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NEWS



The investigation into the death of 65-year-old Frederick (John) Hatch is more than two years old. The Ottawa man's remains were found Dec. 17, 2015, in a wooded area off Wellington Road 124 near Erin.

OPP used innovative mobile billboard to garner tips

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A black and white OPP van with images of Hatch and details about the investigation toured from Erin to Nepean as a kind of moving billboard to kick-start anybody's memories who made

have seen the victim on his travels between Ottawa and Er-

in. "The tigations branch is doing an unprecedented move in ing to bring witin the Hatch homicide," Sgt. David community services and media relations co-ordinator for OPP

West Region, told The Banner. The provincial government had also posted a \$50,000 reward for information that leads to the arrest of Hatch's killer.

"The idea is to stimulate a response. There has been and continues to be information being brought forward to investigators, and they are pouring over that," said Rektor.

The investigation took a more high-tech route almost a year after Hatch's body was found. Central Region OPP texted people whose cellphones were identified to be in use near the area where Hatch was last seen alive on Dec. 16,

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'The OPP criminal OPP investigations criminal inves- branch is doing unprecedented that we're try- move in that nesses forward we're trying to bring witnesses Rektor, forward in the Hatch homicide.

- David Rektor, Sgt.

sage asked recipients to visit a website and voluntarily answer simple questions about the case.

The OPP retrieved the phone numbers after obtaining a court order that compelled cellphone companies to provide the information. Police didn't receive the names or any other contact information for the registered cellphone

"We believe this new investigative technique - a text message canvass to cellphone owners - will reach witnesses," OPP Det. Supt. Dave Traux said in a news release. "They may help us solve it by volunteering information and potentially remove a dangerous offender from society before they harm someone else.'

OPP Det. Insp. Andy Raffay said in a news release that texting is a unique investigative technique.

"But it's the most efficient way to contact these people quickly to either eliminate them as witnesses or learn whether they have any useful information," said Raffay said. "This is one of these cases where we have more questions than answers, and we're depending heavily on public input to help assist in the investigation."

Investigators are asking anyone with information about the case or the person (s) responsible for Hatch's murder to contact the OPP at 1-888-310-1122. An additional reward of up to \$2,000 is available through Crime Stoppers should anyone wish to report a tip anonymously at 1-800-222-TIPS