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FLORIDA MAN INDICTED ON MURDER CHARGE
IN 2009 COLD CASE KILLING OF HIS UNCLE IN RIDGEWOOD

First Use of Forensic Genetic Genealogy to Identify a Suspect in NYC Homicide Arrest
Discarded Fork Used to Confirm Defendant's Identity

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz announced that Anthony Scalici was indicted by a grand jury and arraigned today on a charge of second-degree murder in the 2009 stabbing death of his 64-year-old uncle, Rosario Prestigiacomo, inside the victim's Ridgewood home. The 15-year-old case was solved through forensic genetic genealogy, making it the first time a homicide suspect was identified and arrested in New York City making use of public genealogy databases.

DNA from a discarded fork used by the defendant and retrieved in Florida in February was matched to DNA found at the crime scene.

District Attorney Katz said: "I formed a Cold Case Unit to bring closure to grieving families and seek justice on behalf of victims. This case is an example of the perseverance and determination of the investigators on this, and every cold case, and highlights the successful partnership formed between my office and the NYPD Cold Case Squad. Defendants should not be able to evade justice no matter how much time has passed."

Scalici, 41, of Boynton Beach, Fla., was arraigned today on an indictment charging him with murder in the second degree. Supreme Court Justice Kenneth Holder ordered Scalici to return to court July 8.

Scalici faces up to 25 years to life in prison if convicted.

According to the charges:

- On February 10, 2009, at approximately 2:15 p.m., police were called to Prestigiacomo's home at 2031 Greene Avenue in Ridgewood after a neighbor reported hearing a disturbance.
- A responding officer gained access to the home through a first-floor window and saw the victim laying face down in a pool of blood in a hallway. Blood was also visible on the walls.
- Prestigiacomo had been stabbed 16 times in the face, neck, torso and extremities and suffered puncture wounds from a knife to his lung, esophagus, chest and lower abdomen. He also had blunt force injuries to his head, torso and extremities.
- NYPD crime scene detectives collected several blood swabs from the location. The Office of the Chief Medical Examiner examined the swabs and was able to determine not only a DNA profile that matched the victim, but also an additional unknown male DNA profile, suggesting that the attacker had been injured and was bleeding. That profile was entered into local, state, and national databases with negative results.
- In March 2022, the Queens District Attorney's Office and the NYPD Cold Case Squad sought the assistance of a private laboratory and the United States Department of Homeland Security to help generate leads to the unknown suspect's identity by using forensic genetic genealogy.

- In June 2022, the laboratory, Othram Inc., used advanced DNA testing to produce a comprehensive genealogical profile from the suspect's blood left at the scene. The genealogical profile was then uploaded to public databases.
- Linda Doyle, of the NYPD's Forensic Investigations Division, built a family tree to identify possible suspects, or relatives of a suspect, using information from the databases. In December 2023, Doyle turned over an investigative lead to the Queens District Attorney's Office and the NYPD Cold Case Squad. The District Attorney's Office alongside NYPD's Cold Case Squad then conducted an extensive investigation which ultimately resulted in the identification of Scalici.
- On various dates in January and February, detectives from the NYPD Cold Case Squad and Boynton Beach Police Department conducted surveillance on Scalici and attempted to obtain a discarded DNA sample from him. On February 17, 2024, Boynton Beach Detectives Marco Villari and Aramis Grigorian successfully obtained a fork used by the defendant.
- The Office of the Chief Medical Examiner analyzed the fork under the supervision of Lisa Mertz, the Assistant Director of Cold Case, and was able to produce a DNA profile. DNA testing confirmed that the profile matched the unknown male DNA profile developed from blood evidence left at the scene by the suspect and matched DNA recovered from under the victim's fingernails.
- Scalici is the son of the victim's ex-wife's brother.

Scalici was apprehended in Boynton Beach, Florida on May 14 by United States Marshals, NYPD's Regional Fugitive Task Force and Boynton Beach Police Department. On May 29, 2024, he was extradited to New York.

The investigation was conducted by Detectives Matthew Debonis and Francis Noonan of the NYPD's Cold Case Squad under the supervision of Sergeant James Wheeler and the overall supervision of Lieutenant Michael Saccone. Also assisting in the investigation were Detectives Marco Villari and Aramis Grigorian of the Detective Bureau, the Boynton Beach Police Department under the supervision of Sergeant Cory Herny, and the United States Department of Homeland Security.

Assistant District Attorney Karen L. Ross, Chief of the Cold Case Unit and Deputy Bureau Chief of the Homicide Bureau, is prosecuting the case with the assistance of Assistant District Attorney Veronika Podoprigora, under the supervision of John Kosinski, Bureau Chief, and under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Major Crimes Shawn Clark.

Criminal complaints and indictments are accusations. A defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

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