

Press Conference Statement
August 10, 2010

Homicide Investigation
RPD Case No. 91-37482

On August 10, 1991, officers from the Redding Police Department responded to a field on the north side of East Cypress Avenue west of Alfreda Way on the report of a dead body. The body of the victim, later identified as Despina Magioudis, age 53, was found lying face down with her dress pulled up around her waist. She was nude from the waist down with the exception of her sandals and her panties, which were left around her ankles. The initial observations by officers on the scene showed that the victim had significant trauma to her face and the side of her head.

An autopsy was conducted by medical examiner and pathologist, Dr. Joseph T. Tripoli, at the Shasta County Coroner's Office. Dr. Tripoli determined the cause of death to be manual strangulation with other significant conditions of bludgeoning. During the autopsy, Dr. Tripoli completed a sexual assault examination. During the collection of evidence, Dr. Tripoli took swabs from the vaginal area of the victim. Those swabs were booked into evidence at the Redding Police Department, which were later provided to the Department of Justice laboratory for testing.

On December 19, 2001, ten years later, the swabs collected from the victim were tested by the Department of Justice laboratory. During the testing, DNA was located and uploaded into the Combined DNA Index System (CODIS) for routine searches against profiles from both offenders and other case evidence.

On March 22, 2010, a DNA match was identified between this evidence from the victim and a suspect by the name of Brian Eric Norton. The suspect, Brian Eric Norton, who is currently 43 years old, is in custody in the Iowa Department of Corrections system on charges of rape.

Investigators assigned to the case determined that Norton had resided in Redding, California, during the years of 1991 through 1995; the same time as the homicide.

In July 2010, four investigators from the Redding Police Department, as well as a prosecutor from the Shasta County District Attorney's Office, went to Iowa. During that time, they contacted witnesses as well as the suspect, Norton. In addition, they collected a fresh DNA sample from Norton, which has been matched to the Despina Magioudis homicide case.

The entire case has been submitted to the Shasta County District Attorney's Office. A warrant has been issued for Brian Eric Norton for the charge of homicide for the murder of Despina Magioudis which occurred on August 10, 1991.

Today marks the 19-year anniversary of the death of Despina Magioudis. Now that the warrant has been obtained, it will be sent back to Iowa and extradition processes will begin to bring Norton to Shasta County for prosecution in the case.

The remaining family members of Despina Magioudis have been notified about the progress of this investigation. The Department of Justice has played a significant role in this case as they not only processed the original evidence, but were able to obtain a DNA match to our suspect. Without their assistance, as well as the persistent and tireless efforts of the investigators from the Redding Police Department throughout the years, this case would not have been solved.

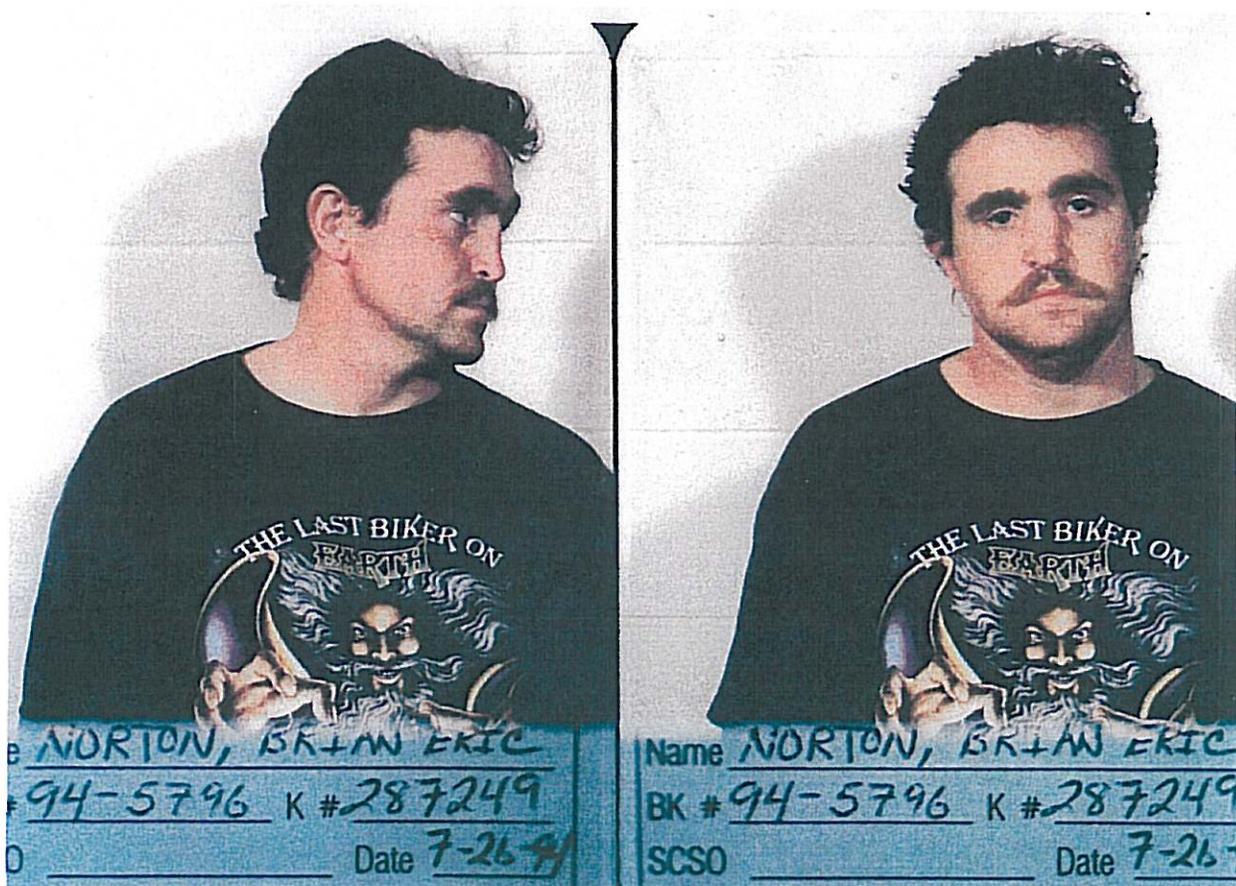




Brian Eric NORTON
10/15/2009



Brian Eric NORTON
06/26/1994



Family Statement

My family would like to express our deepest gratitude to the Redding Police Department, past and present investigators, for their unwavering commitment to solving the case of our Mother's homicide. We are so appreciative to everyone in law enforcement that was and will continue to be involved.

Our mother, Despina Magioudis, was a loving and caring person who enjoyed spending time with her family. She was an active parent in the Reed Union School District. She was an avid reader, was fond of Greek dancing, and loved to cook. Inspired by her love of travel and her interest in other cultures, she was a member of the Northern California World Affairs Council. She is survived by her five daughters.

We are confident that justice will prevail and knowing this will give our family much needed closure and bring peace to our Mother.