



Cold Case Solved in Calgary

Seeing her attacker convicted and sentenced to a lengthy prison sentence did not make the nightmares go away, but it helped her get on with life.

In October 2002, 39-year-old Charles Desjarlais plead guilty to a crime he had committed in a Calgary neighbourhood eight years earlier.

In broad daylight, he grabbed a woman walking through a park and forced her into some bushes. Using the victim's backpack, heavily weighted with books, the attacker held her down, threatened her and raped her.

In spite of a massive police investigation, no charges were laid and the case went cold.

Fortunately, police had collected biological samples from the woman for DNA analysis. This evidence would later link Desjarlais to the crime through a "hit" by the National DNA Data Bank.

At the time of his conviction, Desjarlais was serving time for sexual interference on a young girl. Under the terms of the new *DNA Identification Act*, the judge in the case required him to submit a biological sample to the NDDDB for DNA analysis. The DNA profile matched the sample from the 1994 attack and the NDDDB had another "hit".

Based on the evidence developed during the investigation and the vital link produced by the National DNA Data Bank, Desjarlais plead guilty.

A senior police investigator in Calgary was quoted after the trial as saying: "I think we're just starting to see the early part of the wave here. As more people... provide samples to the (National DNA Data) Bank, there is the potential for more of these matches."