

March 2012

# The Spotlight

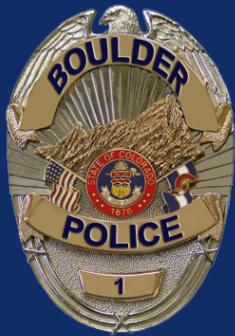


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## Cold Case Homicide Solved Acquaintance of Victim Arrested

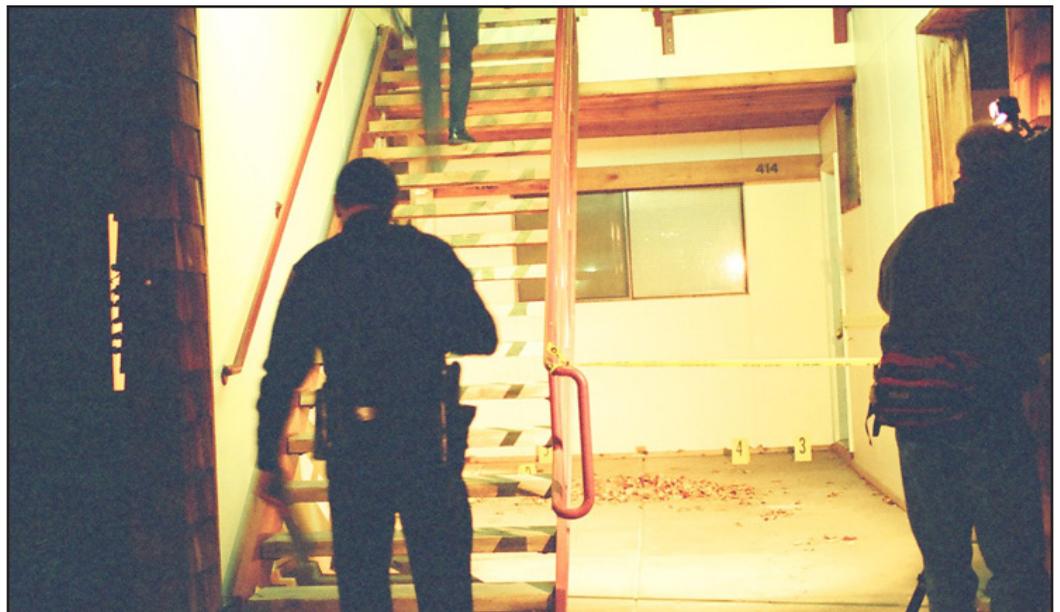
Marty Grisham was having a late dinner with his girlfriend at his apartment on Arapahoe Ave. when he heard a knock at his door. It was November 1, 1994, around 9:30 p.m. Grisham answered the door, and was gunned down in his doorway. An assailant shot him four times in the chest and face before fleeing the scene.

Grisham was rushed to the hospital, but died of his wounds. He was the City of Boulder's Data Processing Director.

Police suspected an acquaintance of Grisham's daughter, Michael Martin Clark, because he had admitted to stealing a book of checks from Grisham, which he used to forge nearly \$4,500 from Grisham's account. Grisham discovered the theft on Nov. 1. He reported it to police the same day, and was killed that night.

Seventeen years later, 36 year-old Michael Martin Clark was arrested on suspicion of First Degree Murder in

See front page story, page 4



Officers investigating the crime scene at Marty Grisham's apartment building

# Freezin' for a Reason

Taking a dip in Boulder Reservoir is something most of us consider a summertime activity. But when it's for a good cause – Special Olympics Colorado – frigid temperatures and a frozen lake didn't deter the Boulder Police Department's team from braving the icy waters. They were Freezin' for a Reason!

The water temperature was 37 degrees when the Boulder Police "Copsicles" team took a running leap into the Rez. Sgt. Dave Seper headed up the team, made up of officers, employees and community members who raised \$7,300.00 for Special Olympics Colorado. They won the award for the "Plunge Team Which Raised the Most Donations." The Copsicles donated \$7,300.00 that will help more than



Copsicles official team photo

11,000 Special Olympics athletes in Colorado. More than 300 people joined the "Copsicles," and all told, they raised about \$50,000 for the charity.

Sgt. Dave Seper is no stranger to the event. He says "old timers" disease helps him forget the shock of the bone-

chilling dip. "I wondered, 'how fast can I get out?!' This is my fourth year polar plunging for the Special Olympics. I think what best prepares me for another plunge is to have a bad memory."

Congratulations to the Boulder Police Copsicles for a successful polar plunge!



# Behind the Badge

**2011 Officer of the Year**  
**Name: Brian Rech**  
**Assignment: Community Services**



BPD's Officer of the Year Award was given to Brian Rech who is currently assigned to our Community Services Unit as a School Resource Officer. Co-workers and school administrators praised his work over the last few years, saying he has fostered many positive relationships within the Boulder Valley School District. His passion, enthusiasm and dedication for the students and staff he works with are highly regarded.



**2011 Detective of the Year**  
**Name: Traci Cravitz**  
**Assignment: Detectives**

Traci Cravitz received the Detective of the Year award at the Boulder Police Department Annual Award Ceremony on February 15. She was nominated for her ability to continuously go above and beyond the scope of her duties. Traci handled several high-profile, high dollar amount thefts and frauds which changed the lives of many innocent victims. Her supervisors complimented her determination and compassion in giving her victims the very best in customer service.

# Did you know...

**That at least two people in the Boulder Police Department have relatives who were killed in the line of duty? Sgt. Alastair McNiven and Kim Kobel.**

The year was 1927, and it was two days before Christmas in a town called Cisco, located in central Texas. Ex-con Marshall Ratliff was dressed in a Santa Claus suit, but he was no Santa. Ratliff, along with three associates, was about to rob the First National Bank, and he thought the suit was a clever disguise. The men were armed, and when they entered the bank lobby, one of them pointed a gun at a teller and yelled, "Hands up!" Ratliff was stuffing his bag with money when a woman came into the bank with her daughter – her daughter wanted to see Santa. The two ran through the bank and escaped through a back door after they realized that Santa was actually a bank robber. They alerted police, and that's when Police Chief G.E. "Bit" Bedford ran to the rescue with two of his officers. Chief Bedford, Sgt. Alastair McNiven's grandfather, would not survive the day.

Bedford was waiting for the suspects at the entrance to an alley when someone fired shots inside the bank. No one knows who fired that first bullet, but it started a fatal fire fight between the bad guys, police officers and citizens who had shown up – heavily armed -- outside the bank to help. Bedford was hit five times in an exchange of gunfire that also wounded one of his officers. He died on Christmas day.

Several citizens were also wounded, and two little girls were even taken



Chief Bedford

The three remaining bank robbers took off with one of the largest posses in Texas history on their heels, and the chase ended with their capture seven days later. Ratliff was convicted and sentenced to death, but he thought he could avoid the death penalty if he could convince them he was insane.

At one point in his captivity he tried to escape, managed to grab a gun, and fatally shot one of his jailers. Townspeople were so incensed that he hadn't already been executed for his previous crimes that they formed a mob, which overtook the remaining jailer. They dragged Ratliff to a vacant lot behind a local theater, and hung him from a telephone pole.

Ironically, the play being presented at the town theater that night was titled, "The Noose."

Public Information Officer Kim Kobel's great-grandfather, John Holt, was a detective captain for the Erie Railroad in Pennsylvania. On April 7, 1931 –



April 7, 1928: Erie RR Engineer Sam Smock (l) and Capt. John Holt (r)

hostage as the bank robbers fled in their getaway car. The little girls ultimately survived. One of the bank robbers died of gunshot wounds.

just two days after Easter -- he was called to assist another officer who was patrolling the railroad yards. The officer came upon a group of trespassers making coffee around a campfire, and he began to arrest the men, who had been told earlier to leave the property.

Det. Capt. Holt rushed to his car and drove to the area in an attempt to catch the men. Just a few minutes earlier, 60-year-old George Wade decided to enter the fray after witnessing the group bolting from police. Wade lived in a shack near the tracks. He grabbed a gun from his house and then joined the others.

Holt found the group running along a highway. He jumped out of his car and held the men at gunpoint, and that's when Wade started shooting. Det. Capt. Holt was running for the safety of high ground, firing over his shoulder, when a bullet struck him in the hip. Even though he was mortally wounded, he managed to crawl to the road. A passing driver – with his two children in the car -- found him in the middle of the highway and drove him to the hospital in an attempt to save his life.

It was Holt's 43rd birthday, and a close friend had planned a large party that evening to celebrate. Instead, the friend spent the evening donating blood to be used in transfusions; the bullet had torn

# Cold Case Solved

Continued from page 1

Summit County, CO on Jan. 5, 2012. He has denied any involvement in Grisham's murder.

Detective Chuck Heidel is one of the most experienced cold-case investigators at the Boulder Police Department. "We always considered Michael Martin Clark to be a person of interest in the case," says Heidel. "He had the opportunity. He had the connection with the victim, and he had the motive because he had admitted to stealing thousands of dollars from Grisham." Detective Heidel says one of the keys to solving cold cases is time. "Cold cases are time-intensive because the case files can be extensive, especially if a lot of time has passed. Pouring through each piece of evidence, each police report and each witness statement is worth it for us and for the victim's family when we can ultimately make an arrest."

It takes a lot of work and patience to clear up a 17-year-old homicide. Detective Commander Kim Stewart says, "Chuck has certainly been a 'go-to' guy as it pertains to solving cold cases. His work in this arena is exemplary. Pretty much the entire detective section had a hand in the



Marty Grisham

successful resolution of this case. I have a fantastic group of hard-working, dedicated detectives. The community members of Boulder are fortunate to have this team of professionals working with and for them," said Stewart.

Currently, Clark is free on bond. He was recently arrested on DUI charges in Boulder after his probation officer reported that he seemed intoxicated when he showed up for a pre-trial meeting. The preliminary hearing on the murder charge takes place on April 5.

# Did You Know

Continued from page 3

through Det. Capt. Holt's intestines, and had shattered bones in his pelvis.

Nearly every available police officer in the area was called to search for Wade and the group of men who had run off. Wade was found a short time later, laying flat under the cover of some bushes. The other suspects were also found and arrested. Numerous witnesses, including the men Wade tried to help, identified Wade as the shooter. He was brought before Det. Capt. Holt in the hospital, and Holt also positively identified Wade as the man who had fired at him.

Wade ultimately admitted to shooting Holt with a Colt .45 pistol.

Detective Captain John Holt died several days later in the hospital, leaving behind a wife and four sons. His oldest son was 14-years-old at the time of his father's death. He later became of the Chief of Police in the town where his father died.

The district attorney in the case had intended to pursue the death penalty against Wade. It's not known whether Wade was executed, or if he died in prison.

## Additional contact information:

### Emergency Assistance — 24 hours

- Police 911
- Fire 911
- Medical 911
- Mental Health 303-447-1665
- Rocky Mountain Poison Center  
1-800-222-1222
- Xcel Energy/Electrical outage  
1-800-895-1999
- Xcel Energy /Gas leak or odor  
1-800-895-2999

### Non-Emergency Assistance

- Police 303-441-3333
- Fire 303-441-3333
- Medical 303-441-3333
- Police Records 303-441-3300
- Professional Standards  
303-441-3312
- Public Works 303-441-3249
- Crime Stoppers 1-800-444-3776
- Community Police Center  
303-413-7324

*Do you have a question you'd like to see answered in an upcoming edition? Email your question to Kim Kobel at [KobelK@bouldercolorado.gov](mailto:KobelK@bouldercolorado.gov)*

