



1/3/24 Media Release

Suspected Murderer Behind Bars:
Eric Craig Hodges Arrested for 2011 Homicide of Delbert Wilder

Nevada City, CA – A 12-year-old cold case homicide has taken a big step towards closure. In partnership with the Nevada County District Attorney's (DA) Office, Eric Craig Hodges, 47, of Nevada City, was formally arrested on Jan. 3, 2024, by the Nevada County Sheriff's Office (NCSO) Major Crimes Unit (MCU) and charged with the murder of Delbert Wilder, 63, of Grass Valley.

Wilder was found deceased at his property on Nov. 15, 2011, following a request for a welfare check. He died of a fatal gunshot wound. After 12 years and no arrests made, NCSO turned to the community for help in bringing justice to Wilder and his surviving family by releasing the first of several cold case docuseries on the way. The video, called *Murderer Among Us*, was released Nov. 15, 2023, which marked the 12th anniversary of when Wilder was discovered murdered. The video shared insights into Wilder's life and his murder and encouraged community members to come forward with information, and that's exactly what the community did.

With the help of a variety of media outlets who shared the video, coupled with the power of social media shares, tips and phone calls began coming in.

"Twelve years is a long time to wait for an arrest, but when we bring a homicide case to our DA, it's imperative that we have sufficient evidence and proof of the crime committed and who committed it," said Sheriff Shannan Moon. "This case has been on the cusp of being solved for some time now, thanks to our MCU detectives who have been relentless and determined to bring closure for the Wilder family. Along with recent advances in DNA technology, new witness statements as a direct result of our video, and the DA reviewing our new evidence and filing this case, we hope justice will finally be served."

NCSO detectives presented their case and newfound evidence to the DA in late December. After thorough review, the DA's Office issued a warrant for Hodges' arrest for the crime of murder and issued a new search warrant for the property where Hodges is known to frequent.

This case is now officially at the District Attorney's Office for prosecution. Hodges is presently awaiting arraignment at Wayne Brown Correctional Facility without bail.

Individuals who have information related to this case are encouraged to continue to come forward. Contact Det. Rory Sonnier at the Sheriff's Office with tips by calling (530) 265-1471. Alternatively, tips may be made anonymously on the Sheriff's website at <https://nevadacountyca.gov/192/Sheriffs-Crime-Tip-Form>.

The docuseries on Wilder, *Murderer Among Us*, remains available to watch and share online:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nShGC6_AFYg

<https://www.facebook.com/nevadacountysheriffsoffice/videos/873347171029881>

“We would like to thank our media partners and the greater community for their help in sharing our video. To those who came forward with key information, we thank you for having the courage to speak up and help not only the Wilder family, but for your help in preventing evil acts like this from happening to other members of our community,” concluded Sheriff Moon.

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