

Nanaimo mother organizes vigil and walk to remember missing daughter

BY CHRIS BUSH
THE NEWS BULLETIN

A Nanaimo mother has been waiting 11 years for her daughter to come home or police to solve the case of her disappearance.

Lisa Marie Young, who was 19 when she disappeared, has not been seen since she left a house party in Nanaimo the morning of June 30, 2002.

In the intervening years Joanne Young has fought to keep her daughter's memory alive with walks, vigils and other public reminders.

Sunday (June 30) starting at 11 a.m. at the Lions Pavilion at Maffeo Sutton Park, people will once again gather for a walk followed by a candlelight vigil.

The walk will follow a route from the park, over the Pearson Bridge on Terminal Avenue and down Stewart Avenue before returning along the Waterfront Promenade to Maffeo Sutton Park for a noon candlelight vigil.

About 50 supporters came out for last year's walk and vigil, which was held at Christ Community Church.

Joanne hopes for at least as big a turnout this year.

"It's not about whether anyone knew my daughter or not," Joanne said. "It's to promote awareness of being safe. You can walk for your own family."

Joanne has done a lot of walking on her own, putting up posters, promoting the vigil and trying to keep her daughter's memory alive in the community,

but some businesses and individuals are unwilling or unable to help by putting the posters in windows or passing along information about the missing person case or the vigils.

"Sometimes it doesn't seem to have an effect on people because nothing like that has ever happened in their lives – and thankfully not," Joanne said. "You wouldn't want anyone to go through that same anguish because it really is a living nightmare. Every year it's a struggle to do this. It's emotional, but I get through that. It's not about me. It's not for my husband. It's about Lisa Marie and hopefully we find some answers one day."

Joanne said police are supportive, but have no reported

breaks in the case.

Police believe Lisa Marie met with foul play after she left a house party in the Cathers Lake area at about 3 a.m. June 30, 2002, with a man who drove an older model red Jaguar. The last anyone heard from her was when she phoned a friend at about 4:30 a.m.

Police identified the car and the man Young left the party with.

He is part of a police list of persons of interest in the case, but in spite of following up every lead, producing Crime Stoppers TV re-enactments and even conducting a full scale search with K-9 units based on information from a psychic, police have, so far, not been able to prove foul play or find

the missing woman's remains.

"The case is active and will remain active until such time it is determined what happened to Lisa Marie," said Const. Gary O'Brien, Nanaimo RCMP spokesman.

"The vigil is important to not only her family and friends, but also to remind the public of her disappearance.

"Someone out there knows something and we need to hear from them."

Anyone with information about what happened to Lisa Marie Young is asked to contact Nanaimo RCMP at 250-754-2345 or contact Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-8477 or online at www.nanaimocrimestoppers.com.

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