

Investigation for missing woman frustrates family

By Ruth Olgilvie
Ha-Shilth-Sa Reporter

Frustration with Nanaimo RCMP Serious Crime Unit mounts as the family of missing Lisa Marie Young continue to wait for answers.

June 30th marked one year since her disappearance. Lisa's Aunt Carol has remained close to Lisa's parents Joanne and Don Young since her niece's disappearance. She expressed a definite lack of confidence in the RCMP's handling of the investigation. "These adults know she was reported missing," Carol said. "They said they didn't have enough man-power."

"Police didn't even search for Lisa until three months after she was reported missing," according to Lisa's Aunt Carol. "They said they didn't have enough man-power."

Lisa was last seen getting into a maroon Jaguar outside a downtown Nanaimo nightclub on June 29, 2002. Her parents phoned RCMP on June 30th, 2002, but RCMP did not launch their actual ground search until September 17, 2002. They conducted the search in the Doumont/Mitchell Rd. area of Nanaimo, but found nothing. In contrast, when 26-year-old Elizabeth Dueck went missing on Monday, May 19th, Victoria RCMP started looking for her just two days after her disappearance. The circumstances surrounding Dueck's disappearance were similar to Lisa's, her family phoned RCMP immediately as it was unusual for Dueck not to contact family. Dueck and Young are both perceived as intelligent, responsible young people. Lisa was excited about a new job and a new home, a move her father Don was to assist her with.

Sgt. Doug Chisholm of the Nanaimo Serious Crimes Unit said that on began the day Lisa was reported missing. Although he did not mention when the actual ground search took place he said they immediately responded by tracing Lisa's last contact with people and where she was last seen, "By the end of the first week we had concerns and in fact were very focused on the investigation." Chisholm said.

Despite a lack of specific ground search training, the Young's family from Tla-o-qui-aht (TFN), decided to launch their own ground searches in Bamfield Nanaimo and Coombs. TFN's band manager Francis Frank acted as one of the coordinators of the searches. "We just had to help out," he said, "We went out there without any police assistance." Francis supports the family in speaking out about their lack of confidence in Nanaimo RCMP's handling of Lisa's case. "Our relationship with RCMP isn't the best to begin with," he said, "This situation doesn't help."

"Typically the RCMP waits no more than 72 hours to launch a search for missing persons," Francis said. "They have enough manpower, they need to start dedicating themselves to a real search."

A man was taken into police custody earlier this year on other charges and was questioned by RCMP regarding Lisa's disappearance. Police searched the man's maroon Jaguar using infrared light and DNA testing and found no evidence that could keep him in custody. He was released shortly after, though the RCMP told the Youngs they were sure he was withholding information critical to the case. Don was distraught and prepared to alert media about the man's release. Two officers from the Nanaimo detachment showed up at their house, warning Don they would charge him with obstruction of justice if he pursued media coverage. RCMP said they did not want the Young's "interfering with the integrity of the RCMP".

Sgt. Chisholm is hesitant to discuss the case as it is still an active investigation, but admitted Lisa's case is a missing person's case with suspected foul play. "Suffice to say we feel strongly about an individual, but there isn't sufficient evidence to charge him," Chisholm said.

"I hesitate greatly to discuss this as there hasn't been sufficient evidence to charge anyone," he said.

However, RCMP admitted to believing there is a connection between Lisa's disappearance and the individual. Joanne was warned on a separate occasion via a letter on RCMP letterhead for telling one Nanaimo paper about the man who was taken into custody then released.

Persistent in the search for her daughter, Joanne contacted Crime Stoppers and inquired about making a re-enactment video of the last place Lisa was seen.

Constable Jossee Smith of Crime Stoppers instructed Joanne that one of the investigators of Lisa's case would have to request a re-enactment video be made as they hold the file with all information pertaining to Lisa's disappearance.

Joanne then asked one of the investigators to make the request to make the request to Crime Stoppers and he told her he didn't feel it would be helpful at this time, In fact, Constable Jack Eubank, spokesman for the RCMP in Nanaimo, made a media statement saying Crime Stoppers no longer does re-enactments of crimes. According to Constable Smith Crime Stoppers still makes re-enactment videos. When Smith was then asked what the process is to make a re-enactment video she said, "it is always up to the investigator; they send in their request either by fax or by phone with details of the files and pictures". Don and Joanne are concerned because communication with RCMP has all but stopped. Much of their time is spent waiting for officers to return phone calls. Don emailed the investigators expressing his frustration with the lack of communication and in a returned email investigators responded with apologies for their lack of communication, explaining communications have dwindled because they have nothing to tell them yet.

Francis Frank expresses empathy for the Young family, "I can imagine how they feel; powerless and frustrated with the system."

Sgt. Chisholm spoke highly of the investigators in charge of Lisa's case. "We've been fairly open with the Young's," he said. "We have very dedicated people committed to pursuing the investigation." He explained again the hesitancy investigators had about providing much information about the case as it is an active investigation.

The past year has taken a toll on the Young family both emotionally and financially. To sustain their family and the search for Lisa, Don and Joanne both maintain full time jobs. Any spare time is devoted to keeping Lisa's name alive. They continue to distribute thousands of posters, make hundreds of phone calls and hold candlelight vigils. The Young family has received much support from their extended family and others, including the local community of Nanaimo. The efforts of these people are appreciated and continue to be much needed. Lisa's family remains close to each other, bonded in their search for Lisa, fighting for hope. "Sometimes I get upset just thinking about it," Carol said, "We just want some answers, some hope."



Our Love & Prayers Are With You
"Love You More Each Day"
Come Home Soon

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Ha-Shilth-Sa (Ruth Olgilvie) - Thursday August 14, 2003

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The family requests RCMP find some answers and wants assurance that all measures are being taken to find Lisa. "We are not going to give up until we find some answers," Carol said. The Young's are currently trying to raise funds to have a billboard made similar to the latest posters they distributed.

Any information relating to Lisa Young's disappearance or any donations would be appreciated. Don and Joanne can be contacted through the website:
<https://www.allisoncrowe.com/lisapage.html>

<https://lisamarieyoung.ca/n/hss20030814>

https://issuu.com/hashilthsa/docs/16__august_14__2003/3

https://web.archive.org/web/20220615012503/https://issuu.com/hashilthsa/docs/16__august_14__2003/3

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