

Beat: News

Florida woman, 20, who disappeared in 1983, found dead in New York

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USPA News - A young woman from Florida, who disappeared in the summer of 1983 after telling her mother she was leaving to become a model, was found dead in western New York just months later, but her body remained unidentified for more than three decades, police said on Monday. Shari Lynne Ball, 20, was last seen in Boca Raton, Florida, on June 27, 1983, when she packed her bags and told her mother that she was going to New York with an unidentified friend to begin a modeling career.

She left her mother's house on foot at about 5:30 p.m. that day, leaving her luggage behind, to meet her friend in nearby Boynton Beach. Hours after leaving the house, Ball called her mother to ask for money, which was the last time they spoke to each other. However, Ball's boyfriend later told police that she had called him from a truck stop in Ashland, Virginia, on either June 28 or June 29, presumably when Ball and her unknown friend were on their way to New York. After the call, Ball was never heard from again. About three months after Ball's disappearance, a hunter in New York found the severely decomposed body of a woman near the shoulder of State Route 63 in the town of Shelby in Orleans County, about 285 miles (458 kilometers) northeast of New York City. But the body remained unidentified as she was not carrying an ID and there were no identifying characteristics on her body. A break in the cold case would not come for more than three decades until the Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) at the New York State Police, in conjunction with the Orleans County District Attorney's Office, requested a court order in October 2013 to exhume the woman's body from a cemetery in Albion to obtain her DNA for analysis and entry into the national DNA database. "Ultimately, the DNA was processed and entered for comparison by the Chief Medical Examiners Office in New York City," a New York State Police spokesperson said on Monday. "A database match was made to a family member who had entered their DNA several years ago in hopes of some day finding their loved one." The cause of Ball's death remains unknown, but investigators believe foul play was involved.

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