

Stateline man arrested in connection with 1982 murder

By Jesse B. Gill, San Bernardino Sun

Sheriff's deputies have arrested a 51-year-old man in Douglas County they suspect killed a 62-year-old Yucaipa man in 1982.

On Oct. 2 that year, deputies arrived at an apartment complex in the 31400 block of Yucaipa Boulevard after a neighbor saw blood on the sidewalk and heard moaning in an apartment.

A deputy found Ralph Knappenberger severely beaten in a bedroom, according to a sheriff's news release.

Paramedics rushed Knappenberger to Loma Linda University Medical Center. He died on Feb. 4, 1983, while in the hospital's Intensive Care Unit, authorities said.

The cause of Knappenberger's death was blunt force trauma, sheriff's officials said.

Knappenberger's powder blue, 1979 Ford Fairmont was missing from the apartment complex. Riverside police found the car on Oct. 5, 1982, in Riverside.

Sheriff's detectives identified Bernhard Hahm – now 51, but 22 at the time of Knappenberger's death – as a man seen in the Ford Fairmont a few days before the beating, sheriff's officials said.

Detectives alleged that Knappenberger gave Hahm a ride to the apartment. But investigators never found Hahm to interview him.

The case went cold after detectives were unable to find Hahm.

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