



## Hernando County Sheriff's Office

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### Media Release

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**From:** Denise M. Moloney  
Public Information Officer, 352-797-3609

**Re:** Odom – Cold Case Investigation

**Date:** February 12, 2013

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Based on recent Media inquiries and requests for information, we believe it is important to notify the public and the Media of the following information.

Jennifer Odom was abducted on February 19, 1993 from Pasco County while walking home from her bus stop. An older blue full-size pickup truck (unknown model) was seen in the area at the time of her disappearance. Jennifer was found deceased six days later in an orange grove in Hernando County.

On January 25, 1995 Jennifer's missing clarinet case and book bag were found in a rural area of Hernando County.

This year marks the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Jennifer's death.

Sheriff Al Nienhuis stated today, "My administration has decided to put additional and exclusive resources into investigating the Jennifer Odom homicide. This has been a very heart-wrenching case for the entire Tampa Bay area community for two decades. The fact is that this case may never be solved. Tremendous investigative work has been done on this case during the last 20 years. Although the work has never stopped, I believe the time has come to assign a Major Case Detective to this case exclusively for a year, in an attempt to solve this horrific crime. Technology has come a long way in the last 20 years. We also know that there are probably people out there who know something and may be willing to talk because their relationships or life circumstances have changed.

This is no small task, however. This case file consists of dozens of very large binders, hundreds of pages of electronic investigative reports, and hundreds and hundreds of pieces of evidence. Lastly, there are over 1000 people associated with this case. These people

include law enforcement officers, potential witnesses, suspects, and other individuals. Quite often in these high profile cases, people come forward with false leads or confessions, all in an attempt to interject themselves into the case. The only way we can efficiently evaluate these misguided leads is to compare them to the specifics of the case. It is for this reason that we have held, and will continue to hold, a lot of specifics regarding this case out of the public domain.

We also have to be considerate of the family. They have endured 20 years of agony and, although we desperately want to solve this case, we also want to be mindful of the wounds this crime has caused. It is for this reason that, although this is the twentieth anniversary of this terrible crime, we are staying focused on the case itself. This review will be narrowly focused and we believe it will take at least a year to review all the reports, interviews, and evidence, and then, based on that review, pursue possible leads or evidence testing. It is important to note that we are not doing this because we have a new or hot lead; we are not, in other words, necessarily, any closer to solving the case. It is just the right thing to do, to take a fresh and focused look at everything in this case, in hopes of solving this two decade old mystery.”

The Hernando County Sheriff’s Office will utilize federal forfeiture funds to dedicate additional manpower to this investigation. Detective John Ellis has been assigned to follow up on existing investigative leads and generate new leads through evidence analysis and investigative efforts.