

EXPLAINS INVESTIGATION

Information withheld in killings — for reason

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If for a while, it seemed as though the sheriff's office was holding back on how Cheri Domingo and Greg Sanchez were killed in a home at 443 Toltec Way, it was because the bodies were so brutally disfigured it was difficult to determine the cause of death, said Carpenter.

Investigators have linked the killer in the Toltec Way slayings to the nearby 1979 murder of Dr. Robert Offerman and Debra Manning and to a foiled attack on a Queen Anne Lane couple three months earlier. He has been described as a white male in his early 20s, of medium build and height and brown hair.

But the detectives have declined to release a psychological profile of the killer — an evaluation that warned the

psychopath might strike again. The profile was completed in early 1980 after the Offerman-Manning slayings.

Sheriff John Carpenter said that "you have to give the benefit of doubt (whether to release information) to the investigator who is intimately involved with the case."

Why didn't the sheriff's office release the profile's warning that the Offerman-Manning killer might strike again?

"That was a very nebulous prediction," said Carpenter. The profile said that this type of person "could" kill again, not that the subject "would," he said.

The only practical value in releasing that kind of information is to get people to secure their homes better, he said. In the course of talking to people in the neighborhood of the Offerman-

Manning murders "we found out they did that anyway," said Carpenter. "You weigh that against terrorizing people."

Another often-cited reason detectives try to withhold certain details is so that they can sort out suspects, particularly those who submit to a polygraph examination.

For example, he noted that in the Thor Christiansen case, investigators found a handbill tucked in a rock near where the last of his three local victims was located in Cat Canyon. The poster had pictures of the three victims — and Christiansen's fingerprint, said Carpenter.

During a polygraph examination, a question about such a poster won't mean anything to an innocent person. But the guilty person will respond, said Carpenter.

Psychological profiles, prepared with the help of the FBI and a local psychiatrist, are based on the theory the killer's method of operation is a kind of psychological "signature."

"A severe beating will tell us something . . . If one blow is sufficient to cause death, why does the killer hit 20 or 30 times," Carpenter said.

For example, Christiansen's profile suggested that he was a loner, in his early 20s, white, never married, impotent, unable to have a stable emotion, or sexual relationship with a woman, and someone who worked at menial tasks.

Only some of the information was correct. When caught, Christiansen was found to have been working as a gas station attendant and a busboy. But he was also living with a woman.

And as it turned out, releasing the

profile didn't help at all, the sheriff said.

Carpenter said the way to keep intruders out — whether they're killers or burglars — is using "good locks." If someone is determined to get into a house, they can, he said. "But to do that, they've got to break in and make some noise."

The noise of a break-in or the barking of a dog can be enough to give residents time to barricade a bedroom door and dial 911 for help, said Carpenter. Often, just the barking of a dog will be sufficient to drive an intruder away, he said.

Carpenter also warned about the risk of a homeowner using a gun.

"If you're not a damn good shot, you might as well not have a gun . . . When you're faced with an emergency situation, your accuracy goes all to hell."

CARPENTER EXPLAINS INVESTIGATION

Information withheld in killings — for

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By Dave Hardy

News-Press Staff Writer

A bullet has been recovered from the bedroom of the victims of Monday's double murder in Goleta. But sheriff's investigators are unlikely to release to the public exactly what caliber it is.

"We don't purposely try to withhold things," Sheriff John Carpenter said today. "Our main purpose is to solve crimes and apprehend the subject.

"After we catch a suspect, we want to convict him. That's where putting out information can hurt you. It's not enough to catch him. You have to convict him," said Carpenter, suggesting that release of some evidence could jeopardize a court case.

Sheriff's officers have described the killer in Monday's slayings as a psychopath, and Carpenter said: "These kinds of persons do, by and large, read

the paper. They're very interested in what's being said about them."

If for a while, it seemed as though the sheriff's office was holding back on how Cheri Domingo and Greg Sanchez were killed in a home at 449 Toltec Way, it was because the bodies were so brutally disfigured it was difficult to determine the cause of death, said Carpenter.

Investigators have linked the killer in the Toltec Way slayings to the nearby 1979 murder of Dr. Robert Offerman and Debra Manning and to a foiled attack on a Queen Anne Lane couple three months earlier. He has been described as a white male in his early 20s, of medium build and height and brown hair.

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