



This police booking photo provided by the Cathedral City Police Department shows one of "America's Most Wanted" fugitives, Robert Bowman, 72, in Cathedral City, Calif. on Thursday Oct. 2, 2008. Bowman was arrested Thursday in Cathedral City after two district attorney's investigators spotted him on a bicycle and believed he was wanted on an unrelated case. (AP Photo/Cathedral City Police Dept.)



## Chance meeting leads to arrest in 1967 killing

By JOHN SEEWER – Oct 3, 2008

TOLEDO, Ohio (AP) — Their paths crossed at Sunday dinner, a police officer and a man in the early stages of Alzheimer's, when the story of a girl's disappearance 40 years ago unfolded.

Larry Adams told Officer Mike McGee about his 14-year-old daughter, Eileen, who went missing in 1967:

She boarded a city bus to visit her sister the week before Christmas and never returned. Six weeks later, her body was found near Monroe, Mich., sexually assaulted and strangled. She had been tied up with telephone and drapery cords. A nail had been driven into her head.

"I could tell by looking at this guy's face that he believed what he was telling me," McGee recalled of his chance meeting two years ago with Adams at McGee's in-laws' home. Adams had been invited along with other residents of a nursing home.

McGee got his department's cold-case squad on the case. On Thursday, investigators got a break when a suspect years ago, drifter Robert Bowman, surfaced in Southern California riding a bicycle.

Bowman, 72, will face extradition to Ohio on Monday, where authorities want him to face charges in the kidnapping and killing of Eileen Adams.

"If this can bring some joy to this guy's life, it's all worthwhile," McGee said of Adams, recalling how he promised to look into the case.

"I was very afraid he wasn't going to see the end of this," McGee said.

Detectives collected DNA samples from Bowman's ex-wife and their daughter and compared them with DNA found on Eileen. They identified DNA on Eileen as Bowman's, judging by a match with a sample from his daughter, detectives said.

The Ohio detectives then alerted authorities in several states that Bowman was wanted in the killing. He was profiled on "America's Most Wanted" last year, though all police knew at that time was Bowman had been in Riverside, Calif., and San Diego in 2003.

They figured he was either living on the streets or dead.

Dozens of tips came in, including one from a woman who thought she had spotted Bowman in a Las Vegas casino.

About a month ago, detectives were told that Bowman had been in San Diego and had tried to get medical treatment, said Toledo Police Chief Mike Navarre.

"We weren't sure he was still alive," Navarre said.

Bowman was arrested in Cathedral City, Calif. after two Riverside County district attorney's investigators spotted him and thought he was wanted in an unrelated case. Police later discovered he was wanted in Toledo.

Attempts to locate an attorney for Bowman were not successful Friday.

The family of Adams, whose health is failing, said in a statement they were still in shock over Bowman's arrest.

"Now having to relive events of 40 years ago and knowing what those events have done to an innocent family is not going to be easy or pleasant," the statement said.