

# Chicago slayings unrelated to Oakland killings

By MARY CONNELLY-SZCZESNY

The head of the task force investigating the Oakland County child killings does not think they are linked to the slayings of several Chicago youths.

Michigan State Police Lt. Robert Robertson, who spearheaded the task force seeking the so-called Oakland County child killer, said Tuesday the killings in the two states are not related.

Police in Chicago, Ill. are holding 36-year-old John Wayne Gacy in connection with the deaths of at least 28 young men and boys. Authorities uncovered the bodies in and around Gacy's suburban Chicago home.

"I don't have any vibes at all that there would be any connection," Robertson said. "I don't think there is any connection at all."

The Oakland County Homicide Task Force, which at one time included a full-time force of 20 investigators headquartered in Valley Woods School in Beverly Hills, has probed the kidnappings of four children in 1976 and 1977.

The task force disbanded and vacated Valley Woods Dec. 15 when funding for the probe expired. However, investigators continue to meet periodically and check out tips.

THE INVESTIGATOR heading the

Chicago case is familiar with the Oakland County murder, Robertson said.

"By chance, the guy that is heading it up in Chicago attended a seminar Jerry Tobin and I were at in Denver," Robertson said. "So he knows a lot about our case. I talked to him about it and it would seem most unlikely there would be any connection."

"Our arrangement now is that at the end of January I'll call him or he'll call me and we'll talk it out. He should have it all sorted out by then and might know where (Gacy) worked and where he traveled."

On Tuesday, Robertson said he received a tip that Gacy's construction company did work in Grand Ledge last summer. However, he said he had been unable to verify the information or determine if Gacy was on the job in Michigan.

"IT WAS an entirely different method of operation," Robertson said of the Chicago slayings.

Gacy is suspected of luring teenage boys to his home by promising them jobs in his construction company and then sexually assaulting and slaying them.

The Oakland County cases involve four children who were apparently kidnapped while walking or bicycling on public streets.

"Most of the Chicago victims were older than ours, and of course in Chi-

cago the bodies were hidden, the cause of death was different and he apparently didn't keep the person long," Robertson said.

The slain Oakland County children were held captive for several days before being murdered. Their bodies were carefully arranged and left in public places.

"In Chicago, the bodies were hidden," Robertson said. "Our killer wanted the youngsters found right away without anything happening to the bodies."

ROBERTSON SAID he talked to Chicago police about Gacy's driving record to determine if he had traveled or been stopped in Michigan. Robertson said he found no information in this instance.

An initial check of Gacy's relatives indicated they live west of Chicago, he said.

The new task force unit is designed to check out tips, but not on a day-to-day basis. Consisting of Robertson and 10 investigators, it met Wednesday for the first time since vacating Valley Woods.

Investigators include representatives from the Oakland County Sheriff's Department, Michigan State Police, and Birmingham, Troy, Southfield, Southfield Township, Ferndale, Berkeley, Pontiac and Oak Park.

ROBERTSON SAID he does not believe the disbanding of the old task force will provoke another kidnap attempt.

"We brought in three psychiatrists to the task force in August, including one from Connecticut who is a leading authority in the nation on the subject of deviant behavior," he said.

"He believed that if the killer is not in a mental institution or a prison, then he is probably dead."

"They believed his behavior is probably such that society would have to stop him. He could not stop himself."

"The doctor felt he was not out there waiting for us to close. He doesn't have that kind of control. If he was out there, he'd be killing."

"The killer would also know that the fact that we closed doesn't mean we all packed our suitcases and left. He would know if he strikes again we would reactivate."

The slayings being probed are those of Mark Stebbins of Ferndale, found in Southfield in February, 1976; Jill Robinson of Royal Oak, found in Troy in

December, 1976; Kristine Mihelich of Berkley, found in Franklin in January, 1977; and Timothy King of Birmingham, found in Livonia in March, 1977.

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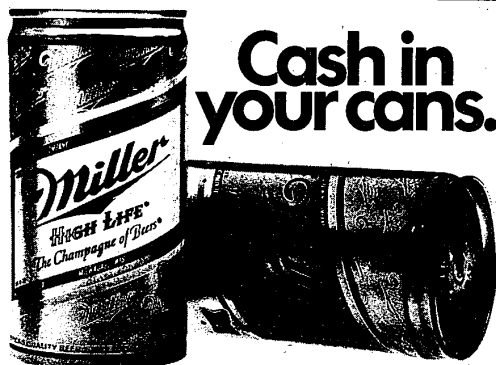
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