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**Cold case**

A joint investigation by the Merrillville Police Department, the Jasper County Sheriff's Department and the Indiana State Police turned up potential suspects but more than 20 years later, the killer or killers remains at large.

"It was one of the most difficult cases I've worked," said Dan Demmon, now retired from the Merrillville Police Department, where he served as chief of police and as the lead detective in the Davis case.

"I spent many hours on it and would love to see it solved," Demmon said. Merrillville police still consider it an open case. Chief Joseph Petrach said earlier this month.

DNA testing, then a fairly new tool to crime solvers, was employed to help track suspects, but it more than once proved false for investigators.

By mid-1990, authorities believed they'd narrowed the hunt for the murder suspect to a Michigan man. The man, whose identity has never been revealed, was identified in a police lineup by a witness, whose identity also remains shrouded in secrecy.

Hope was crushed in early 1992 when DNA samples from the Michigan man failed to match bodily fluids and crime scene samples found at the crime scene.

Later that year, a second suspect was ruled by DNA test results. Earlier, investigators had to rule out a connection between a series of murders committed across the Southwest in job 1986 when it was learned the suspect in those slayings had been in jail on the day Gill and Gilbert were killed.

For the Jasper County Sheriff's Department, every year brings at least one phone call about the murders of the two women, Sheriff Orville Perry said.

"It's the only major crime we ever had that hasn't been resolved," Perry said. "We have a full briefcase that we keep all of the case work in. It is something we think about regularly, and hopefully, with some luck, it will be solved someday," Perry said.

"In this business we don't like to count on luck, but it sometimes comes forward to help us, and we're hoping for a break," Perry said. Failure to find the women's killer or killers gaves an Andrew Mitchell, Gilbert's father.

"I think about Jeanne every day," he said. The pain grows sharper on Gilbert's Nov. 18 birthday, a date her family commemorates yearly by placing her photo and a birthday message in the *Amersburg* hometown newspaper.

Rational since 1992 from his job as an official with Carpenter Union Local 1003 and the Northwest Indiana District Council, Mitchell has his own theory about who killed the women.

"I think it's somebody in the area, somebody that knew both the girls," Mitchell said. That somebody is "probably sitting back now laughing that they got away with it," Mitchell said. "These are the things that run through my mind."

Gilbert's children, a daughter who will be a high school graduate in March, told a man then in middle school, are gone. Gilbert's daughter is an attorney and her son is an operating engineer. Gilbert's mother, the Mrs. Mitchell, said.

The woman Mitchell described as "happy and full of life," now has three grand-children. Andrew Mitchell said he waits to hear something, anything, from police officials looking into the murders.

"I'd be more than thankful if they went to solve it," Andrew Mitchell said.

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**Intermodal**

communities rushing forward to demonstrate they had the infrastructure and the will to build such a facility.

Major railroads also expressed interest, with CSX officials confirming they were on the hunt for an intermodal facility in Northwest Indiana and city of LaPorte officials confirming Norfolk Southern was interested in a site west of their city.

Intermodal facilities facilitate the transfer of huge freight containers from trains to truck and truck to train. Most of the jobs are created in warehouses and sometimes at manufacturing plants built on the site or nearby.

At least eight sites were identified as having the required rail service and highway access.

They ranged from small sites of a few hundred acres in industrial sites to other stretching thousands of acres in rural areas such as Union Mills and Kingsbury in LaPorte County.

The Union Mills site emerged as the first to draw significant interest from developers, with South Bend-based Cribbs & Ellis-Cress & Everett offering options on 1,000 acres where three rail lines converge.

The plan even prompted a protest group called Stop Intermodal Save our County. But two years later, it looks like protesters could have saved their energy.

Although the developer reportedly still holds the land options there, nothing has developed, and buzz about the site has gone quiet.

"When you look at what was supposed to transpire and what is actually going on, there is a big difference," said Don Kolbocki, director of economic development at the Northwest Indiana Forum, a private economic development group backed by the region's leading employers.

The only full-fledged intermodal facility that has even come close to breaking ground is across the border in suburban Crete, where CenterPoint Properties Group spent millions of dollars to buy land that was annexed by the village.

The Oakbrook, Ill.-based company operates the giant CenterPoint Intermodal Center in Elwood, Ill., which serves the BNSF Railway, and another in Keshelie serving the Union Pacific Railway Global III intermodal facility.

In Crete, primary rail lines for the Union Pacific and CSX run through the 1,000-acre site on the village's southeast side.

The village plans to run water and sewer lines there in the spring. CenterPoint plans to break ground on its first distribution facility there at about the same time.

"We're the economy doing what it has done, it has been a slower go than we would like, but we are in it for the long

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**Smoking**

Heard in the Senate. That proposal would have banned smoking in restaurants and most workplaces, but it was amended to exempt most bars, tobacco shops, private clubs and casinos.

Brown said his new proposal will exempt casinos from the beginning in hopes of getting it passed.

"They were the strongest opponents last year. They paid everyone out in the hall to track that for them to make sure nothing went in," Brown said, describing the lobbying tactics.

In the GOP-led Senate, anti-smoking proposals released to support a smoking ban with so many exemptions, while other senators were concerned about the effects of a smoking ban on Hoosier businesses.

"Studies have shown a business going smoke-free will not lose any revenue or customers as a result of that," Brown said. "But that's the line and cry here, that we don't want to negatively impact a business."

But far beyond the Club restaurant in Schererville, customers were not happy when management discussed making the location smoke-free, said George Guigun. He is the manager of the Highland location that already has gone smoke-free. The Schererville location kept its smoking and non-smoking sections.

"Fifty percent of our customers there smoke-free will not lose any revenue or customers as a result of that," Brown said. "But that's the line and cry here, that we don't want to negatively impact a business."

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Here doctors, an employee at Cigarettes Discount Outlet, smokes a cigarette behind the counter Friday at the Highland store. More than a quarter of adults smoke in Indiana, and state Rep. Charlie Brown, D-Gary, is planning to introduce legislation to ban smoking in all indoor public places, except casinos.

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**INDIANA SMOKING STATISTICS**

- 26.3 percent of Hoosier adults smoked last year
- 24.1 percent of Hoosier adults smoked in 2007
- 18.7 percent of Hoosier smokers had an average of 15 cigarettes a day in 2009
- Indiana has no statewide ban on smoking, meaning that tobacco is legal government.

**INDIANA SMOKING STATISTICS**

- 23.3 percent of Hoosier adults smoked last year
- 20.2 percent of Hoosier adults smoked in 2007
- 42.2 percent of Hoosier smokers had an average of 15 cigarettes a day in 2009
- The state has banned smoking in nearly all indoor public places, including restaurants, bars and theaters, since last year. Fines are \$100 to \$200 for smokers and \$200 or more for business owners.

**THE 10 HIGHEST SMOKING STATES**

State	Percentage of adults who smoke last year
West Virginia	26.6%
Mississippi	22.7%
Alabama	22.6%
North Carolina	22.4%
Arkansas	22.3%
Alabama	22.2%

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

But for those who say you can't smoke there, (smokers) can't smoke unless they're at their house, and even then their wives will still give them crap."

The lounge offers wireless Internet service, couches, a refrigerator and television. Dombreg drew it in the "coffee house of cigars."

If the state were to ban smoking in public places, Dombreg said he would get up a "members only" sign.

"To have that luxury — especially with cigar smokers — they'll have no problem paying something small so they can sit and smoke that cigar in peace and get their own bars such as Crown Point did last year. He said he banned smoking in the restaurant because it's a family dining spot.

"When you have a section where people are smoking on a bar from an intent, it was pretty much a no-brainer for us," he said.

But some smokers, including 52-year-old Doug Dombreg, say the government should think twice before banning smoking.

"I'd like to see the government do that. I'm not a smoker, but my public place is wrong," said Dombreg, who manages CDO Tobacco in Highland. "Non-smokers can have their section, but they can't take away my section."

Dombreg said the store, which serves about 200 customers each day, opened a smoking lounge last year to offer smokers a place to enjoy cigars and cigarettes indoors.

"A lot of people always complain about having to go outside to smoke," Dombreg said. "We always have a section in the Senate take up the debate over the health care overhaul. Lugar recommended that Congress postpone the health care effort until next year so lawmakers can concentrate on how to finance the war."

"In the three weeks of debate we still have ahead of us, we really ought to concentrate on the Congress on the way, on the overall strategy of our country and the cost of it. Lugar told CNN's King King, "We may wish to discuss higher taxes to pay for it," but we're not going to do that debating health care."

Rep. David Obey, D-Wis., chairman of the House Appropriations Committee, has introduced legislation to impose a 2-cent surtax beginning in 2011.

"If this war is important enough to engage in the long term, it's important enough to pay for," they said.

With Obama's Afghanistan speech

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**Lugar**

and police are central to succeeding in the 8-year-old war and more U.S. troops and it's unclear, Levin said, what role tens of thousands additional combat troops will play and Obama has to make a compelling case during a national address he scheduled to give Tuesday night from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, N.C.

"The key here is an Afghan surge, not

an American surge," said Levin, D-Mich. "We cannot, by ourselves, win that war."

Levin's remarks are a preview of the possible tough talk Obama faces from his own party as he prepares to sell a broad, six-month expansion battle plan for Afghanistan to an American public weary of the conflict that began just weeks after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks.

At West Point, Obama is expected to announce an increase of up to 30,000 more U.S. forces to defeat the Taliban-led insurgency and stabilize a weak Afghan government. The escalation, which would

take place over the next year, would put more than 100,000 American troops in Afghanistan at an annual cost of about \$75 billion. Democrats concerned by the price tag have proposed a war tax to pay for operations.

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