

'We Don't Give Up'

continued **▲** from front

would get away with the crime," he said. "And then we get to tell them that they are going to have to pay the price for what they did."

Before the creation of the unit, all homicide cases, hot, warm and cold, were the responsibility of the Hot Squad, which is comprised of 10 detectives and two sergeants on call 24 hours a day.

In the late 90s, however, there was a push for a cold case unit after an influx of gang

murders, which Weatheroy explained are difficult cases to solve.

"Overtime you start to build a data base of unsolved cases," he said. "They get caught up in the viscous cycle where they (the Hot Squad) never got the chance to put in the necessary efforts to work on those cold cases."

Consequently, he said Portland recognized the need to do something different.

"It wasn't just us," said Weatheroy. "Police agencies across the country realized the need as well."

Over the years, the Cold Case Unit has

been funded by two-grants, co-sponsored by the Federal Department of Justice and The National Institute of Justice.

In an effort to reduce the number of lingering murder cases throughout the country, the first grant was given in 2008 and allocated \$237,000 to the unit.

The monies enabled the hiring of eight retired homicide detectives to be brought back into the force and help with case load.

"Initially they volunteered their time" Weatheroy said.

The grant allowed the unit to pay the retired detectives 20 hours a week per person, and pay the crime lab, so they can test on an overtime basis and shorten the turnaround time on evidence testing.

Although the crime lab is responsible for evaluating evidence from all of the police agencies in Oregon, the added funding allowed the unit to hire criminalists on overtime shifts, said Weatheroy.

The unit received a second grant in 2010 for \$257,000.

"We currently have about 300 unsolved homicides and for a metropolitan city our size that is about average," he said.

Over the past several months, the unit has found success.

"We have recently solved a 1963 case," he said. "Through a bunch of research and the assistance from the community, we were able to figure out where he was and show his photograph to the family and witnesses."

Weatherly said sometimes relationships and loyalties change overtime, and people who were previously not willing to speak with detectives become willing to talk.

He said all of the cases he has worked on have been really gratifying.

"We have been involved in solving a lot of cases over the past several years, so all of them are pretty precious, but recently that one stands out in my mind," he said.

On New Year's Day in 1993, Kimberly Jean Dunkin, 30, was found shot to death inside the driver's seat of her blue 1973 Chevrolet Camaro parked in front of 4927 N.E. Skidmore St. the morning after attending a New Years Eve party.

Although the case remained unsolved for years, Cold Case detectives began re-examining this case in 2008, when Dunkin's unsolved homicide was featured in a set of playing cards distributed throughout Oregon's correctional facilities.

Featured on each card was information on 52 different homicides from the Portland metro area, including Dunkin's. A tip was generated from Dunkin's card which led to the arrest of Brad Ballantyne in July 2010.

As a part of a guilty plea negotiation, the family had the opportunity to confront the killer.

Weatheroy remembers the emotion present in the room at the time.

"This gave the family a chance to ask questions," he said. "And in that respect, I feel like they were able to get some justice."

Although the job is tough, it is also extremely rewarding, Weatheroy said.

"In a lot of ways I think people have jobs they're meant to do, and I think this is one of the things I was meant to do," he said.

"Sometimes, what's not always recognized is that when someone's life is taken, it impacts so many different people," he said. "It impacts all of their friends, relatives, co workers, neighbors, and it has quite a ripple effect."

In an effort to get the word out, the unit does a number of community outreach efforts, including distributing the playing cards, public service announcements, and displays on TriMet buses and billboards.

This sends a message to the families that their loved one is important and their case matters, he said. "It also shows we are not going to give up until we get the people who are responsible for their loved one's murder."

"What we have tried to do as part of the cold case unit is to get all of our cold cases out there to all the eyes, ears and the minds of people who have information about our cases," he said. "It's a way for us to think outside the box and try to develop tips and leads instead of sitting back and waiting for people to contact us."

Weatheroy repeats his Cold Case Unit's motto: "We don't give up, we never give up."

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