

HAMILTON COUNTY COLD CASE UNIT
DISTRICT ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE
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HAMILTON COUNTY DA RE-OPENS TONETTA CARLISLE COLD CASE

Chattanooga, Tenn. — Tonetta Carlisle was 15 years old when she was last seen walking home from City High School, where she was a freshman, at approximately 2:55 p.m. on March 16, 1989. She was headed to her family's residence in the 600 block of Hamilton Avenue at the time. An eyewitness told Chattanooga police that she observed Tonetta's abduction approximately half a block from Tonetta's home at approximately 3:00 p.m. The woman said she saw unidentified suspects jumped out of a tan and yellow vehicle with the Tennessee license plate number LKH 920, forcibly pull Tonetta inside the vehicle and then drove away.

The witness told authorities that she and her husband chased the vehicle and called the police department with its license plate number. Tonetta's mother filed a missing child report with Chattanooga police eight hours later when her daughter failed to return home from school. The plate number of the vehicle involved in the abduction was traced back to Jeffrey Jones. Jones was previously convicted of rape and aggravated sexual assault and served eight years in prison. He was released about a year before Tonetta disappeared. Jones committed suicide and was found deceased inside his van on March 18, 1989, two days after Tonetta was last seen. He had died of carbon monoxide poisoning.

There has been no trace of Tonetta since that time, but Hamilton County District Attorney General Neal Pinkston has directed his Cold Case Unit to re-open the case because he believes it is solvable. "I believe Jeffrey Jones is an important piece of the puzzle," said Pinkston. "We would like to hear from anyone who has any knowledge of Jeffrey Jones, specifically within his last year or so before he committed suicide."

Anyone with information about Jeffrey Jones, or the disappearance of Tonetta Carlisle, is urged to call the cold case hotline at 423-209-7470. You can also send information via email at Coldcases@hcdatn.org.