

He enters world of law enforcement

stream.

State police Sgt. Dale Payne says the victim was a man who measured 5 feet, 7 inches and weighed about 135 to 150 pounds.

Except for a molar missing from the left side of his jaw, John Doe's teeth were perfect, suggesting to Payne that the man was health-conscious, possibly an upscale professional.

"There was not a cavity, not a filling," Payne said. "This was someone who had taken care of himself."

When the skeletal remains were discovered last April 16, they bore almost no clothing. In fact, Payne said, all that was located in the latter regard was a wide band around the midsection. It appeared to have come from a sweatshirt.

On the left wrist was a wide, black rubber band. The man had been put there several months earlier, likely from the last of October to the latter part of February.

Since then, Blake said, no one has called about the discovery. The absence of any local inquiries indicates to the prosecutor the victim was from out of state, possibly dumped into the stream by someone passing along the West Virginia Turnpike.

This is where Weaver comes in.

Trained in facial reconstruction, he is able to forge a near duplicate of a face from a skull in about 40 hours.

Weaver reconstructs the face using an oil-based clay.

There is no way to tell if a victim had a scar, a birth mark, or a tattoo.

"But I can tell if he was overweight," Weaver said. "The muscle attachments are more defined than average, where the muscles are attached to the skull, across the back."

For the past 120 years, skull charts have been plotted, based on sex, race, and age, using the dead and the living for analytic purposes.

Weaver uses one prepared by a New Mexico physician.

"When I first started this business — the latent fingerprint business — I thought all the skulls were the same, that if you had seen one, you had seen them all," he said.

"That's not the case. Every skull is different. It's like a fingerprint. In fact, later on, if he doesn't have dental records, we could ID this person if he's ever been X-rayed for sinus infection, because the sinus cavities are very unique.

"So there are alternate ways of identification, not just dental records."

Once the clay is smoothed to match the depth markers, Weaver literally begins to rebuild the missing face — nose, eyes, lips.

"Teeth tell me how thick the lips are," he said.

Nothing Weaver does in reconstructing a face harms the skull.

"It sounds promising," Blake

said. "It sounds like something that gives us a decent shot at maybe identifying this person."

"We're at the end of what we can do, based on what we have. Somebody out there knows who this person is. I think we're at the point that this seems like a proper investment to try to identify this person."

Earlier this year, Weaver was featured on national television with a revolutionary new fingerprinting identification device he was instrumental in developing. Recently, the International Association of Identification certified him as a senior crime scene analyst.

For almost eight years, Weaver worked for the state police in Anchorage before moving to Fayette County in 1993.

Spreading an array of color photographs on a table in Blake's library, Weaver pointed to a number of successes. A picture of a slain brunette and his recreation of her skull were uncannily close. The woman's husband is now serving a 75-year prison term.

Nine out of 10 of his reproductions are close enough for a positive ID, he noted. In three out of every four skulls on which he has worked, an unknown has been identified "usually within hours of the press release," he added.