

Forty years after the disappearance of Curtis Havard and the slaying of his friend Bobbie Joe Sims, their families still search for answers. Havard, 21, and Sims, 30, both of Escatawpa, were last seen alive on March 10, 1970, three days before Havard was scheduled to testify against two young people from Escatawpa accused of theft and assault. A fight had resulted in a teenager being stabbed, according to previous reports. The teen "had been stabbed so bad that he had to wear a colostomy bag," said Deloris Ann Broadus, Havard's oldest sister, now 65. Investigators believed in 1970 that Havard was slain after a March 10, 1970, confrontation near an Escatawpa store where witnesses reported three gunshots. But a body never turned up. Sims, meanwhile, was found floating face down in Biloxi Bay on March 19, 1970, and had been in the water for several days, according to the coroner's report. Broadus remembered Sims' 1963 blue Ford Fairlane being discovered in Lyons Lake, just off Nutbank Road in Helena, seven years later. "Someone, somewhere knows something," Broadus said. "And it's time they came forward." Biloxi Police Capt. John Miller reopened the case last week and is working with Jackson County sheriff's investigators to solve the mystery. "We're going to do this together," Miller said. Jackson County Sheriff's Capt. Mick Sears said that detectives have chased a number of leads over the years, even employing ground-penetrating sonar at a grave at the Latter Day Saints Cemetery in Escatawpa, near where Havard's parents lived. "We had a lead that Havard may have been buried there," Sears said. "And we may follow up on that further, but right now we have other, more viable leads that include several persons of interest. We're not letting this go, and now that we have Biloxi police involved, I really hope to get some closure for these families."...

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