

Alabama man arrested in 1988 murder of 11-year old girl in Massachusetts

"Essex District Attorney Jonathan Blodgett announced today that after nearly 34 years, a suspect has been arrested in connection with the murder of 11-year-old Melissa Tremblay in 1988.

Last evening, Marvin C. McClendon, Jr., 74, (DOB: 7/3/1947), of Breman, Alabama, was placed under arrest and charged as a fugitive from justice based on an arrest warrant issued yesterday for the murder of Melissa Ann Tremblay of Salem, NH, on September 12, 1988. He is in the custody of the Cullman County Sheriff's Office and will be arraigned in an Alabama court tomorrow. The timing of his return to Massachusetts is dependent on his decision to waive rendition. He is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

"I want to thank everyone involved in this investigation from beginning to end," District Attorney Jonathan Blodgett said. "Their tireless pursuit of justice for Melissa has brought us to this moment. We never forgot about Melissa, nor did we give up on holding her killer accountable."

On September 12, 1988, the body of 11-year-old Melissa Ann Tremblay (DOB: 3/1/1977) was discovered in the old Boston & Maine Railway Yard near Andover Street and South Broadway in Lawrence. She had been stabbed to death. Postmortem, her body was run over by a train car causing her left leg to be amputated.

An investigation ensued and police learned that Melissa Tremblay had accompanied her mother and mother's boyfriend to the LaSalle Social Club at 397 Andover Street in Lawrence on Sunday, September 11, 1988. While her mother and mother's

boyfriend remained inside the club, Melissa played in the adjacent neighborhoods and was last seen by a railroad employee and pizza delivery driver during the late afternoon hours.

That night, Melissa's mother and mother's boyfriend frantically searched the area and then reported her missing to the Lawrence Police around 9:00 pm.

Over the years, scores of witnesses, suspects, and persons-of-interest were interviewed by police.

Assistant District Attorneys and State Police Detectives assigned to the Essex District Attorney's Office specializing in cold cases have worked diligently on this case since 2014. Evidence recovered from the victim's body was instrumental in solving the case.

The investigation found that the suspect lived in Chelmsford in 1988, and had multiple ties to Lawrence. Specifically, investigators learned that he worked and frequented establishments in the city of Lawrence including the Seventh Day Adventist Church on Salem Street.

Essex Victim Advocates contacted surviving members of Melissa's family last night and again this morning.

DA Blodgett thanked Essex Chief Homicide Prosecutor Jessica Strasnick and Appeals Unit ADA Marina Moriarty; the Essex State Police Detective Unit, headed by Captain Steve McDonald and lead investigator Lieutenant Peter Sherber and Lawrence Police Detectives, both current and retired, particularly retired detective Thomas Murphy, for their tireless and relentless pursuit of justice for Melissa.

They were assisted by the Massachusetts Department of Corrections, the FBI, Tewksbury Police, the Cullman County Sheriff's Department, and the Alabama State Bureau of Investigation." -Massachusetts Essex District Attorney's

Office.