




**GREGORY D. TOTTE**  
**District Attorney**

**NEWS RELEASE**

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**Man Sentenced to Life Without the Possibility of Parole for Murder in 1980 Cold Case**

*VENTURA, California* – District Attorney Gregory D. Totten announced today that Lenard Chester (DOB: 04-22-61), of Oxnard, was sentenced to life without the possibility of parole by Judge Ryan Wright. On June 22, 2020, Chester was convicted by jury of the first-degree murder of Leah Bullis, aged 81, of Oxnard, with the special circumstances that the murder was committed while in the commission of rape and burglary.

Chester severely beat and raped Ms. Bullis in her home in Oxnard between the evening of November 30, and the morning of December 1, 1980. Ms. Bullis was found in her bedroom late in the morning by neighbors and later died at the hospital. In 2018, Chester was identified using forensic DNA analysis. The case was investigated by the Oxnard Police Department.

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The Ventura County District Attorney's Office is the public prosecutor for the county's 850,000 residents. The office employs approximately 280 employees including attorneys, investigators, victim advocates, and other professional support staff who strive to seek justice, ensure public safety, and protect the rights of crime victims.

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