***Article clipped from Corvallis Gazette-Times***

***Corvallis Gazette-Times, October 15, 2002, Page 5. via Newspapers.com (https://gazettetimes.newspapers.com/article/corvallis-gazette-times/32302622/ : accessed November 14, 2023), clip page by user pjollota***

The Associated Press PORTLAND On the 10th anniversary of Sharon Schlosser's murder, a family dispute over her insurance policy may yet help reveal who killed her or who did not. Charles Schlosser, her husband, ordinarily would receive her $150,000 insurance policy, which has grown to nearly $215,000 with interest since her death in October 1992. But the insurance company filed a lawsuit saying that it didn't know who should get the money because her husband had been investigated by the police in the death of his wife. And under Oregon law, a person complicit in a policyholder's death cannot receive the money from the policy. So the insurance company filed a suit that asks the court to determine who gets the money: Charles Schlosser or the policy's " secondary beneficiaries, Sharon Schlosser's four children from another marriage.

The children, who bear the burden of proof, will try to show that Schlosser is to blame, much like a prosecutor would in a criminal trial. Schlosser's attorneys declined to comment, but in court papers he denies any connection with his wife's death and says he is entitled to the money. Attorneys for his stepchildren said the trial is an opportunity to vindicate their belief that their stepfather killed their mother. '"They would like to have him prosecuted, (but ) this is the most they can get now," said Margaret Fiorino, one of their attorneys. Prosecutors and investigators are watching the civil case.

"We're certainly aware of that case, and we're interested to see what comes out of that case," said Gary Meabe, a Multnomah County deputy district attorney. Charles Schlosser reported his 49-year-old wife missing on Oct. 21, 1992, telling police she had left their Clackamas home a day earlier to drive to Mount Vernon, Wash., on a business trip," according to Pieter Van Dyke, Multnomah County chief deputy sheriff. . Four days later, her car was found in the parking lot of the Red Lion Inn at the Quay in Vancouver.

Two days after that, a passing tugboat crew spotted her body in the Columbia downstream from the Interstate Bridge. An autopsy revealed she died of a blow to the head, said Van-Dyke, one of the original investigators. Van Dyke said he and Detective Karl Hutchison interviewed Schlosser the same day the car was found and that he made contradictory statements about his activities. Gary Muncy, the sheriff's detective currently assigned to the case, said the records of Sharon Schlosser's cell phone also raise suspicions. Charles Schlosser told investigators he had her phone, Muncy said, and shortly after he said she left town, the cell phone was used up and down Interstate 5 and was in the vicinity of where her car was dumped.

If Schlosser did keep the cell . phone, Muncy said, the records contradict what he said he did following her disappearance. But Fiorino says she thinks the evidence is more than strong enough to win her case, particularly since the burden of proof is lower in a civil trial than in a criminal trial..

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