibility of a witness who found further evidence that seemed to link Talbott to the van: a palm print, on a back door.

At first, a Washington State Patrol crime lab investigator had ruled out Talbott as a match.

A colleague told forensic scientist Angela Hilliard to look again. Hilliard realized she’d been examining the sample upside down. She changed her conclusion: The print matched Talbott.

The defense pointed out how convenient that seemed for the police but did not call an expert witness to challenge the final conclusion of the lab, nor did the lawyers dispute it was Talbott’s semen in the van.

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Defense witness testimony lasted about 10 minutes — a brief discussion of an address on Talbott's driver's license in Okanogan County, where he owned land.

Talbott grew up near Woodinville, in a house that's no longer there. At the time of his arrest, he lived in SeaTac.

None of his relatives recalled ever seeing him with a blue blanket, a Minolta camera, dog collars or guns.

The jury began deliberating around 4 p.m. Tuesday.

The answer

As they awaited a verdict, Cook's family spoke with The Daily Herald.

"Regardless of how this case comes out, I know they'll survive," said Cook's brother-in-law, Gary Baanstra. "I've seen them do it. Their closure is just going back to that place where they can say, 'Jay,' and there's just no baggage against it anymore."

To Cook's sister, it has seemed mind-boggling that a killer could do this once. Never before. Never again.

Tanya's brother has thought about that, too.

"We're trying to logically understand an illogical act," John Van Cuylenborg said. "Or acts, in this case. You're starting off to do the impossible."

Sitting outside the courthouse on a sunny evening this week, he said he believed Talbott was guilty.

He'd seen what the jury had seen. He could come up with no other explanation for the evidence.

Jurors returned a verdict around 11 a.m. Friday. Defense attorneys did not stay to talk with the 12 Snohomish County residents who had convicted Talbott.

After over an hour of discussion with prosecutors in a closed room, most of the group trickled out of a back exit of the courtroom. At least one juror was wiping away tears. None were willing to talk with media right away.

A national spotlight has followed the trial this month, because it is uncharted legal and ethical territory.

Snohomish County Prosecutor Adam Cornell spoke to a wall of television news cameras outside the courtroom.

"Justice arrived late for Jay and Tanya, but it arrived today," he began.

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Genealogy research had been critical in cracking the case, he said, but it was dogged detective work at the sheriff's office — running down leads, using every strategy at their disposal — that brought justice for the families.

“Folks aren’t going to be able to get away with murder anymore, when we have this information,” Cornell said. “And if you’re a killer and you’re out there, then this office and other law enforcement offices around the country may be coming for you.”

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CRIME

Another decades-old Tacoma murder solved? Suspected killer of 12-year-old Michella Welch arrested

BY STACIA GLENN, KENNY OCKER, AND SEAN ROBINSON

June 20, 2018 12:58 PM, Updated June 21, 2018 12:56 AM

Possibly solving a second high-profile cold case murder in two months, Tacoma police on Wednesday arrested a man suspected of killing 12-year-old Michella Welch more than three decades ago.

Officers booked Gary Charles Hartman, 66, into the Pierce County Jail just after 3:15 p.m. on suspicion of first-degree murder, jail records show. Prosecutors are expected to charge him Thursday.

Police declined to talk about the arrest or how they linked Hartman to Welch's death. A news conference set for Friday is expected to provide answers.

Welch was abducted March 26, 1986, from a Tacoma park and found dead later that day.

Five months later, a second young girl, Jennifer Bastian, disappeared while riding her bicycle in Point Defiance Park. The 13-year-old's body was found weeks later. Police arrested a suspect in her death last month.

Tacoma Cold Cases from 1986

[Suspected killer of Tacoma girl who disappeared in 1986 has been arrested](#)

[It was the DNA: Man charged with killing Jennifer Bastian voluntarily gave police his](#)

[Police say he killed Jennifer Bastian in 1986. Family, neighbors know him as a caring man](#)

['After all this time, justice is Jenni's': Bastian's mom speaks about arrest in daughter's death](#)

[Who was Robert Washburn in the 1980s? Police have few details on suspect in Bastian case](#)

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[A child dies, but lives for decades in the mind of a once young reporter](#)

[Man accused of killing Jennifer Bastian returns to Tacoma](#)

[A young girl dies and three generations live with fear](#)

['He can't hurt anybody': Jennifer Bastian's mother sees man accused of killing her daughter](#)

The girls' deaths haunted the community, becoming two of the most heart-wrenching cold cases in Tacoma's history.

Initial searches of public and court records show no prior criminal convictions for Hartman, described as a cordial man who collected vintage cars, and lived with his wife on the shores of Steilacoom Lake.

A neighbor who asked not to be named said a swarm of law enforcement officers descended on Hartman's home early Wednesday, surprising the quiet community, though some neighbors saw signs of surveillance activity over the past few weeks.

"This is completely from left field for us, I mean like way left field," said the neighbor, a retiree who has lived in the area for five years. "I don't know the gentleman real well. We waved to each other constantly. ...

"He had four or five collectible cars that he and his wife would always drive around. Very cordial and very sweet older people. The neighbors thought he was greater than sliced bread."

Records indicate Hartman might have lived in the 4600 block of North Huson Street from 1986 to at least 1989. The two-story house, on a quiet street with a view of Commencement Bay, is a little more than a mile from the entrance to Point Defiance Park.

Other information indicates that Hartman worked at Western State Hospital in Lakewood as a community nurse specialist. State records list him as a registered nurse with an active license, first issued in 1998. No complaints are attached to the record.

A co-worker who asked not to be named said Hartman's current duties involve arranging community placements for patients discharged from the state hospital. The co-worker said he spoke to Hartman at work a week ago.

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"I've known him. I've supervised him in the past, the co-worker said. "He interviews patients and so forth for placement, to go to a specific group home or facility. He's gotten a couple of very troubled patients off the ward that have been there for decades."

The neighbor and co-worker were equally surprised to hear of Hartman's possible involvement in the 32-year-old murder.

"Here's an example of when you think you kind of know people and you don't," the neighbor said.

On the day she disappeared, Welch took her two siblings to Puget Park in North Tacoma about 10 a.m. She rode her bicycle home an hour later to make lunch for them.

When she returned, she chained her bike next to her sister's bike, put lunch on the table and went looking for the two younger girls.

Her sisters returned to the park about 1:15 p.m. and didn't see her, so they went to play near a cave under a bridge for another half an hour. The girls later found the brown paper bag with their lunches and got worried about Welch.

They called her name from the edge of a gulch and started down a trail looking for her but their baby-sitter called them back.

Police began searching for the missing girl at 3:10 p.m. A tracking dog found her body late that night in a makeshift fire pit in a gulch near the park.

She'd been sexually assaulted and died of a cut to the neck.

In early August that year, Jennifer Bastian disappeared. Her body was found Aug. 26 in a wooded area off Five Mile Drive. She'd been sexually assaulted and strangled.

Detectives long believed the two deaths were linked because the girls were similar in age and appearance and both killings happened in North End parks.

Tips flooded in but no arrests were made.

In 2016, police announced that DNA tests showed different men killed Welch and Bastian.

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Investigators made a list of suspects in both girls' deaths and asked them to provide voluntary DNA samples.

In May, a hit came in Bastian's murder. DNA linked her death to 60-year-old Robert D. Washburn, who lived near Point Defiance Park at the time the girl went missing.

He was arrested May 10 at his home in Eureka, Illinois, and brought back to Pierce County. He has pleaded not guilty to first-degree murder.

Staff writer Alexis Krell contributed to this report.

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Michella Welch, 12, was killed in Tacoma's Puget Park in March 1986.

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The man who killed Jennifer Bastian in 1986 in Tacoma has been sentenced

[BY ALEXIS KRELL](#)

January 25, 2019 02:17 PM, Updated February 05, 2019 10:51 PM

Jennifer Bastian's family waited more than 32 years for justice.

It finally came Friday when the 13-year-old's killer was sentenced to nearly 27 years in prison.

Robert Dwane Washburn, 61, pleaded guilty to first-degree murder for Bastian's death — a cold case that detectives solved last year when [DNA linked him to the crime](#).

Superior Court Judge Elizabeth Martin then handed down the 320-month sentence.

Bastian went missing Aug. 4, 1986 while riding her Schwinn bicycle in Point Defiance Park. Her body was found in a wooded area of the park weeks later.

Washburn's plea statement said that he grabbed Bastian by the arm, led her into the woods, then strangled her.

There were signs of sexual assault, charging papers said.

On Friday, family, friends and supporters of Bastian packed the courtroom for Washburn's plea and sentencing, including detectives and Tacoma Police Chief Don Ramsdell.

The court also provided an overflow room with video.

Pattie Bastian, Jennifer's mother, described to the court how there's "always a cloud of fear and foreboding" for the family on nice summer days.

"We continued to live and laugh and love, but in a much different way," she said.

She also described how the crime changed the city.

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Kids stopped playing outside unsupervised, and “walking to school became a logistical nightmare,” she said.

Half those in the courtroom gallery were kids themselves in 1986, she told the judge, and the crime influenced how they’re raising their own children.

That includes Jennifer’s sister, Theresa Bastian, who told the court that she hadn’t taught her daughter how to ride a bike.

“You made me an only child,” she told Washburn.

Washburn declined to speak on his behalf at sentencing but did write a statement that Judge Martin read aloud.

He wrote that he wanted to plead guilty from the start of his legal proceedings to spare his family and the Bastian family the trauma of a trial. The letter said he was sorry for his actions and that he recognized the impact they had on many people.

Washburn wrote that he hoped his sentencing would bring the Bastian family “one step closer in their healing process.”

The Bastian family told reporters outside court that they felt justice had been served and praised the law enforcement officers who never gave up.

“There’s a certain amount of exhaling that went on in that courtroom,” Pattie Bastian said.

She noted that Washburn looked down throughout the hearing.

“I guess that’s the picture of a guilty man,” she said.

Washburn got the sentence he deserved, she said, adding that she couldn’t imagine going to trial and having to relive details of the crime.

“He did give us the gift of not having to go to trial,” Pattie Bastian said.

Theresa Bastian noted that, at age 61, Washburn likely will die in prison.

“His sentence is a lifetime,” she said.

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Until DNA showed otherwise in 2016, investigators thought that the same person killed Bastian and another girl, 12-year-old Michella Welch. Welch also went missing in 1986. Her body was found in Tacoma's Puget Park.

The gruesome crimes so close to one another [shook Tacoma](#).

Washburn contacted police about the Welch case in 1986 and said he saw someone jogging in Point Defiance Park who resembled her killer. He wasn't considered a main suspect in Bastian's murder, but he was on the list.

When the Federal Bureau of Investigation went to his home in Eureka, Illinois in March 2017, he gave investigators a DNA sample. Test results in May 2018 linked him to Bastian's death, and [he was arrested and charged](#).

[Welch's suspected killer also was arrested and charged last year, following DNA tests](#).

Prosecutors accuse 67-year-old Gary Charles Hartman of sexually assaulting and killing Welch March 26, 1986. Her body was found in the park's gulch that night. She died from a cut to her neck and blunt force trauma to her head.

Hartman has pleaded not guilty and awaits trial.

Before she sentenced Washburn, Martin noted how Bastian's death "grotesquely compared" to the innocence of a child riding a bike. She added that the murder traumatized an entire community.

"Jennifer's life was stolen right as she was poised to begin it," the judge said.

Then Martin said the high-end sentence recommended by the state and the defense was appropriate.

Thirty-two years, she said, is a long time to wait for justice.

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Jennifer Bastian was reported missing Aug. 4, 1986, while riding her Schwinn bicycle at Point Defiance Park. Her suspected killer, Robert Washburn, was arrested 32 years later. DEAN J. KOEPFLER *STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER*