

Former Top Cops Join Family's Revived Efforts to Solve Florida's Only Unsolved Murder of a Law Enforcement Officer

Victim's family says after 54 years, "It's been long enough"

CORAL GABLES, FLORIDA, UNITED STATES, April 5, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A coalition of retired law enforcement leaders, along with the family of slain Coral Gables, Fla. police officer Walter Stathers, are calling for stepped up efforts to solve his decades-old murder to include

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Wayne Stathers, the slain officer's son

releasing the files to the public (Miami-Dade Police Case #120076K). Detectives said Stathers was gunned down while on patrol in the 700 block of S. Alhambra Circle in Coral Gables on the morning of December 19, 1967. The special task force is demanding full transparency from the Miami-Dade and Coral Gables Police Departments.

“Despite all the evidence collected over the years, there has been marginal progress in this case - it's been long enough,” said Wayne Stathers, the slain officer's son. “My family is eager to learn the truth. My father gave his life to protect and serve. The killing of an officer is a deeply

heinous act striking at the heart of our law-and-order society. It's shameful that there seems to be little to no interest in solving this cold case. It's been years (as of March 31) since we've heard from the Miami Dade Police Department. I'm deeply grateful for the efforts of the retired law enforcement officials who share our desire for justice.”

Members of the Stathers investigation task force include:

- Lt. Pablo Garcia (retired), Coral Gables Police
- Chief Jim Butler (retired), Coral Gables Police
- Chief Tommy Hunker (retired), Bal Harbor Police
- SAC Tom Raffanello (retired), U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA)
- SSA Jim Shedd (retired), U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA)
- Homicide Det. Charles Seraydar, (retired) Miami Beach Police
- Miami Private investigator David Bolton

Miami-Dade homicide investigators, along with the City of Miami and Coral Gables police,

launched an extensive manhunt with more than 100 tips during the first few days following the murder in 1967. A few members of the coalition shared their thoughts on how the case was handled and what the next steps should be.

"We believe rivalries between the investigating agencies hurt the case," said Butler. "There has been a strong suspect over the years. I agree that this case should have been resolved long ago with suspect(s) in custody."

"I'm excited to work with the best investigators I have ever been associated with," Raffanello said. "We implore the Miami-Dade Police Department and the State Attorney's Office to take this case seriously and finally bring closure to the Stathers family and the greater law enforcement community."

"More than 54 years is long enough," Shedd added. "It's now time for the law enforcement and political authorities of Miami-Dade County to make the decision, no matter how embarrassing this may be, and release/reveal the investigative file and its content and conclusions."

Miami private investigator David Bolton of Bolton Investigations, Inc. has been working the Stathers case for more than 20 years. He said all the evidence and information from the community points to one individual. Surprisingly despite repeated requests this person has never been interviewed. Bolton also claims evidence has been lost and other key individuals have not been interviewed since hours after the murder.

"Shame on those who dropped the ball," said Garcia. "It's been 54 years and we should not continue to neglect this case. The family has suffered long enough."

"Community involvement could change the course of this investigation," Bolton said. "I encourage anyone with information, regardless of how insignificant the details may seem, to reach out to us."

"The tragic killing of any police officer strikes at the heart of the law enforcement community," said Seraydar. "This case is the only unsolved police killing in Florida history and deserves the necessary resources to solve the case and finally bring closure to the Stathers family and the extended law enforcement community of which Officer Stathers gave the supreme sacrifice."



\$100,000.00 reward offered by the City of Coral Gables, Florida for information relating to the homicide of Officer Walter Stathers.

Citizens who believe they have information vital to the case are asked to call or email Bolton Investigations at (305) 447-0888 or boltonpi@cs.com

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