



AP PHOTO

Bruce Maitland comforted his wife, Kellie, during a news conference yesterday. They and Fred Murray (right) asked for federal and public help in the search for their daughters.

May 9, 2004, Associated Press Photo

THE CALEDONIAN-RECORD (2004)

This is a composite of articles from 2004 that appeared in The Caledonian-Record, which is a daily newspaper published in St. Johnsbury, VT. The majority of the pieces are written by Gary E. Lindsley, who was one of the few journalists covering Maura's disappearance in 2004 that used primary sources and obtained direct quotes from witnesses in his reporting.

February 12, 2004

["Police Ask For Help Finding Missing Woman"](#)

Gary E. Lindsley

February 13, 2004

["Family Members, Fiance Seek Help In Finding Woman"](#)

Gary E. Lindsley

February 18, 2004

["Missing Woman - Police Chasing Regionwide Leads"](#)

Gary E. Lindsley

February 20, 2004

["Area Man Laments The Events Of Feb. 9 - Missing Woman Didn't Accept His Help"](#)

Gary E. Lindsley

February 20, 2004

["Air, Ground Search Futile - FBI Called Into Case"](#)

Gary E. Lindsley

February 21, 2004

["Search For Missing Woman Extended To Vermont Nothing Turned Up"](#)

Gary E. Lindsley

February 21, 2004

["Family, Friends Not Giving Up Efforts"](#)

Gary E. Lindsley

February 27, 2004

["Seeking Outside Help - Family, Friends of Maura Murray Upset With Investigation"](#)

Gary E. Lindsley

February 28, 2004

["Relatives May Have Found A Clue"](#)

Gary E. Lindsley

March 29, 2004

["Vermont Woman Turns Out Missing After Car Crash"](#)

Gary E. Lindsley

March 31, 2004

["VSP Forensics Team Studies Missing Teen's Car"](#)

Gary E. Lindsley

April 2, 2004

["K-9 Teams To Search For Murray"](#)

Gary E. Lindsley

April 8, 2004

["America's Most Wanted Producers Decline To Profile Missing Woman Case Seventeen Magazine To Publish Story"](#)

Gary E. Lindsley

THE CALEDONIAN-RECORD (2004)

April 9, 2004

["Vermont, N.H. State Police Rule Out Connection Between Disappearances Search Resumes For Vermont Teen"](#)

Gary E. Lindsley

April 20, 2004,

["State Police Conduct Second Air Search"](#)

Gary E. Lindsley

April 21, 2004

["Father Of Missing Sheldon Girl Worried About Others' Safety"](#)

Gary E. Lindsley

April 22, 2004,

["Letters To Editor - Something to hide?"](#)

April 30, 2004

["Ceremony Planned For Murray Accident Site Public Urged To Attend"](#)

Gary E. Lindsley

May 4, 2004

["Circle Of Hope Ceremony For Murray Draws People"](#)

Gary E. Lindsley

May 6, 2004

["Police Have New Lead In Maura Murray Case"](#)

Gary E. Lindsley

May 10, 2004

["Families Issue Emotional Plea For FBI Help"](#)

Gary E. Lindsley

May 21, 2004

["Another Person Reported Missing - Man Fails To Return From Walk"](#)

Gary E. Lindsley

May 25, 2004

["Petition Drive Demands Action In Maitland Case - Seeks Action From Governor Douglas"](#)

Gary E. Lindsley

May 26, 2004

["Fred Murray Appeals To Governor Benson - Says Police Failed His Daughter"](#)

Gary E. Lindsley

May 29, 2004

["FBI Involved In Investigation - Brianna Maitland Disappearance"](#)

Gary E. Lindsley

May 31, 2004

["Another Vermont Woman Reported Missing - Police Find Her Jeep"](#)

Gary E. Lindsley

June 3, 2004

["Police Say Husband Confesses To Murder - Missing Woman's Body Believed Found"](#)

Gary E. Lindsley

June 4, 2004

["Body Identified - Johnson Woman"](#)

Gary E. Lindsley

THE CALEDONIAN-RECORD (2004)

June 10, 2004

["Letters To Editor - Help bring Bri home."](#)

Laurie Gilman

June 10, 2004

["Parents Of Missing Vermont Teen Heartened By Dubie Meeting"](#)

Gary E. Lindsley

June 16, 2004

["State Police Discard Runaway Theory - Drugs May Be Connection To Disappearance"](#)

Gary E. Lindsley

June 23, 2004

["Letters To Editor - Reservations about officers' attitudes"](#)

Helena Murray

July 1, 2004

["Lieutenant Says Major Crimes Involved Since Beginning - Police Secure Murray Items For Evidence"](#)

Gary E. Lindsley

July 3, 2004

["Maura Murray Family, Friends Say State Police Lied"](#)

Gary E. Lindsley

July 10, 2004

["Woman Missing Since July 5"](#)

Gary E. Lindsley

July 14, 2004

["Another Search For Maura Murray Turns Up Little - Missing Since Feb. 9"](#)

Lorna Colquhoun

August 5, 2004

["Family, Friends No Closer To Finding Maura Murray"](#)

Gary E. Lindsley

February 12, 2004

Police Ask For Help Finding Missing Woman

Gary E. Lindsley

Haverhill police officials have issued a plea for the public's help in locating a missing 21-year-old Massachusetts woman. The woman, Maura Murray of Hanson, may be suicidal, according to a press release by Police Chief Jeffrey Williams.

Police began their search after they responded to a one-car accident on Wild Ammonoosuc Road in Woodsville, Monday. When officers arrived at the scene of the accident, they found an abandoned, black 1996 Saturn bearing Massachusetts plates.

A search of the area for Murray by local police, New Hampshire State Police and emergency medical services personnel came up empty. Witnesses who saw the accident told police they had seen a lone woman. They also said that it didn't appear that the woman had been injured in the accident.

When asked if she needed help or the police, she reportedly said, "No." She left the scene before police and EMS arrived. Murray was last seen wearing jeans and a dark colored coat. She is a white female with brown, shoulder-length hair and blue eyes. She is 5 feet, 7 inches tall and weighs about 120 pounds.

Police say an intensive search is under way and is being conducted by the Haverhill Police Department, Troop F and New Hampshire Fish and Game. A New Hampshire State Police helicopter also is taking part in the search.

Police are asking anyone who may have seen a woman matching Murray's description Monday near the accident scene at about 7 p.m. to contact them. Additionally, anyone seeing her since the night of the accident should call the Haverhill Police Department at 603-787-2222.

Police believe Murray may be headed to the Kancamagus Highway area.

February 13, 2004

"Family Members, Fiance Seek Help In Finding Woman"

Gary E. Lindsley

Fred Murray has issued a plea to his 21-year-old daughter to contact him so they can work together on straightening out what is troubling her. Murray met with reporters in Bethlehem Thursday night after he and family members scoured parts of New Hampshire from Haverhill to Conway and Bethlehem for his daughter, Maura.

"Maura, this is me ... like always, we will solve this," he said in a plea to his daughter through the media. Maura, who is 5 feet, 7 inches tall and weighs about 120 pounds, was involved in a one-car accident on Wild Ammonoosuc Road about 7 p.m. Monday night.

When officers arrived at the scene, they found an abandoned black 1996 Saturn bearing Massachusetts plates. Police determined the car belonged to Maura Murray and searched the area, but were unable to turn up anything.

Witnesses who saw the accident told police they had seen a lone woman. They also said it didn't appear the woman had been injured in the accident. When they asked if she needed help or the police, she reportedly said, "No." She left the scene before police and EMS arrived. Police said Maura may be suicidal and headed toward the Kancamagus Highway area.

Fred Murray said he doesn't understand what prompted his daughter to leave the University of Massachusetts in Amherst, where she is a nursing student, to drive to New Hampshire. He said it's very unusual for her just to take off. He said he had seen her Sunday afternoon and didn't suspect anything was wrong.

"I don't know exactly what you think is the matter," Murray said, again pleading to his daughter. "It isn't anything that can't be easily solved." Murray did say Maura was upset about something that had happened over the weekend. He also said whatever it was wasn't a big deal. Shivering in a light coat as he spoke about his daughter, Murray said he didn't know she was missing until another one of his children, Kathleen, called him Tuesday from Maura's apartment.

Haverhill police officers, he said, had called Maura's home. He made the trip to Haverhill, N.H., in the middle of the night. Joining Murray in speaking with reporters in Bethlehem Thursday night was Bill Rausch, who is a second lieutenant with C Battery, 119th Field Artillery at Fort Sill, Lawton, Okla. Rausch said he flew out first thing Wednesday morning. When asked how he is connected to Maura, he said, "Well, her father didn't know this, but we are engaged to be engaged."

Rausch said they have been dating for several years. He also said he had spoken to Maura Sunday and as recently as Monday morning. She did not seem to be upset about anything when he spoke to her. "Everything seemed fine," he said.

While he was at the airport waiting to catch a flight out of Oklahoma, Rausch said he received a call on his cell phone in which all he heard was someone breathing. The call, he said, was traced to a calling card. "We have talked to the chief," he said, referring to Haverhill Police Chief Jeffery Williams, "and he said they have no leads. They have stopped the search."

That bothers both Murray and Rausch. They have been told police are waiting for another lead. "Our concern," Murray said, "is getting the word out from one police department to another police department. In the meantime, we are trying to spread the word."

THE CALEDONIAN-RECORD (2004)

And that doesn't mean just law enforcement agencies in New Hampshire. They both believe Vermont and New Hampshire police agencies should be working together on this. "That community lies right on the border," he said, referring to Haverhill. "Vermont could be helping out."

When Murray was asked why Maura had driven up to New Hampshire and may be headed toward the Kancamagus Highway area, he said the family had been visiting the area for several years to camp. "It's very familiar," he said. Rausch and Murray spent Wednesday and Thursday handing out dozens of flyers with a picture of Maura and information describing her.

They are asking anyone who has seen Maura to contact the New Hampshire State Police at 603-846-3333 or 603-271-1170. People can also call the Haverhill Police Department at 603-787-2222.

Rausch and family members plan to extend their search into Vermont Friday.

February 18, 2004

"Missing Woman - Police Chasing Regionwide Leads"

Gary E. Lindsley

HAVERHILL NEW HAMPSHIRE - Haverhill police officers and detectives from New Hampshire State Police Troop F are receiving leads from all points in New England regarding a missing 21-year-old Massachusetts woman.

"This search has gone nationwide," Haverhill Police Chief Jeffery Williams said in a phone conversation late Tuesday afternoon. Williams' four-person police department, which includes himself, has been investigating the disappearance of Maura Murray of Hanson, Mass. They, along with detectives from Troop F, have been receiving leads from all over New England.

Murray is 5 feet 7 inches tall, weighs about 120 pounds and has long dark brown hair and blue eyes. She was involved in a one-car accident about 7 p.m. Feb. 9. Her car failed to negotiate a sharp curve and went off the road. Her father, Fred Murray, said it was a minor accident.

A resident who lives near the accident scene told police Murray was asked if she wanted police or emergency medical services called. She reportedly said no. That was the last time anyone has seen the young woman, who reportedly crashed her father's vehicle two days before she crashed her own car, a black 1996 Saturn bearing Massachusetts plates.

According to police, Murray was not injured in the accident. However, she was reportedly impaired due to alcohol consumption when she was seen by her car after her accident. Williams said his department has received a number of calls in connection with Murray's disappearance, but he will not comment on them because of the ongoing investigation.

The person who saw Murray after the accident also was at the scene when officers arrived. Williams wouldn't comment concerning what the witness had said about Murray's disappearance between the time of the accident and the time officers arrived.

"We don't know if someone picked her up," Williams said. "We are certainly concerned about that (possibility). We are getting leads from all over New England. It's a national investigation at this point." Maura's father and her fiance, Bill Rausch, who is a second lieutenant with C Battery, 119th Field Artillery at Fort Sill, Lawton, Okla., have been joined by relatives and friends in their search for the 21-year-old woman. She is a student in the University of Massachusetts nursing program at Amherst.

They have been scouring areas on both sides of the Connecticut River, hoping to find someone who may have seen Maura or have information as to what happened to her after the accident.

Williams said although a search for her was called off last week, the investigation is continuing. He said New Hampshire Fish and Game is in charge of searches. "I don't see a need for a search until we have a (solid) lead," Williams said. In addition to officers from his department, and detectives, including Sgt. Bob Bruno from Troop F, Vermont State Police also are playing a part in the investigation.

Williams said information about Murray as been entered into the National Crime Information Center computer systems. Anyone who has seen Murray is asked to contact the New Hampshire State Police at 603-846-3333 or 603-271-1170. People also can call the Haverhill Police Department at 603-787-2222.

February 20, 2004

“Area Man Laments The Events Of Feb. 9 - Missing Woman Didn't Accept His Help”

Gary E. Lindsley

Butch Atwood wishes the events of the night of Feb. 9 had gone much differently for a missing 21-year-old Massachusetts woman. Atwood was on his way home, about a mile from Swiftwater on Route 112 in Haverhill, when rounding the sharp left-hand curve by The Weathered Barn, he saw a black Saturn partially in the roadway and partially mired in the snow. It was about 7:30 p.m., he said.

The driver had failed to negotiate the sharp curve after passing the barn, gone off the road and struck a stand of trees on the right side of the highway. The car sustained extensive front-end damage. Atwood, a school bus driver for First Student, was returning from dropping off students after a day of skiing at Wildcat Mountain.

He stopped the school bus by the Saturn to see if he could help. "She was still in the car," Atwood said, referring to Maura Murray. Murray, who is from Hanson, Mass., and is a nursing student at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, has been missing since the night of the accident.

Atwood said the Saturn's lights weren't on. "I shined the light in (her car)," he said. "I said, Are you OK? She said she was." Atwood said he got a good look at her. She looked to be about 20 and had dark hair. As a matter of safety, he told her to turn her car's lights on so no one would strike her vehicle coming around the curve.

"I saw no blood," he said. "She was cold and she was shivering. I told her I was going to call the police." Murray, according to Atwood, told him not to because she had already called AAA.

"I said, OK. I will make a call to the police department and the fire department to check you out," he said. "I said, Why don't you come to my house? You can get warm and wait for the police and EMS." Atwood said she just told him to go. He drove to his house, about 75 yards from the scene of the accident, and backed it his driveway before running into the house to call police.

However, he couldn't get through to the Haverhill Police Department and the Grafton County Sheriff's Department. He called 911 and the operator couldn't either. Atwood said another 911 operator was able to get through.

While he was talking on his phone on his front porch, Atwood could see the road, but not Murray's disabled car. He saw several vehicles drive by, but couldn't tell any makes or models because it was so dark. After about seven to nine minutes, he looked out and saw the Haverhill Police. Atwood believed the situation was under control and went to the school bus to tend to his paperwork.

The next thing he knew, Haverhill Police Department Sgt. Cecil Smith was banging on his bus window. Smith asked him if he had called in the accident and seen anyone at the scene. Atwood told Smith he had seen a girl about 20 with dark hair. Smith said when he arrived, Murray was no longer with her car. In the seven to nine minutes between the time Atwood had left Murray to call for help and the time Smith arrived, Murray had vanished.

"I took a ride around the back roads," Atwood said. "I was gone about 15 minutes. Then I took a ride to French Pond." He even drove about a mile down the road to the store in Swiftwater to check and see if she was there. She wasn't. When he returned to the accident scene, a New Hampshire State Police trooper was there.

Atwood said they checked the woods in the immediate area to see if Murray had gone into the forest. There weren't any tracks. He said there wasn't any way Murray could have driven the car after the accident. He said the radiator had been pushed back into the fan. The air bag also had been deployed.

THE CALEDONIAN-RECORD (2004)

However, he said it didn't appear Murray had been injured, just shaken up. "I just wish I could have gotten her to come with me," he lamented. "But I am a big man, over 350 pounds. She may have gotten into a car with someone who was clean cut."

Atwood believes one of the vehicles which had passed his house could have stopped and picked her up. "She could be anywhere, absolutely," Atwood said. He said whoever may have picked her up could have driven toward the area of Lincoln, or back to Route 302 and over to Vermont.

Anyone who has seen Murray is asked to contact the New Hampshire State Police at 603-846-3333 or 603-271-1170. People also can call the Haverhill Police Department at 603-787-2222.

February 20, 2004

“Air, Ground Search Futile - FBI Called Into Case”

Gary E. Lindsley

Nancy Lyon and her canine partner, a 3-year-old malinois, Quicklie, spent most of Thursday morning scouring a section of Route 112 for a missing 21-year-old Hanson, Mass., woman. Lyon and Quiklie are members of the New England K-9 Search and Rescue group. They were one of three canine teams taking part in the search for Maura Murray, a nursing student at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

They were unable to turn up any sign of the missing college student. A ground and air search coordinated by New Hampshire Fish and Game failed to turn up any clues in Murray's disappearance Thursday.

Murray unexpectedly left her college and her job at an art gallery Feb. 9 and headed to New Hampshire in her black 1996 Saturn. She was traveling on Route 112 around 7 p.m. in Haverhill when she failed to negotiate a sharp left-hand curve past The Weathered Barn and crashed into a stand of trees on the right side of the highway.

The front end of the car suffered extensive damage upon impact. The car's radiator was pushed back into the fan, making the vehicle inoperable. Fish and Game Lt. Todd Bogardus, in a press conference at the Haverhill Police Department Thursday afternoon, said the three canine teams, two of which were part of the New England K-9 Search and Rescue group, and the other from the state police, were unable to come up with any clues. Two of the canines were air scent dogs.

"The results today were non-conclusive," Bogardus said. "We were unable to locate anything within a 2-mile square radius." Between the air and ground searches, he said there weren't any conclusive clues to enable a continuation of the search. "Tracks are prevalent out there, but none connected with Maura," he said. "So, now our ground search is suspended."

Lt. John Scarinza of New Hampshire State Police Troop F said police know Murray had e-mailed her employer she was taking a week off for a family emergency. "How and why she ended up in Haverhill is unknown," he said. However, Maura's father, Fred Murray, has said the family used to camp in the area and Maura was familiar with New Hampshire.

"We are reasonably confident she did not enter the woods near the crash scene," Scarinza said. He also said police don't have any indication any harm has come to her. "There is no indication someone picked her up," Scarinza said. "At this point, I have no reason to believe that (she was taken against her will)."

The FBI, he said, is now involved with the case and is conducting a background investigation in Massachusetts. "We have not asked them to do that," Scarinza said, referring to checking her computer

THE CALEDONIAN-RECORD (2004)

for any information which would help move the investigation along. "We have been working with the University of Massachusetts police at Amherst. They have been a tremendous help." Police have checked bus companies and questioned bus drivers to see if Murray had caught a bus somewhere. Nothing has proven that was the case.

Authorities are also conducting background checks of "people of interest" in the area. When asked why a second ground and air search was conducted Thursday, nearly a week and a half after the accident, Scarinza said, "We wanted to make sure we had done everything twice. We have a very good feeling we have done everything we can do at the crash site."

Police in the meantime have been tracking Murray's credit cards and bank accounts. But they aren't revealing anything they have learned. Sharon Rausch, the mother of Bill Rausch, who is Murray's fiance-to-be and a second lieutenant with C Battery, 119th Field Artillery at Fort Sill, Lawton, Okla., was present at the press conference.

"It's been a long, long 10 days," Rausch said. "We are very worried. We believe she is somewhere and someone is preventing her from contacting us. "She loved her family and there is no way she would put her father and my son through this." Rausch, who is from Marengo, Ohio, wanted to send a message to Murray.

"Maura, we love you," she said. "Don't you give up. We will never give up. We will find you."

February 21, 2004

["Search For Missing Woman Extended To Vermont Nothing Turned Up"](#)

Gary E. Lindsley

The search for a missing 21-year-old Massachusetts woman has shifted in a different direction, at least for the moment. New Hampshire State Police Troop F Commander Lt. John Scarinza said a search of Maura Murray's computer in her dorm room at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst revealed the missing woman had searched for directions to Burlington, Vt.

Law enforcement authorities, as well as family members and friends, scoured the Burlington, Shelburne, East Burlington and Colchester areas Friday, a day after New Hampshire State Police and New Hampshire Fish and Game suspended a one-day air and ground search in the Haverhill, N.H. area. Murray, who is a nursing student at UMass at Amherst, left the university Feb. 9 and headed toward New Hampshire in a black 1996 Saturn.

About a mile east of Swiftwater on Route 112, Murray failed to negotiate a sharp left-hand curve and her Saturn went off the right side of the highway, striking a strand of trees. Butch Atwood, who lives just up the road from the site, offered her help. She refused. However, he went to his house to call police and EMS. When Haverhill police arrived about seven to nine minutes later, Murray was no where to be found.

Scarinza said police detectives with the UMass campus police department searched Murray's computer and learned she had used the Mapquest Web site to search for directions to Burlington, the day before she had her accident in Haverhill. "We have contacted Vermont State Police and Burlington police," he said. "They have canvassed all of the hotels. She also had looked at hotel (Web) sites."

Scarinza said color photos of Murray have been distributed in the Burlington area, as well as in Colchester, Shelburne and East Burlington. "No one has seen her," he said.

Scarinza speculated Murray had searched for directions to Burlington because she and her father, Fred, had been to the area and had hiked Mt. Mansfield and Camel's Hump. Murray said he and his daughter had hiked Mt. Mansfield and Camel's Hump on Columbus Day weekend and had had a great time. "She loved it," he said. "Especially the area downtown where you can walk." The search in Vermont comes a day after police conducted and suspended a combined air and ground search for Murray, the second such search since she disappeared Feb. 9. Although three dog search teams did not come up with any hits Thursday, a canine team did hit on Murray's scent when a search was conducted Feb. 11.

Scarinza said a canine tracked Murray for about 100 yards east of where Murray's car went off the road. He said the trail ended in the general area of Atwood's residence. Because the trail came to an end, Scarinza believes it is an indication she left the area in a car. "It's very frustrating," he said, referring to the lack of any information coming in about where Murray can be.

Scarinza said UMass campus police have been interviewing people, including professors and students, since Murray left the university for unknown reasons. She'd e-mailed her professors telling them she would be away for a week because of a family emergency.

"It has become pretty clear, she hasn't told anyone she was leaving," he said. "In reality, she had planned to go (to Burlington)." However, Murray was headed in an entirely different direction, toward Lincoln, N.H., when she had her crash. She was familiar with the New Hampshire White Mountains as well.

THE CALEDONIAN-RECORD (2004)

Anyone who has seen Murray is asked to contact the New Hampshire State Police at 603-846-3333 or 603-271-1170. People also can call the Haverhill Police Department at 603-787-2222.

February 21, 2004

“Family, Friends Not Giving Up Efforts”

Gary E. Lindsley

Family and friends of Maura Murray have been in the area of the crash site conducting massive foot searches for Maura Murray since Feb. 11. Friday, their attention turned to Vermont where they distributed more fliers to hotels and police agencies in Burlington.

Sharon Rausch and her husband, Bill, have been helping Fred Murray search for his daughter since Feb. 11. So has the Rausch's son, Billie, who is Murray's fiance-to-be and a second lieutenant with C Battery, 119th Field Artillery at Fort Sill, Lawton, Okla. They have been going non-stop in their search for Murray, including walking trails and roads, distributing fliers and knocking on doors in the area of the accident.

Family members and friends are at times upset about the lack of information or difference in information obtained by police investigators and what they have been able to glean from knocking on doors and asking questions. Last week, they were told by investigators it was believed Murray had headed toward the Rausch's home in Marengo, Ohio, because she was having family trouble.

Sharon Rausch said although she didn't believe that, she had one of her children, who had stayed behind, put notes on the door for Murray and left the home unlocked. However, Murray has not turned up in Ohio. Nor have signs of her surfaced in Vermont. And the only hint of a sign of her in New Hampshire was Feb. 11 when a canine tracked her scent from her car to about 100 yards east of the accident site, in the area of the Butch Atwood residence.

The 5-feet, 7-inch-tall brunette, who weighs about 120 pounds and has blue eyes, reportedly e- mailed her employer she would be gone for a week and took about \$280 from her checking account. Family members have said it was not like Murray to just up and leave the campus without telling anyone. Rausch said a dorm mate saw her leave the campus about 4 or 4:30 p.m. Feb 9. She said Murray's father and her son went through Maura's stuff again and found an index card with the Mapquest directions for Burlington, Vt. Rausch said the Saturn was having mechanical problems, possibly only running on three cylinders, when Murray set out for Burlington. She said, possibly, because the car was running poorly, she decided to leave Interstate 91 and pick up Route 302 and head toward the Lincoln area.

And Rausch discounts any thoughts Murray would have just walked away from her family, boyfriend and friends because she loved them too much. She and Fred Murray said Maura wouldn't have picked up insurance forms for her father to fill out if she had not planned to return home.

"I hope we can get more help...in Vermont," Murray's father said. "We need to look elsewhere. I will take all the help I can get from anywhere." Family members and friends are hoping the FBI will take a more thorough and active role in the search for Murray since three states are involved.

February 27, 2004

"Seeking Outside Help - Family, Friends of Maura Murray Upset With Investigation"

Gary E. Lindsley

HAVERHILL, NEW HAMPSHIRE - Family and friends of 21-year-old Maura Murray believe someone picked up the University of Massachusetts at Amherst nursing student after she was involved in a one-car accident in Haverhill, N.H., Feb. 9. They have hired an outside investigator to find out what happened to her.

It has been more than 2-1/2 weeks since Murray's car failed to negotiate a sharp curve near The Weathered Barn on Route 112 and crashed into a stand of trees about one mile east of Swiftwater. "With all the attention from the media, if a good person had picked her up, he would have come forward," said Sharon Rausch, mother of Bill Rausch, Murray's boyfriend. "It leads us to believe a bad guy picked her up."

"I just wish they would treat this as a criminal investigation. If they treated it as such, the FBI could become more involved." The "they" she is referring to is New Hampshire State Police Troop F and the Haverhill Police Department.

Rausch said her son Bill, Murray's father, Fred, and Murray's siblings, Freddy, Kathleen and Julie, are all frustrated with the lack of leads and the apparent belief by law officials that Murray's disappearance is nothing more than a person not wanting anyone to know where she is.

They believe Murray would have fought anyone trying to abduct her. Family members and friends are also frustrated with conflicting information in Massachusetts and New Hampshire. Murray, who is 5 feet 7 inches tall, weighs about 120 pounds and has brown hair and blue eyes, was last seen on the UMass campus between 4 and 4:30 p.m. Feb. 9.

Packed Up Her Dorm Room

UMass Police Department Detective Brian Davies said Murray had packed up all her belongings in her dorm room and appeared to be moving out and not returning.

Murray also had notified her professors she was going to be gone for a week because of a family emergency. A search of Murray's computer by UMass detectives turned up evidence she had conducted a Mapquest search on the Internet for directions to Burlington, Vt.

Murray may have been having trouble with her black 1996 Saturn. Rausch said she understood the vehicle was not running on all of its cylinders. Believing that, Murray may have left Interstate 91 and exited onto Route 302. She then picked up Route 112 and was headed east when her accident occurred.

She reportedly is familiar with the White Mountains region because of family camping trips. After Murray's accident, Butch Atwood said he was returning from taking students skiing when he spotted Murray's car half in the road and half off the road without its flashers on at about 7:30 p.m.

Others near the scene said the car's emergency flashers were on. Atwood, who drives a First Student school bus, stopped his school bus by the Saturn to see if he could help. Murray was still in her car.

Atwood said she looked to be about 20 and had dark hair. "I saw no blood," he said. "She was cold and she was shivering. I told her I was going to call the police."

Murray, according to Atwood, told him not to because she had already called AAA. Atwood said he invited the woman to wait at his house, nearby, but she declined. He said he then went home to call 911.

THE CALEDONIAN-RECORD (2004)

After about seven to nine minutes, he looked out and saw a Haverhill police cruiser by the Saturn. A short time later, Haverhill Police Department officer, Sgt. Cecil Smith, notified Atwood that when he arrived at the crash scene, Murray was no longer with her car. Between the time Atwood had left Murray and her vehicle to call for help and the time Smith arrived, Murray had vanished.

State police arrived and checked the woods in the immediate area to see if Murray had gone into the forest. There weren't any tracks. Atwood said Murray didn't appear to be intoxicated, despite police having said a witness indicated she had appeared to be impaired due to alcohol. He lamented the fact Murray had not accepted his offer for help. He noted school bus drivers have to go through extensive background checks.

Police Delay Search And Press Release

Family members and friends are upset because police did not issue a press release seeking people's help in locating Murray until two days after the accident. They also are upset because a thorough search of the area wasn't conducted until two days after the accident.

On Feb. 11, a canine team tracked Murray from the crash site east for about 100 yards.

Troop F Commander Lt. John Scarinza this week said investigators are still treating Murray's disappearance as a missing person investigation. Scarinza says there is absolutely no evidence foul play has been involved, and that people living in the area of the accident scene have been interviewed several times. A search of nearby homes by a canine team as well as forensics experts would require a search warrant. And a search warrant would require probable cause.

Rausch said family members were told by at least one person living near the accident site a man was seen in Maura's car after the accident. Scarinza said investigators are using all the tools they have available to them to locate Murray. Rausch said despite the appearance of Murray's dorm room, she and family members don't believe that's the case.

She said Murray, on the day of the accident, had picked up insurance forms related to an accident she'd had on Feb. 7. Murray was going to call her father the night of Feb. 9 to have him help her fill out the insurance forms.

Those forms, according to Rausch, were found in Murray's car along with school books, clothing and expensive jewelry. The insurance forms and school books indicated to Rausch that Murray was going to return to Massachusetts and the university and was planning to study while she was away.

Family members and friends also are upset with no information coming from someone who placed a calling card call to Bill Rausch's cell phone as he was waiting to fly out of Oklahoma Feb. 11 to come search for his girlfriend.

Calling Card Call

Bill Rausch said he heard what he believed to be whimpering and crying. However, Scarinza said that angle has been eliminated because investigators traced the calling card to the American Red Cross officials who had been attempting to contact Bill Rausch.

There also is the mysterious phone call Murray received while working as a security person at a residence hall at the UMass Amherst campus Feb. 5. The call reportedly reduced Murray to tears and her supervisor had to take her home because she was so distraught.

THE CALEDONIAN-RECORD (2004)

UMass Detective Davies said his department has been able to track the phone call. "We know the location," Davies said. "We have not been able to identify to whom she was speaking. Her friends have no idea who called her." Sharon Rausch said, "It's obvious to us something has happened to distress her."

She said Murray had called Bill Feb. 8 and was crying because of the previous Saturday accident, though he didn't feel that was it. "He told her on a scale of 1 to 10, it was only a 3 or 4," she said. "He had to talk to her a long time to calm her down. We are convinced something happened at school and her Amherst friends know."

Rausch speculated that what happened at the college has nothing to do with what happened to Murray after the accident on Route 112 in New Hampshire. Because family and friends have been frustrated with the way the investigation has been carried out, they have brought in a private investigator to help them find Murray.

R.C. Stevens of PSII Inc., a Northampton, Mass., private investigation agency, is digging into what has happened. A retired state trooper of 22 years, Stevens' firm handles high profile cases.

"Hopefully, we are going to do something soon," he said. Murray's family and friends have started a pledge for reward fund. Rausch said donations aren't being accepted. However, pledges for a reward are, in the event information is provided which leads to Murray's return. People can make pledges to the fund by sending an e-mail to mauramissing@hotmail.com.

Rausch said Duke University Blue Devils basketball coach Mike Krzyzewski and his family have pledged an unspecified amount of money to the reward fund. Krzyzewski met Murray and Bill Rausch around Thanksgiving time and provided them with basketball tickets during the Christmas holiday basketball tourney. Anyone who has seen Murray is asked to contact the New Hampshire State Police at 603-846-3333 or 603-271-1170. People also can call the Haverhill Police Department at 603-787- 2222.

February 28, 2004

“Relatives May Have Found A Clue”

Gary E. Lindsley

Haverhill, New Hampshire -- Relatives of Maura Murray have found what may be a clue in her disappearance. Kathleen Murray found a pair of white, women's underwear lying on the snow near French Pond Road in Haverhill, Thursday.

Murray said she does not know if they are connected to the disappearance of her sister, who has not been seen since the night of her car accident on Route 112, about a mile east of Swiftwater.

Maura was driving a black 1996 Saturn Feb. 9 when her car failed to negotiate a sharp, left curve past The Weathered Barn and went off the road. Maura is a nursing student at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. Kathleen and her brother, Freddy, have been scouring the area around the accident site every day.

"I have been making my way down (toward the French Pond Road area)," Kathleen said. "We have been tracking through quite a bit of snow." She turned the underwear over to Haverhill Police and said it will be about two weeks before DNA results come back.

"Hopefully, they will turn out not to be hers," Kathleen said. "Maybe it was just teenagers having fun. The area is pretty secluded." Kathleen does not believe Maura has just taken off and doesn't want to be found. "I know my sister," she said. "We were really close. If she were in trouble, she would have called me. I am extremely worried."

Kathleen is hoping to hold some type of fund-raiser to help boost the pledge reward fund established to help find Maura. It currently stands at about \$30,000. Family and friends have sought the assistance of a private investigator. R.C. Stevens of PSII Inc., a Northampton, Mass., private investigation agency, is looking into the disappearance. Anyone who has seen Maura or may have information, is asked to contact the New Hampshire State Police at 603-846-3333 or 603-271-1170; or the Haverhill Police Department at 603-787-2222.

She is 5 feet, 7 inches tall, weighs about 120 pounds, has brown hair and blue eyes, and was last seen wearing a dark coat and jeans.

March 29, 2004

"Vermont Woman Turns Out Missing After Car Crash"

Gary E. Lindsley

Another young woman has turned up missing after a car accident on a dark, rural highway - this time in Vermont.

Brianna Maitland, 17, of Sheldon, Vt., has disappeared after being involved in a one-car accident late at night on the East Berkshire Road in northern Vermont.

This comes on the heels of the disappearance of Maura Murray, a 21-year-old nursing student at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, has not been seen since she was involved in a one-car accident on a dark stretch of rural Route 112 in the town of Haverhill, N.H., Feb. 9.

Maitland was working at the Black Lantern in Montgomery March 19, when she clocked out at 11:20 p.m. and headed to her friend's house in Sheldon, where she was living. She had even left her friend a note saying what time she would be home from work.

She never made it.

Her car was found by police early the morning of March 20, with its rear end in an abandoned building. The car was about a mile from the Black Lantern, where Maitland is a dishwasher.

However, Maitland's parents were not notified about the accident although the car is registered to the mother, Kellie.

It wasn't until Tuesday, March 23, when Brianna's friends contacted the Maitlands, that they became aware something was wrong.

"They asked us if Brianna had moved back in with us," Bruce Maitland said. It was the first he and his wife had heard she was missing.

The Maitlands contacted state police in St. Albans to file a missing person's report. Troopers told them an all points bulletin would be put out about Brianna and her 1988 Oldsmobile.

State police did not draw any connection between Brianna and the car, until Thursday morning, nearly a week after the accident. The Maitlands were called about the Oldsmobile. Bruce Maitland said it was her car.

The Maitlands don't understand why state police did not call them after finding the car because the car is registered in Kellie's name.

"That was a huge error on their part," Bruce Maitland said. "I asked why we weren't notified. They said the telephone number did not match the address. All they would have had to do was look in the telephone book."

He said the state police have been very leery about sharing information with the family. "I gave them a good lead, the only one they have," he said. He did not want to publicly divulge what it was because he didn't want to compromise the investigation.

The Maitlands have also turned something else over to state police, a woman's jacket found near the accident scene. "It had a wallet with a woman's name and credit cards," Bruce Maitland said.

THE CALEDONIAN-RECORD (2004)

He said it appeared the woman was from California and had recently moved to Vermont. It also appeared she was a certified ski instructor.

With his daughter missing, as well as Murray, now finding this woman's jacket, Maitland is worried there may be someone in the area preying on young women.

Kellie Maitland is upset because state police have said they believe her daughter just took off.

She said a co-worker supposedly told troopers Brianna had said she was going to take off on a short trip.

Kellie Maitland does not believe that because she said her daughter was doing really well. She had recently passed her GED with flying colors, and worked at the Black Lantern and as a hostess at KJ's Diner in St. Albans.

"Her jobs are going well," Kellie Maitland said. "She has been upbeat. Everything seemed fine."

She also doesn't believe her daughter hit a patch of ice and slid off the road into the building. "I saw the pictures (of the accident scene)," Kellie Maitland said. "I know it was not her doing."

And she also does not believe Brianna just took off. "There weren't any keys in the car," she said. "And her two paychecks were on the front seat untouched."

Also, her ATM card, medication, makeup, clothes and contact lenses were still at her friend's house.

"She is very pretty," Kellie Maitland said. "I saw her earlier in the day (March 19). I had taken her shopping to get her dress slacks. She had a good time."

Brianna is 5 feet, 4 inches tall, weighs 105 pounds, has hazel eyes and medium length brown hair. She also has a nose stud in her left nostril and a faint scar in her left eyebrow.

Kellie Maitland said her daughter, if she were planning a trip, would have come to her for money. She doesn't understand why state police are treating this as a young woman taking off.

"I don't want anyone else going through what Maura's family is going through," Kellie Maitland said.

State police in Vermont have not been available to talk about the Maitland investigation. Detective Sgt. Heidi Glynn was unavailable for comment Friday and Sunday.

When Sharon Rausch heard another young woman has turned up missing, under similar circumstances, and that state police are treating the case as a missing person rather than a criminal investigation, she was upset.

"It's like living it all over again," said Rausch, whose son, Billie, is Maura Murray's fiance-to-be. "I feel so sorry for her."

New Hampshire State Police had not heard about Maitland's disappearance in Vermont. People with information about Maitland should call Vermont State Police at 802-524-5993.

Anyone with information about Murray should contact New Hampshire State Police at 603-271- 3636.

March 31, 2004

“VSP Forensics Team Studies Missing Teen's Car”

Gary E. Lindsley

A forensics team from the Vermont State Police lab in Waterbury began poring over a missing teenager's car Tuesday to obtain possible evidence, including whether foul play may have been involved in her disappearance.

Brianna Maitland, 17, of Sheldon, has been missing since she left the Black Lantern in Montgomery at 11:20 p.m. March 19. Her 1985 Oldsmobile sedan was found partially ensconced in an abandoned building off of East Berkshire Road, about a mile from the Black Lantern where she worked as a dishwasher.

Lt. Thomas Nelson, who is in charge of the Bureau of Criminal Investigation at the St. Albans barracks, said the forensics team began its investigation around 2 p.m. Tuesday.

Nelson said one of the things the team will be looking for is any sign of a struggle which may have occurred the night Maitland disappeared.

"The initial investigation did not show there was a violent struggle," he said. "We hope it's not a crime."

The Oldsmobile was discovered by a neighbor around 1:22 a.m. March 20, according to Nelson. The vehicle had sustained minor damage.

"It looked like it had been backed into the building," he said. "It did not look like a regular accident."

Kellie Maitland, Brianna's mother, also believes her daughter was not in an accident. She believes someone else was involved and forced the car into the building.

Maitland, and her husband, Bruce, are upset because they were never notified the car had been found, although Kellie is the registered owner.

The Maitlands were told by Brianna's friends March 23 she was missing and they filed a missing person report. State police did not mention anything about the car being found.

It wasn't until Thursday, nearly a week after Brianna's disappearance that investigators made a connection between the car and Brianna's disappearance, according to the Maitlands.

Nelson said he cannot say why the Maitlands were not notified March 20 when the car was found.

The reason could have been, according to Nelson, that the car was on private property and it didn't look like it had been involved in an accident.

"Oftentimes, people do leave their cars beside the road because maybe they had too much to drink," he said.

Also, it wasn't apparent to investigators Brianna had been the last person to drive the vehicle. However, the Maitlands said Brianna's paychecks were in the car.

Nelson said a couple of ground and air searches have been conducted of the area around the accident scene, although the area between the accident scene and the Black Lantern has not been searched. The searches have involved K-9 units and a helicopter from the Vermont National Guard.

"Troopers have done walks through the fields," Nelson said. "The search has been concentrated." So far, he said, nothing has turned up.

THE CALEDONIAN-RECORD (2004)

Regarding a woman's jacket which the Maitlands found in the area near the accident scene, Nelson said he does not believe there is any connection to Brianna's disappearance. However, he also said investigators haven't located the owner of the jacket yet.

When asked if investigators were looking at a possible connection between Brianna's disappearance in northern Vermont and the Feb. 9 disappearance of 21-year-old University of Massachusetts at Amherst nursing student Maura Murray, Nelson said they have not made any direct connection between the two cases.

"We never rule anything out," he said. "We will talk to (New Hampshire State Police)."

Murray, who is a resident of Hanson, Mass., disappeared the night of Feb. 9 after she had a car accident on a dark stretch of Route 112 in the town of Haverhill, N.H., about a mile east of the hamlet of Swiftwater.

Murray failed to negotiate a sharp left-hand curve past The Weathered Barn. In another development, the Klaaskids Foundation, which was established in 1994 after Polly Klaas was abducted and murdered, has offered the Maitlands assistance searching for their daughter. The foundation's search center director Brad Dennis has spoken with them about how he can assist them.

Dennis said the foundation also is working on contacting news groups nationally to help with finding Brianna. Nelson said he would be more than willing to talk with people from the foundation's search center. People with any information about Brianna, who is 5 feet, 4 inches tall, weighs 105 pounds, has hazel eyes and medium length brown hair, should call Vermont State Police at 802-524-5993. Brianna has a nose stud in her left nostril and a faint scar in her left eyebrow.

April 2, 2004

“K-9 Teams To Search For Murray”

Gary E. Lindsley

K-9 Teams To Search For Murray By Gary E. Lindsley

HAVERHILL NEW HAMPSHIRE - Family and friends say they have not given up hope that 21-year-old Maura Murray, of Hanson, Mass., will be found.

Although an official air and ground search was declared concluded by New Hampshire Fish and Game and Troop F State Police officials in February, K-9 teams from the Adirondack Rescue Dog Association will resume their search of the Haverhill area this weekend.

Sharon Rausch, whose son, Billy, is Murray's fiance-to-be, said she, her son and Murray's family have not given up hope she will be found and safely returned.

However, Rausch said they also know a lot of time has elapsed since Murray's black 1996 Saturn was found off the road near The Weathered Barn along Route 112, about a mile east of the hamlet of Swiftwater, Feb. 9.

This weekend, like last weekend, K-9 teams from the Adirondack Rescue Dog Association will conduct a search of the area surrounding the accident site.

Rausch said one of the teams is Marilyn Greene, a team trainer and private investigator, and her K-9, Buddy, from Guilderland, N.Y.

Fred Murray, Maura's father, said he was impressed by the teams when they searched the area last weekend. He will be returning to the accident scene this weekend to search areas not being searched by the K-9 teams.

On another front, Rausch is enlisting the help of University of Massachusetts at Amherst officials. Maura was a junior nursing student there.

Rausch is asking them to send an e-mail message to the university's 40,000 students through a blind e-mailer between April 15 and 20.

The e-mail will read, "Please help us find Maura. Please forward this to all the contacts in your address book."

The e-mail will contain information about what Maura looks like as well as information about the accident which she was involved in the night of Feb. 9.

"It will literally (reach) hundreds of thousands of people," Rausch said.

She is holding off sending out the e-mail right now because about 15,000 posters are being distributed in Vermont and New Hampshire, as well as at UMass.

Rausch also wants to do something special for Maura's 22nd birthday May 4. Initially, she wanted to have balloons released.

However, she said the family and friends will ask people to tie blue ribbons around trees as well as to their car antennas.

The following message also will be released May 4: "Maura's family prays for her safe return on her birthday."

THE CALEDONIAN-RECORD (2004)

Maura is 5 feet, 7 inches tall, weighs 115 pounds, has blue-green eyes and curly brown hair. She is soft-spoken and is an avid runner, logging between five and six miles daily.

People with any information should call the New Hampshire State Police at 603-271-3636, or the Haverhill Police Department at 603-787-2222.

April 8, 2004

"America's Most Wanted Producers Decline To Profile Missing Woman Case Seventeen Magazine To Publish Story"

Gary E. Lindsley

The television show "America's Most Wanted" will not profile the case of a 21-year-old University of Massachusetts nursing student who disappeared the night of Feb. 9 after she was involved in a one-car crash on Route 112 in Haverhill.

Maura Murray, a resident of Hanson, Mass., and a junior at the UMass Amherst campus, was driving a black 1996 Saturn at about 7 p.m. when she failed to negotiate a sharp left-hand curve and went off the right side of Route 112 after driving past The Weathered Barn.

Jeremy Cohen, managing editor for "America's Most Wanted," says Murray's case will not be profiled on the Fox network's TV show.

"I know about the case," Cohen said. "I have been aware of it since it happened. Unfortunately, we can't do many missing cases at all."

He says the show devotes most of its missing people air time to cases involving children. "As for adults," Cohen said, "we only do it when there is clear evidence of a crime."

Unless it's clear to the show's producers a crime has been committed, a case won't be aired.

"It's been our experience when we can't tell our viewers what to look for, we don't get a response," he said. "We save our space on our show (for a case) only if it would be successful. Unfortunately, we turn down a lot of cases."

While "America's Most Wanted" officials are refusing to profile Murray's case, Seventeen, a magazine geared toward 12- to 24-year-old girls and young women, is very interested.

Members of the magazine's staff have been interviewing Murray's friends and family members. Elizabeth Dye, a spokeswoman for Seventeen, said there isn't a run date yet for the story, though she feels it should resonate among the magazine's subscribers.

"We feel like other young women can learn from circumstances from everyday situations," Dye said.

"We also believe there is a community of readers out there who may be able to help."

She said Seventeen's readers will be able to identify with Murray.

Dye said Seventeen's circulation is 2.1 million readers, but she estimates the magazine actually reaches about 14 million people through its presence in doctors' offices, libraries and other venues.

Fred Murray, Maura's father, has been searching the area where his daughter had her accident every weekend since he was notified. He was not happy with the decision of "America's Most Wanted."

"I am really disappointed," Murray said. "It has an extensive audience and is so influential."

Lt. John Scarinza of New Hampshire State Police Troop F and Haverhill Police Chief Jeffery Williams both have said they, too, would welcome the TV show profiling the case.

If the show did profile Maura's disappearance, he said, maybe someone somewhere in the country, who may have been traveling through the Haverhill, N.H., area the night of Feb. 9, may recall seeing something. Or they may remember having seen her get on a bus somewhere.

THE CALEDONIAN-RECORD (2004)

"It's just the national scope of it," he said. "Plus, it would put pressure on the state police to call in the FBI. You have two close to one another, geographically and chronologically."

Murray was referring to not only his own daughter, but also to Brianna Maitland, 17, who has been missing since leaving work late the night of March 19. Maitland's car was found with its rear end in an abandoned building about a mile from the Black Lantern in Montgomery, Vt., during the early-morning hours of March 20. She hasn't been seen since.

Murray, though, is happy Seventeen magazine will be profiling his daughter. "I will take any help I possibly can get," he said. "Everything helps."

Sharon Rausch, whose son, Billy, is Maura's boyfriend, is also glad Seventeen is interested. "I am thrilled," Rausch said. "This has been in the works for awhile."

She said the magazine had sent an e-mail to Maura Murray's Web site, www.spbowers.com/mauramissing.html, leaving a message they were interested in publishing a piece.

Maura is 5 feet, 7 inches tall, weighs 115 pounds, and has blue-green eyes and curly brown hair. Anyone with information should call the New Hampshire State Police at 603-271-3636, or the Haverhill Police Department at 603-787-2222.

April 9, 2004

"Vermont, N.H. State Police Rule Out Connection Between Disappearances Search Resumes For Vermont Teen"

Gary E. Lindsley

Vermont and New Hampshire state police say there isn't a connection between the disappearances of two young women within the past couple of months.

They say both disappeared after their vehicles were involved in motor vehicle accidents, but that is the extent of the similarity.

Maura Murray, a 21-year-old University of Massachusetts at Amherst nursing student from Hanson, Mass., has been missing since she was involved in a one-car accident on Route 112 in Haverhill, N.H., the night of Feb. 9.

Brianna Maitland, 17, of Sheldon, Vt., has been missing since she left work at the Black Lantern in Montgomery the night of March 19. Her car was found the next morning with its rear end partially inside an abandoned building about a mile from the Black Lantern on the East Berkshire Road.

"We have been in contact with Vermont State Police several times," said Lt. John Scarinza of New Hampshire State Police Troop F.

He said there aren't any similarities other than Murray and Maitland disappeared after accidents.

Lt. Thomas Nelson of the Vermont State Police Bureau of Criminal Investigation at the St. Albans barracks, also said there isn't a connection.

Bruce Maitland, Brianna's father, said the family and friends will be conducting another search for her this weekend.

Maitland said a command center will be set up at the East Franklin Store. A search will begin at 8 a.m. Saturday. The phone number at the store is 802-933-4100.

The family received help with a major search last weekend from Brad Dennis of the Klaaskids Foundation Search Center. The foundation was established in 1994 after Polly Klaas was abducted and murdered.

Maitland said the experience was invaluable and will help the family conduct another search this weekend.

During the search last weekend, duct tape and clothing were found and turned over to state police. However, Nelson says none of it was connected to Brianna's disappearance.

Maitland said a lot of tips have been received. He praised VSP for doing a good job, although he believes they made mistakes in the beginning.

On the other hand, Fred Murray, Maura's father, is upset with the response of New Hampshire State Police in its investigation into his daughter's disappearance and what he says is law enforcement's reluctance to get the FBI fully involved.

Murray is going to be speaking with Scarinza today to appeal to him to bring the FBI in. He also is asking for the public's help.

THE CALEDONIAN-RECORD (2004)

"I am appealing to the public," he said "I want people to walk their fence lines and their property. Get help if you need it."

"She could have ducked up a driveway and around a house," Murray went on to say. "And I am not just appealing to people in New Hampshire. I am also appealing to people in Vermont, especially since a young girl in Vermont is missing."

When members of Maura's family searched her 1996 black Saturn after her disappearance, they found information indicating Maura may have intended on going to the Stowe and Burlington areas in Vermont. People with information about Maitland should call Vermont State Police at 802-524-5993. Anyone with information about Murray should contact New Hampshire State Police at 603-271- 3636.

April 10, 2004

"Murray's Family Enlists Help From Psychic Profiler"

Gary E. Lindsley

Maura Murray's family has enlisted the help of a nationally known psychic profiler to help them find her. Murray, a 21-year-old University of Massachusetts at Amherst nursing student from Hanson, Mass., has not been seen since she was involved in a one-car accident in Haverhill, N.H. Feb. 9.

Carla Baron of Los Angeles, Calif., has come up with a theory about what happened to Murray the night her car failed to negotiate a sharp left-hand curve after driving by The Weathered Barn.

Baron, along with Maura's father, Fred, want to reserve some of the information so New Hampshire State Police can have a chance to act on it.

She believes Maura was picked up by someone passing through the area where the accident occurred.

"I believe she is no longer with us," Baron said. She has told Maura's father she believes Maura met with foul play.

Baron, a psychic profiler who helped lead police to finding the body of a man who had committed suicide in a cornfield in the Midwest, has provided Fred Murray with a description of the person who picked her up as well as the type of vehicle.

She has also told him in what kind of an area Maura can be found. "I have been in touch with Maura," Baron said. Maura met with foul play the same night as the accident, she said.

What really concerns Murray, is what else Baron has told her. She has told him there is another woman who can be found near Maura who has fallen victim to the same person. And, Baron also told him there have been others.

Murray does not want too many details released right away to the public until the state police have had time to analyze the information and search possible locations.

Baron has been able to obtain somewhat of a description about the man as well as where she can possibly be found by talking twice with Maura's father via the telephone for a total of about 2 1/2 hours.

"It's called remote viewing," she said, referring to how she obtained the information about what happened to Maura by talking to her father.

Murray said he spoke with Lt. John Scarinza and others from New Hampshire State Police Troop F Friday.

"I gave them my theory that someone picked her up," he said.

He asked them, again, to bring in the FBI and make a direct appeal to the public for any information they may have in helping find his daughter.

"I asked him if he would accept help from a nationally known psychic," Murray said. He said Scarinza mentioned they had been contacted by other psychics.

"They said they would accept help from a psychic," he said. Murray is hoping state police and Baron talk soon.

Baron has appeared in episodes of "Psychic Detectives" on Court TV and will be seen in a segment of ABC's "Primetime" at 10 p.m. Thursday.

THE CALEDONIAN-RECORD (2004)

Anyone with information about Murray should contact New Hampshire State Police at 603-271- 3636.

April 14, 2004

"Family, Friends Warned About Trespassing - Missing Woman"

Gary E. Lindsley

HAVERHILL, NH - The investigation into the disappearance of 21-year-old University of Massachusetts nursing student Maura Murray has encountered an odd twist.

Fred Murray, Maura's father, has been warned that he, other family members, friends and canine search teams face possible arrest if they trespass on private property in an area surrounding the site of Maura's accident.

Maura, a Hanson, Mass., resident and junior at the UMass Amherst campus, disappeared after she was involved in a one-car accident the night of Feb. 9 on Route 112 in Haverhill, about a mile east of Swiftwater. Fred Murray received a letter, dated April 2, from Haverhill Police Chief Jeff Williams warning against trespassing.

Williams states in his letter his department has received a written request from area residents complaining about repeated trespassing and parking problems on their properties.

"While they are sympathetic with the cause to find Maura, the right to quiet enjoyment of their personal property has been repeatedly and blatantly disregarded to the point that they now must insist that absolutely no one has permission to trespass on their properties," Williams wrote Murray.

The property owners, according to Williams, are specifically excluding the following from their parking lots and properties: Murray family members, friends and relatives of Maura Murray; volunteer searchers and canine handlers; private investigators; members of the press; and anyone else seeking clues or searching for Maura Murray.

"The Haverhill Police Department will honor their wishes to remove unwanted vehicles and/or ask trespassers to leave immediately," Williams wrote in his letter. "Repeat offenders will be arrested." Thank you for your understanding and cooperation in this matter." Sharon Rausch, whose son, Billy, is Maura's boyfriend, was flabbergasted when she learned about the letter.

"I am amazed!" Rausch exclaimed. "He gets a written note, not a phone call, that he will be arrested. It's callous. I think it's callous to put something like this in writing."

Murray said if residents living in the area of Maura's accident have been offended by people searching for his daughter, he is certainly sorry. "I have not tried to cause any problems," he said.

However, Murray believes the true intent of Williams' letter is police are trying to discourage any independent searches for Maura. He also believes it is an attempt to reduce the amount of publicity Maura's disappearance has been receiving. "We have all the interviews we have wanted to do," he said.

"I think it's an overreaction on the part of the police department."

If people are upset because of the search for his daughter, though, Murray said he will personally apologize to them. It's much to do about nothing," he said. "We are not worried. We will continue to act responsibly and look for my daughter."

Williams, when contacted Tuesday, would not say when the complaints were filed nor would he divulge how many were submitted to the police department.

The past several weeks of police reports from his department have not indicated there were any trespassing complaints in the area of Maura's accident. Williams said none were noted because he didn't want the people's names known.

THE CALEDONIAN-RECORD (2004)

"They have been through enough," he said, referring to property owners. "If people are caught on people's properties they will be asked to leave. We will follow the law."

In addition to trespassing, he said people have been blocking vehicles in private driveways. As law enforcers, Williams said police are forced to protect property owners.

"If my daughter was missing, I wouldn't be happy until she was found," he said. "I understand their frustration. Hopefully, we will get to a successful conclusion where Maura is alive."

When asked if he would contact Los Angeles, Calif., psychic profiler Carla Baron regarding any information she may have regarding the case, Williams said, "We don't deal directly with psychics. We deal in evidence."

He did say, though, if she has information regarding Maura, his department will follow up on it.

Baron has claimed she believes Maura "is no longer with us" and may have fallen victim to someone who has killed other women. She also has information about the person's description, vehicle he drives and area where she may be found.

April 20, 2004

“Residents Dispute Claims They Want Trespassers Arrested”

Gary E. Lindsley

Haverhill, NH -- People living in the area near where a 21-year-old University of Massachusetts at Amherst student went missing dispute police claims they filed complaints regarding the woman's father, relatives and searchers.

Haverhill Police Chief Jeff Williams sent a letter recently to Maura Murray's father, Fred, notifying him that anyone, including Fred, his family, friends, searchers and reporters, would face arrest if they continued trespassing on Haverhill residents' properties.

Maura was traveling east along Route 112 when her black 1996 Saturn failed to negotiate a sharp left-hand curve near The Weathered Barn the night of Feb. 9. She disappeared before police arrived and hasn't been seen since.

Steve Loud lives on Maguire Road, just west of The Weathered Barn. Claims the neighbors living near the accident site had gathered together to file complaints with Haverhill Police were not true, he said.

Chief Williams has refused to say when the complaints were filed as well as how many have been filed. "The one neighbor wrote the letter saying it was all the neighbors," Loud said Monday. "It's just the people down by the barn."

He said he has told people at the Stage Coach Stop, a convenience store about a mile west of the accident site, to tell anyone wanting to look for Maura they could search his property.

"I said they can park on my land," Loud said. "I will do anything I can to help. We have been all around this hill. We didn't see any tracks."

Another neighbor, John Boutilier, also said he will do anything he can to help find Maura.

"I don't care if they come on our land," Boutilier said. "I don't have any problem with that. I think it's a most stressful situation for (Fred Murray)."

Searching people's properties, he said, certainly isn't going to hurt anyone. "It makes you wonder if someone has something to hide."

Ann Loud of Woodsville, who was visiting Steve Loud on Monday, said if she lived in the area, she would not complain about people searching for Maura.

"That's not how our community is," she said.

Faith Westman, who owns The Weathered Barn and lives across the road from it in a white house, did file a complaint with Haverhill Police about people parking their cars in the parking lot next to The Weathered Barn.

Westman said she also complained about people traipsing on her property.

"After two months, what are they looking for?" she asked. "Have we not covered enough? We really debated about saying something. We really can sympathize with the family."

Every time the police have parked near her barn or searched her property, she said, they have asked permission first to do so.

"The family has never consulted us," Westman said.

THE CALEDONIAN-RECORD (2004)

In talking about the night of the accident, she said she called it in to police.

Westman said she saw Butch Atwood, a school bus driver who lives about 100 yards east of the accident scene, stop and check on Maura.

She said she saw Maura get out of her vehicle and talk to Atwood. However, once she saw Atwood talking to Maura, she did not continue watching what was going on.

"We never suspected she would disappear," Westman said. "When the police came to our door and asked if she had come in, we were dumbfounded. I can't even imagine losing someone like that.

There isn't any closure."

April 20, 2004,
"State Police Conduct Second Air Search"
Gary E. Lindsley

Members of New Hampshire State Police Troop F were back in the air on Monday searching for Maura Murray. Murray disappeared the night of Feb. 9 after being involved in a one-car crash on Route 112 in Haverhill, about one mile east of Swiftwater.

A state police helicopter, hovering at treetop level, battled stiff winds Monday as passengers Detective Todd Landry and Lt. Wayne Fortier searched the ground below them. They slowly searched areas on both sides of Route 112. At times, it appeared the helicopter wasn't even moving as it hovered over a hilly area south of Murray's accident site.

School bus driver and nearby resident Butch Atwood was the last known person to see her alive. After the crash, he offered to call police and EMS for her, but he said she asked him not to. He went to his house anyway to call for help. Between the time he went the 100 yards to his house and the time Haverill Police Department Sgt. Cecil Smith arrived, Murray had disappeared. She hasn't been seen since.

Her cell phone, bank account and credit cards have not been used since the accident.

Troop F Lt. John Scarinza said Monday the helicopter team was searching an area that has been searched previously, but which until now had been covered by snow. The team searched the river area and Bradley Hill Road areas as well as other side roads.

"We certainly wanted to take this opportunity since the snow was off the ground," Scarinza said. He didn't know if the air search would continue today.

"It depends on how much area was covered," Scarinza said.

Flying at treetop level, investigators could see a lot of detail, he said, especially since the helicopter was flying so slow.

"It's time-consuming," Scarinza said, adding that investigators will search additional areas on foot. He didn't know when the ground search would be conducted, but believed it would be soon.

Not only state police, but also members of the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department will be taking part in the ground search. Area fire departments may also be called in to help search.

Scarinza said investigators won't be asking for volunteers because the purpose of the search will be to locate any possible evidence.

Regarding psychic profiler Carla Baron, Scarinza said Troop F investigators have spoken to her about the Murray disappearance.

"We spoke with her several days before her TV special," he said, referring to the psychic's appearance on "Primetime" last week. "We in good faith did speak to her."

April 21, 2004

“Father Of Missing Sheldon Girl Worried About Others' Safety”

Gary E. Lindsley

Bruce Maitland is worried about the safety of teenage girls and young women in Vermont and New Hampshire - worried they may face the possibility of being kidnapped and transported elsewhere for illicit purposes.

Maitland's daughter, 17-year-old Brianna, disappeared after she left work at the Black Lantern in Montgomery the night of March 19.

"My own theory," Maitland said Tuesday night, "is there may be a market for these girls in the New York City area. I have some inclination of it."

He also believes there may be a connection between the disappearances of his daughter and that of Maura Murray, a 21-year-old University of Massachusetts at Amherst nursing student from Hanson, Mass. Murray disappeared the night of Feb. 9 after she was involved in a one-car accident on Route 112 in Haverhill, N.H.

Brianna disappeared after she left work as a dishwasher at the Black Lantern. Her car was found during the early morning hours of March 20 with its rear end ensconced in a portion of an abandoned building, about a mile from the Black Lantern.

"I do believe there is some form of link," Maitland said.

He also said Vermont State Police investigators haven't ruled out a connection, although VSP and New Hampshire State Police investigators have officially told the media they don't believe there is any connection.

Maitland said state police are investigating the possibility teenage girls and young women are being taken for illegal purposes, such as prostitution in the New York City area.

He said there was a case of underage girls being used for such purposes recently in the Hampstead area. "We know these guys are coming up from New York City," Maitland said. "It's very scary! The connection may not be with a random person. They could be part of a cell."

"In that case," he added, referring to both Brianna and Murray being alive, "there could be a glimmer of hope."

Maitland said he has spoken to detectives in the New York City area about his daughter. He also has visited police precincts there, including the Bronx. And pictures of his daughter have been distributed in the New York City area.

"They gave me some great confidence," he said. "They felt very strongly they would be able to find her if she is on the streets."

Maitland said someone in Burlington had been taking girls from the area to New York City for prostitution in the past.

"So, the market does exist," he said. "It certainly is a reason for the entire community to be upset and to be very careful about their daughters."

THE CALEDONIAN-RECORD (2004)

Maitland also spoke about a letter he and his wife, Kellie, had sent to Gov. Jim Douglas regarding their belief not enough was being done to find Brianna.

He faxed the letter to Douglas' office Friday. "Yesterday we got a response," he said.

The Maitlands spent about two hours talking with VSP Tuesday. "We were unhappy because we hadn't seen any results," he said.

The Maitlands also felt like they were being shut out by investigators. They weren't receiving any information about what was being done to find their daughter. Nor were they receiving any information on what had been learned.

After speaking with state police, Maitland said he believes investigators are desperately searching for evidence and clues that will lead them to Brianna.

"We got a real lesson in procedures," he said. "Certain mistakes were made. They wouldn't directly admit that." However, he said certain other measures were taken to move the investigation forward which he and Kellie did not know about.

Although the Maitlands feel better coming out of Tuesday's meeting, they still aren't happy. "I am not satisfied with the results," he said. "I want my daughter back."

The Maitlands will meet once a week with VSP to discuss the latest developments in the case.

Jason Gibbs, Douglas' press secretary, said the governor understands the family's concerns. "He has been assured we are doing everything we can to bring this young woman home safely,"

Gibbs said. "The family has been briefed on what information can be shared and what can't be."

While wanting to keep the family informed, he said investigators don't want to provide information which will compromise the investigation.

People with information about Maitland should call Vermont State Police at 802-524-5993.

Anyone with information about Murray should contact New Hampshire State Police at 603-271- 3636.

April 22, 2004,
“Letters To Editor - Something to hide?”

Something to hide?
To the Editor:

Just read the article regarding the Maura Murray family being warned about trespassing and being threatened with arrest.

Sounds to me like someone has something to hide and I am appalled that the police would buy into it. Especially as far as not letting the family know what property owners are going to charge them with trespassing, so they know where not to go.

That letter pretty much ends any type of investigation that might be done the way that it is worded. I have not been impressed with the overall response of the police and this just adds to it.

Robert S. Farnham Alton Bay, N.H.

April 30, 2004

"Ceremony Planned For Murray Accident Site Public Urged To Attend"

Gary E. Lindsley

Ceremony Planned For Murray Accident Site Public Urged To Attend By Gary E. Lindsley

Family and friends of missing University of Massachusetts at Amherst nursing student Maura Murray will hold a special Circle of Hope ceremony simultaneously throughout parts of the country at 1 p.m., Sunday.

Murray, who is from Hanson, Mass., has been missing since she was involved in a one-car accident on Route 112 in the town of Haverhill, N.H., the night of Feb. 9.

Her father, Fred, will be joined by Jennifer Henry of Essex, Vt., and Leslie Grima of Franconia, N.H., for a ceremony at the accident site Sunday.

Simultaneous ceremonies will be held by Maura's boyfriend, Billy Rausch, in Lawton, Okla.; Rausch's parents, Bill and Sharon, in Marengo, Ohio; friends and family in Hanson; friends at UMass at Amherst; and by her sister, Julie, in Fort Bragg, N.C.

Twenty-two blue balloons, signifying Maura's 22nd birthday Tuesday, will be released at each site. There also will be blue ribbons, buttons and a large laminated photograph of Maura.

Sharon Rausch said blue ribbons and balloons are being used because blue is Maura's favorite color.

At the accident site, there will be a large laminated photo of Maura. And Henry hopes to tie a blue ribbon around the tree where Maura had her accident.

Maura left her Amherst dorm the afternoon of Feb. 9, driving a black 1996 Saturn, which Rausch said was not operating on all of its cylinders.

As Maura rounded a sharp left-hand curve past The Weathered Barn in the town of Haverhill, she lost control of her car and went off the right side of the highway into some trees, causing minor damage.

Butch Atwood, a school bus driver, was returning home from taking students on a skiing trip when he spotted Murray's car.

He offered her assistance and said he would call police and emergency medical services for her, but she asked him not to.

Atwood, who lived about 100 yards east of the accident site, said Maura did not appear intoxicated.

He drove up to his house to call police and EMS. Between the seven to nine minutes he left Maura and Haverhill Police Sgt. Cecil Smith arrived, Maura disappeared. She has not been seen nor heard from since.

May 9 will mark three months since Maura disappeared.

Her father said he will be releasing the blue balloons and "hope for the best."

He said the balloon casting and Circle of Hope ceremony is going to be symbolic. He is hoping others, including area residents, join him for the ceremony.

However, he also is asking people not to park in the driveway of The Weathered Barn nor people's driveways.

THE CALEDONIAN-RECORD (2004)

The Rev. Lyn McIntosh will be leading the Circle of Hope ceremony at the accident site. Grima said she has become involved in the ceremony and search because she is a nurse.

"It's just something I believe in," she said, referring to the search for Maura. "I think it's awful things aren't happening quicker."

Her sister, Jennifer Henry, also is a nurse.

Henry will be bringing ribbons not only symbolic of Maura, but also of Brianna Maitland, 17, Sheldon, Vt., who disappeared after her own car accident in Montgomery, Vt., the night of March 19.

Henry also has been involved in trying to help find Maura. She laments the fact she disappeared so far from home.

"If one of my children went missing in another town, I wouldn't have the hometown advantage ... support," she said.

She noted how hundreds of people have come out to help search for Brianna, which has not been the case for Maura.

"We want to get the local people involved," Henry said.

May 4, 2004

"Circle Of Hope Ceremony For Murray Draws People"

Gary E. Lindsley

Fred Murray couldn't help but dab at his eyes as Israel Kamakawiwo'ole's version of "Somewhere Over The Rainbow" enveloped the 20 people gathered for his daughter's Circle of Hope ceremony, Sunday afternoon.

With strong winds and sometimes stormy-looking skies portending rain, people from New Hampshire, Vermont and Massachusetts gathered at the site on Route 112 where Maura lost control of her black 1996 Saturn the night of Feb. 9 and then disappeared.

"I was overwhelmed," Murray said, clearing his voice. "That song ... I have never heard it before ... it was Maura. That song ... it tore me up."

Maura's friends from her high school days at Whitman-Hanson Regional High School -- they and Maura were referred to as the "gang of seven" -- wanted the song to be played at the Circle of Hope Ceremony.

Not only was the song played in Haverhill Sunday, it also was played during Circles of Hope ceremonies for Maura in Oklahoma, South Dakota, Ohio, North Carolina and Massachusetts.

The ceremonies were held so that people could gather together to not only let Maura know they are still hoping for her safe return, but also to wish her a happy 22nd birthday.

Each person at the Haverhill site was given one of 22 blue balloons before letting go with a birthday wish for Maura. Blue is Maura's favorite color. She turns 22 today.

As the strong winds scattered the balloons, Murray said they were like the people who care about his daughter. The balloons represent all those people searching for her.

He said no matter what has happened he wants Maura to come home so he can help her work things out.

"Happy birthday and we will see you soon," Murray said, letting go of a blue balloon. He also thanked the 20 people who attended the Haverhill ceremony.

Not only was Murray overwhelmed by the song, he also was overwhelmed by the number of people who attended the Circle of Hope.

"I thought maybe I would be out here by myself," he said. "To get a nice turnout like this made me feel very grateful. It shows the inherent good in people.

"It shows everyone is concerned and wants to help, but they are frustrated."

Diane Brock, who owns the Wells River Motel in Vermont where Murray and other relatives have been staying, said she wanted to show her support for the family.

"I feel like I have become a part of their family," Brock said. "I feel their pain. I have three children Maura's age. I would be doing the same thing he has ... night and day."

Murray has been spending every weekend searching for Maura.

Barbara McDougall from Weymouth, Mass., said she also wanted to support Murray. "I also wanted to wish Maura a happy birthday." She also has been searching for Maura.

THE CALEDONIAN-RECORD (2004)

This weekend was the first chance for McDougall's husband, David, to help join in the search. He has a very personal reason why he wants to help Murray bring his daughter home. "My brother went missing in 1998," David McDougall said. "He was missing 17 days." Family members found him.

"So, I know how they feel," he said. "So, we will keep coming back until something changes."

The Rev. Lyn McIntosh led the Circle of Hope ceremony. McIntosh said it is hard to have a Circle of Hope when someone is missing.

However, she added, while everyone joined hands in a circle, "She is here in our hearts, our minds and our imaginations. "I pray you never give up," McIntosh said, turning to Murray. "Not a chance," he said.

Jennifer Henry, who is from Essex, Vt., made the trip to Haverhill with her children. She helped attach a laminated photo of Maura to the tree and also tied a blue ribbon and bow around it.

Her daughter, Angela, said she felt great seeing how many people turned out for the Circle of Hope. She was pleased with the show of support for Murray and his family.

Everyone attending the ceremony was especially touched when Patti Davidson from Weymouth, Mass., read a poem she had written for Maura, who is a distant relative.

Davidson urged God to keep Maura close in his arms and to bring her home so she is no longer alone. "I kept thinking about her," she said. "This came from my heart. I hope she hears it and I hope she comes home."

At the Whitman-Hanson Regional High School track in Hanson, Mass., about 100 people turned out in support of Maura and her family.

Beth Drewniak, who knows Maura very well, said it was a great turnout. Drewniak used to celebrate her daughter Liz's and Maura's birthdays together because they were within days of one another.

Of the "gang of seven," she said three were at the event.

"When I was growing up, if I had had a group of friends like this, I would have been thankful," Drewniak said. "They are so respectful of one another. They are absolutely heartbroken,"

The Circle of Hope was held at the high school's track, according to Drewniak, because Maura used to spend "weeks and weeks and months and months there."

Regarding the song, she said her daughter and Maura's other friends were adamant it was played during the ceremonies throughout the country.

Drewniak said the song reminded the friends of Maura. "It was just a reminder Maura is still out there and people love her and we will keep trying to bring her home," Liz Drewniak said, referring to the Circle of Hope gatherings. "All of us ... we have good days and we have bad days. We can sense when we need an extra phone call."

"It's been a bad semester," said Liz Drewniak, who is Maura's best friend. "It was emotional. We were in tears most of the time."

When asked what message she would like to send Maura, Drewniak said, "Maura, we want you home."

Sharon Rausch, who is the mother of Maura's boyfriend, said the ceremony in Marengo, Ohio, also was very emotional and was attended by about 20 people. "We joined hands and every person said something," Rausch said. "By the time everyone finished, tears were streaming down our faces."

Anyone with information about Murray should contact New Hampshire State Police at 603-271- 3636.

May 6, 2004

“Police Have New Lead In Maura Murray Case”

Gary E. Lindsley

There may be a break in the case involving 21-year-old nursing student Maura Murray who disappeared the night of Feb. 9 after she was involved in a one-car accident on rural Route 112 in Haverhill.

New Hampshire State Police Troop F Lt. John Scarinza said a witness has come forward with information he may have seen Murray about four to five miles east of the accident scene.

Scarinza said a man, whom he declined to identify, was returning from a construction job in the Franconia area when he spotted a young woman matching Murray's description hurrying east on Route 112, about an hour after her accident.

He not only believes the witness' information is credible, he also believes the man actually saw the Hanson, Mass., resident.

Murray, a student at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, left campus the afternoon of Feb. 9 after e-mailing professors and her boss, telling them she was going to take a week off because of a family problem.

Before heading north, she packed her black 1996 Saturn with some clothing, books for her college classes, expensive diamond jewelry from her boyfriend, Billy Rausch of Fort Sill, Okla., and computer-generated directions for locations in Vermont.

Although directions found in her car indicated she may have been headed toward Stowe or Burlington in Vermont, Murray apparently exited Interstate 91 at Exit 17 and headed east on Route 302.

She then turned right onto Route 112 and apparently headed to Lincoln, which she was familiar with because of family excursions to the area.

About a mile east of Swiftwater, around 7 p.m., she lost control of her car while rounding a sharp left-hand curve near The Weathered Barn. Her car went off the right side of the highway and into some trees, causing minor damage.

Butch Atwood, a school bus driver who lives about 100 yards east of the accident site, discovered Murray's disabled car while returning from taking students on a skiing trip.

Atwood spoke with her and offered to help, including calling police and EMS. However, Murray insisted that Atwood not call police and EMS because she had already contacted AAA.

Murray did not appear to be intoxicated, according to Atwood. Police said a container of alcohol was found in the car.

Atwood went to his house to call for help. About seven to nine minutes later, Haverhill Police Sgt. Cecil Smith arrived at the accident scene. Murray was nowhere to be found.

"Based on the description of what he saw, we believe it may have been Maura," Scarinza said, referring to the witness seeing a young woman fitting Maura's description about an hour after the accident. "Based on the place and based on the time, there is a good possibility the person he saw on 112 was Maura."

The witness contacted state police April 29 about possibly seeing Murray the night of the accident.

THE CALEDONIAN-RECORD (2004)

Scarinza said although the witness thought shortly after her disappearance he may have seen Murray, he discounted that thought after talking with a friend. His friend had said Murray's accident had happened Feb. 11 instead of Feb. 9. And he had seen the young woman the night of Feb. 9.

It was after seeing subsequent news reports, and realizing the accident had occurred Feb. 9, he decided to contact state police.

The man, who Scarinza said is a contractor, checked his work records and verified he was returning home from a job in the Franconia area the night of Feb. 9 when he spotted who he and state police believe was Murray.

Maura's father, Fred Murray, is upset police didn't travel Route 112 toward the Woodstock area, at least calling ahead to the Woodstock police to ask them to look for his daughter.

"This was a young woman involved in an accident," he said. "She had a head injury by the indication of the spider hole in the windshield."

"They know she is somewhere close by and they don't go down the road to bring her to safety?" Murray asked. "If they had searched for my daughter, she would most likely be safely here now."

Sharon Rausch, Billy's mother, said she believes the news of an eyewitness is wonderful.

"It gives me renewed hope she is still alive," Rausch said. "If she sees this in print, we want her to know she's more loved than ever."

Scarinza said because of the new information from the eyewitness, a search will be conducted Saturday in the area of routes 112 and 116 where Maura was last seen by the eyewitness.

May 10, 2004

“Families Issue Emotional Plea For FBI Help”

Gary E. Lindsley

WOODSVILLE, NEW HAMPSHIRE -- When Fred Murray and Kellie Maitland met for the first time Saturday morning, it was a very emotional moment for the parents of two missing young women.

Maitland went up to Murray and they tenderly embraced, both knowing one another's pain of not knowing what has happened to their daughters.

Murray's daughter, Maura, a 21-year-old nursing student at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, has been missing since she was involved in a minor one-car accident on Route 112 in Haverhill the night of Feb. 9.

Maitland's daughter, 17-year-old Brianna, has been missing since she clocked out of work at the Black Lantern Inn in Montgomery, Vt., the night of March 19.

Maitland, her husband, Bruce, and Murray were joined by Charlotte and Michael Riley of Chester, N.H., in a press conference at the American Legion, Ross-Wood Post 20, in Woodsville Saturday morning.

The Rileys were told their daughter, Amie, who had been missing since August, was found in April in a swamp in Manchester. She had been brutally murdered.

Murray and the Maitlands clamored for public support in having the FBI brought in to investigate not only the disappearances of Maura and Brianna, but also the murder of Amie.

Murray has been beseeching New Hampshire State Police officials at Troop F to call in the FBI to join the investigation since learning his daughter was missing.

The FBI will not join an investigation until asked by the police agency handling a case.

And after learning about the disappearance of Brianna, Murray and the Maitlands called for state police in both New Hampshire and Vermont to call in the FBI.

State police officials in both New Hampshire and Vermont have said there isn't any connection between Maura and Brianna's disappearances, other than they both were involved in car accidents.

However, they also have not said how they have ruled out any connection.

"Something has to be done," Charlotte Riley said. "It's important. No one knows where to turn. I don't want (the media) to portray my grief. I want them to portray something has to be changed."

She spoke about how the police in Manchester did not place her daughter's information into the National Crime Information Center until three months after she had disappeared.

Riley said until a case gets an NCIC number, parents of missing children do not receive any help with searches or posters or from support groups.

Kellie Maitland said her daughter had been at a party a week before she disappeared. She had been assaulted at that party. "Maybe she knew something," she said. "We are hoping someone out there knows something."

Murray said, "We need help. All three families need help. None of us have our daughters. If these three cases are connected, and they very well could be, it's horrendous. You could have a killer locally in your midst." He said there is ample reason for the FBI to become involved.

THE CALEDONIAN-RECORD (2004)

"We are asking for your help," Murray said, pleading to the public through the media. "People should be screaming for the FBI. We want this to be brought to a close. You owe it to yourselves, folks."

Bruce Maitland said although he has been told the cases aren't related, he believes no one has really looked into whether they are connected.

"I am going to practically beg the governor (Jim Douglas) to step up to the plate," he said. "Let's give (state police) some help."

Kellie Maitland said she felt as if they are up against the wall.

She spoke about a drug bust at a crack house in Vermont in which those busted were let back out on the street the very next day.

"We can't keep having a revolving door for criminals," Kellie Maitland said. "They are back out there. We don't have our daughter."

"Not one more girl!" she continued, her voice quivering. "Not one more beautiful girl! They are bright. They are talented. Not one more. It's a pretty bad Mother's Day."

With that, she walked away from the microphones and went over to Murray, tears streaming down her face. He hugged her, trying to console her.

Her husband joined her and laid his head on top of hers, encircling his arms around her as they listened to Charlotte Riley speak. Riley said until people are in such a situation, they have no idea what it is like.

She spoke about the lack of media coverage after it was determined her daughter was missing. "She was at a bar," Riley said. "Does that make her less of a person?" The Maitlands and Murray responded with a resounding no.

She also emphasized the importance of pressing police to enter the information into the NCIC system. "The system is not working," Riley said. "Three months! It was three long months before she was considered missing!"

May 21, 2004

“Another Person Reported Missing - Man Fails To Return From Walk”

Gary E. Lindsley

A 24-year-old man is the fourth person to be reported missing since the beginning of this year in the Northeast Kingdom of Vermont and the North Country of New Hampshire.

Matthew Harris, a coordinator of a meditation course at Karne Choling in Barnet, was last seen leaving the Buddhist meditation retreat at 3 p.m. Tuesday. He had a walking stick and a day pack.

Officials at Karne Choling reported Harris missing at 3 p.m. Wednesday.

State police Sgt. Robert Clark doesn't believe there is any connection to the disappearance of three other people.

Another 24-year-old man, Timothy Young of Glover, Vt., was the first to be reported missing. Glover, who is 6 feet tall, weighs 180 pounds and has blond hair, was last seen Jan. 20.

On Feb. 9, 21-year-old University of Massachusetts at Amherst nursing student Maura Murray disappeared after being involved in a minor one-car accident on Route 112 in the town of Haverhill, N.H.

She is a 5-foot, 7-inch brunette, weighs 115 pounds and has blue eyes.

Another young woman, 17-year-old Brianna Maitland of Sheldon, Vt., hasn't been seen since she clocked out of work at the Black Lantern Inn in Montgomery around 11:20 the night of March 19.

Maitland has medium dark brown hair, hazel eyes, weighs about 105-110 pounds and is 5 feet 4 inches tall.

Although a missing person report has been filed on Harris, Clark does not believe he fits in the missing person category.

Clark said Harris has departed for areas unknown without telling anybody in the past. He does not believe Harris' disappearance is connected in any way to those of Young, Murray and Maitland.

"He is a free-spirited traveler," he said. "You can't lump him in with the others. He may not know he is (listed as) missing. He has a history of traveling the world while following different religious organizations."

Clark said during 2001-02, Harris took off without telling anybody where he was going. He was found in the Amazon in Peru emaciated, weighing only 82 pounds.

Then, from November 2003 to February 2004, he went to Scotland, following a religious sect.

"It's not like a 14-year-old girl who lives next to me and does not show up for work," Clark said as an example. "She's a missing person. That scenario is different from this."

State police have issued a bulletin to all police agencies in New England to be on the lookout for Harris. If a police officer spots Harris, he or she is to ensure Harris is OK. The police officer is then supposed to contact Clark.

"He has a right to (go anywhere he wants)," Clark said. "He has a right not to have police following him. This is completely, completely different than the other three. This is a kid with a history (of taking off)."

THE CALEDONIAN-RECORD (2004)

Harris' father, Paul, doesn't agree.

He said when Matthew took off for the Amazon, he had let him and his wife, Anne, know. The same was the case when he went to Scotland.

"He had told us he was going to the Amazon," Harris said. "He called and told us he was going on a slow boat down the Amazon and we wouldn't hear from him four or five weeks."

When the five weeks had come and gone and they hadn't heard anything, the Harrises became concerned. Through the help of a shortwave radio operator, they learned he was in a Peruvian village and in bad shape.

Harris said Matthew went with the head of Karme Choling, Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche, to Scotland for about three months.

"It's sort of like being asked by the pope to be his assistant," Harris said.

His son, he said, is very learned and intelligent. "He is very generous and outgoing," he said. "We (once) gave him a watch. We asked him several months later how he liked his watch. He said he had given it to someone who needed it more."

Harris had praise for Karme Choling. "They are a terrific organization and they have treated Matt fantastically well. This is very out of character for him."

Founded in 1970 by ChÜgyam Trungpa Rinpoche, KarmÉ ChÜling offers year-round meditation retreats and yoga retreats.

Matthew, according to his father, left behind his passport, clothes and study materials.

Josh Silberstein, the retreat's health and well-being director, said Matthew had worked at Karme Choling for 21/2 years until October 2003.

Silberstein said Matthew had returned in February to work as coordinator of a meditation program.

He said Matthew was last seen by Bill Brauer, Karme Choling's director. "It's not uncommon for people to go for a walk," Silberstein said. "So, Director Brauer did not think anything about it."

Like Matthew's father, Silberstein said the 24-year-old's disappearance is out of character.

When Matthew did not show up for dinner at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Silberstein was notified. "Then, we did an exhaustive search of the land," he said, which consists of 675 acres of fields, forest and hills.

The search ran from 7:15 to 10:30 Tuesday night. Then, it resumed at 10:30 Wednesday morning. The search of the property ended about 12:30 p.m.

Then, members of Karme Choling drove about 20 miles south and north on Interstate 91. They also searched sections of Route 5.

When 3 p.m. Wednesday arrived, and Matthew had not returned, Silberstein said state police were notified.

Silberstein said Matthew did not appear to be despondent or depressed any more than anyone else, until the day he disappeared. "After lunch, it was noticed he was more erratic," he said. "His demeanor changed. He was not there ... he was off thinking about something. He was not as interactive as he normally was."

THE CALEDONIAN-RECORD (2004)

Matthew is fluent in Spanish and can speak some French and Italian. He also knows sign language.

He is 6 feet, 2 inches tall, weighs 175 pounds, has blond, close cropped hair, and has a red and blue chain-like tattoo around his left arm. He also wears glasses.

Anyone with information about Matthew's whereabouts are asked to call state police at 802-748- 3111.

May 25, 2004

**“Petition Drive Demands Action In Maitland Case - Seeks Action From Governor Douglas”
Gary E. Lindsley**

The fear in her grandson's voice was the final straw for Lou Byam of Franklin.

Byam has mounted a petition drive to demand Vermont Gov. Jim Douglas, Lt. Gov. Brian Dubie, and Vermont Public Safety Commissioner Kerry Sleeper take definitive action in the disappearance of 17-year-old Brianna Maitland of Sheldon.

"My grandson, who is 14, said, 'I don't want to come up here,'" Byam said. Her grandson did not want to visit her in northern Vermont because of the disappearance of Maitland and his concern for his own safety.

"He's scared," Byam said. "Parents are scared. Everyone's scared. We want answers and we aren't getting them."

The petitions, which are being circulated around sections of northern Vermont, read, "We, the undersigned concerned citizens of the state of Vermont, summer residents and tourists of the state of Vermont, do hereby petition the governor, lieutenant governor and the Vermont State Police Commissioner to figure out a way to find Brianna Maitland, no matter what it takes to get her home!

"We, as parents, friends, family, community, state, caring humans and taxpayers say enough is enough! It is time to do whatever it takes to get Brianna and others like her home."

The petition also notes because Maitland has not been found, it is time to bring in help, more resources.

"We live in fear for our children's health, safety, welfare and their lives," it reads. "Our children no longer have the freedom as an American citizen to walk, ride their bicycles, go shopping or drive their vehicles safely in our state!

"The government's first duty is to make sure its citizens are safe from crime. We are angry and want the wheels of motivation kicked into high gear. Bring Bri home now!"

Maitland has not been seen since she clocked out of work at the Black Lantern Inn late the night of March 19. Her vehicle was found partially ensconced in an abandoned building about a mile from the inn early March 20.

She disappeared more than a month after 21-year-old University of Massachusetts at Amherst nursing student Maura Murray was involved in a one-car accident on rural Route 112 in the town of Haverhill, N.H.

Murray has not been seen since walking away from the accident scene the night of Feb. 9.

"Our children are our most valuable resources," Byam said. "The way the state police handled this since day one has been unacceptable. It kills me. Every day we see Bruce and Kellie (Brianna's parents). We want our state back. We want Brianna back."

"I hope it works," Kellie Maitland said, referring to the petitions. "I am starting to get desperate."

Bettina Desrochers, who is from St. Johnsbury, also is upset about the two missing young women. "It seems as if not enough is being done," she said. "We need more help. There isn't anything wrong with asking for more help."

THE CALEDONIAN-RECORD (2004)

As a parent of daughters whom she said are all beautiful, young and outgoing, her heart goes out to the Maitlands, as well as to Fred Murray, Maura's father.

With summer nearing, she is concerned about students getting out of school and their safety. "Wouldn't you want to know (the disappearances) are being handled properly?" Desrochers said.

Carolyn Gendron, who lives in Richford, also believes the investigation into Brianna's disappearance was botched from the start. She said common sense says if Brianna left behind her paychecks and driver's license, she didn't disappear willingly.

"They should know a kid wouldn't leave money behind," she said, referring to the state police. "As a parent, if it was my daughter, I don't think I could be as calm as Mr. and Mrs. Maitland."

Gendron believes the best investigators the state police have should be involved in the investigation. She also believes the FBI should be asked to be a major part of the search for Brianna.

Gendron said she almost lost her own daughter a few years ago. "Our daughter was coming home from a study group when she noticed a car kept driving by her," she said.

When there was an open area, the car pulled in front of Gendron's then 16-year-old daughter and the occupants screamed for her to get in the car. "She froze," Gendron said. "Luckily, a friend came forward and saw her and took her away."

So, she said, she got a little bit of a taste of what the Maitlands must be going through. "I can't imagine going to bed every night not knowing where this child is," Gendron said.

She truly believes there is a connection between Brianna's and Maura's disappearances. "They are too much alike," Gendron said. "They need to do a lot more to bring these girls home."

Bruce Maitland has put out his own plea to Vermont officials. "Brianna is not a runaway no matter how much the Vermont State Police ... try to play down her abduction," he wrote in a letter to the editor to area newspapers. "We desperately need you to step up for what is right and demand a large investigation involving many plainclothes/additional federal people on the ground to find Brianna and Maura before the trail goes any colder."

Today is Missing Children's Day. Carol Knowlton of the Mt. Angel, Ore.-based Child Seek Network will be reading Brianna's and Maura's names at a Missing Children's Day rally in Salem, Ore.

May 26, 2004

“Fred Murray Appeals To Governor Benson - Says Police Failed His Daughter”

Gary E. Lindsley

The father of a missing 22-year-old University of Massachusetts at Amherst nursing student is appealing to Gov. Craig Benson to urge New Hampshire State Police to call in the FBI for help in finding his daughter.

Maura Murray has been missing since she was involved in a minor one-car accident the evening of Feb. 9 after her black 1996 Saturn failed to negotiate a sharp left-hand curve on Route 112 in Haverhill.

"The finest resource in the world is available and you, sir, should direct Lieutenant John Scarinza and Troop F to accept its offer," Fred Murray said in his letter. "There are corollary cases in Vermont also and this entire situation begs for central coordination and investigation by an agency which is not bound by the confines of configuration of Grafton County and the Connecticut River." Scarinza is the commander of Troop F, which is based in Twin Mountain.

Murray also was referring to Brianna Maitland, 17, of Sheldon, Vt., who disappeared after she left work late the night of March 19. Her car was found partially ensconced in an abandoned building about one mile from the Black Lantern Inn in Montgomery where she worked.

Murray noted the FBI offered its assistance during the week of his daughter's disappearance. However, state police declined the offer. Scarinza said the FBI was involved in background searches and gathering information in Massachusetts. He has said the state police have enough resources to conduct an investigation into Maura's disappearance.

Besides asking Benson to direct the state police to call in the FBI, Murray also has claimed state police and Haverhill police had been grossly negligent because a cruiser was not dispatched east along Route 112 to help find his daughter after her accident.

He said police arrived within minutes after Maura was last seen by an eyewitness. "This means that when the police reached the scene, Maura could have been no further than a couple of hundred yards up the road around the first corner walking away," Murray said in his letter.

Police, including Sgt. Cecil Smith of the Haverhill Police Department, were told the driver of the car was a young woman about 20 years old. "There was an empty beer bottle found in the car and in addition, there was a spider hole in the driver's side of the windshield indicating that she had struck her head at impact," Murray's letter reads.

Murray said police should have called ahead to the Woodstock Police Department so officers from that community could have driven west to intercept Maura on the dark, desolate highway.

"She was figuratively and nearly literally right there readily available to be rescued and saved from whatever fate has befallen her," Murray said in his letter. "All that the police had to do was to expend minimal mental and physical effort."

If they had done so, Murray said, Maura would be safe with him today. "Unfortunately, the police neglected to make even the most basic effort to find her and I remain without her now, and perhaps, forever," Murray's letter continued. "The onus of this irresponsible and possibly fatal lack of action lies not only with the North Haverhill force, but also with the New Hampshire State Police who responded to the 911 calls from the neighbors as well."

THE CALEDONIAN-RECORD (2004)

Another witness is believed to have spotted Maura, who is a track star and runner, about four to five miles east of the accident scene running toward Woodstock. "I get nearly physically sick when I wake up each morning and the thought of how really little effort it would have taken to rescue my daughter automatically flashes through my mind," Murray said in his letter.

In addition to sending the letter to Benson, Murray also sent copies of it to New Hampshire Attorney General Peter Heed, state police Col. Frederick Booth, and U.S. Sen. John Sununu and Judd Gregg. Alicia Preston, Benson's press secretary, said Benson had not received the letter as of late Tuesday afternoon.

However, Murray said according to tracking records on the U.S. Postal Service Web site, Benson, Heed, Booth, Sununu and Gregg's offices received the letters Monday morning. "The young women in the northern region of your state are not safe and it is clearly imperative that you act decisively before you lose another," Murray stated in his letter. "Deep within themselves, your citizens are nervously apprehensive and anxiously awaiting your response to this threat." Booth could not be reached for comment Tuesday. And Simon Brown, chief of the attorney general's criminal bureau, said he was not aware of Murray's letter.

May 29, 2004

"FBI Involved In Investigation - Brianna Maitland Disappearance"

Gary E. Lindsley

Experts from the FBI's Behavioral Sciences Laboratory in Quantico, Va., are involved in the investigation of the disappearance of 17-year-old Brianna Maitland.

Maitland, who lives in Sheldon, Vt., has not been seen nor heard from since she clocked out of work at the Black Lantern Inn in Montgomery around 11:30 p.m. March 19.

William McSalis, a supervisory senior agent in the FBI's Burlington office, confirmed late Friday afternoon the FBI is involved in the Maitland case.

In fact, McSalis said the FBI has been working closely with Vermont State Police nearly since the inception of the case.

Maitland's car was found early the morning of March 20 partially ensconced in an abandoned building about a mile from the tavern where she worked.

She left two paychecks behind in the car.

Bruce and Kellie Maitland, along with Fred Murray, father of 22-year-old University of Massachusetts at Amherst nursing student Maura Murray, have been demanding the state police in both Vermont and New Hampshire bring in the FBI to find their daughters.

Maura Murray disappeared the night of Feb. 9 after being involved in a minor, one-car accident on rural Route 112 in Haverhill, N.H.

McSalis said he could not say whether the FBI is involved in the Murray case as well. FBI officials in Boston could not be reached for comment Friday.

Regarding the Maitland disappearance, McSalis said the FBI was contacted by Vermont State Police not long after it was determined Maitland was missing.

Since then, and most importantly, he said, the behavioral sciences group from Quantico has been reviewing what has been done in the case by Vermont State Police.

FBI experts, who also can be called profilers, are using the information supplied by state police to see if it matches up with similar cases elsewhere in the country.

McSalis said a lot of work has been done so far by the group from Quantico. However, he would not discuss what evidence, if any, has been reviewed nor whether any FBI agents have visited Vermont and the accident scene because it is an on-going investigation.

McSalis also would not confirm published media reports that the team would soon be headed not only to Vermont for the Maitland case, but also to New Hampshire to investigate the Murray disappearance.

"We are working closely with the Vermont State Police," he said. "We don't want to go into details."

Lee Pugh, a spokesman from the FBI's Albany, N.Y., office, said he knows the Vermont State Police have conducted a very thorough investigation.

"We have been monitoring the case," Pugh said. "The full services of the FBI have been utilized to some degree."

May 31, 2004

“Another Vermont Woman Reported Missing - Police Find Her Jeep”

Gary E. Lindsley

Lamoille County authorities are asking for the public's help in finding a 35-year-old Johnson woman who hasn't been seen since Thursday morning -- the third woman to disappear in Northern New England since Feb. 9.

Jodie Whitney, who has a 3-year-old child, was last seen by her husband, Edgar, before he left for work Thursday morning. She not only failed to show up for work at Stoweflake Resort in Stowe, but she also did not return home.

Like the two other women who are missing, Whitney is described as a petite woman.

On Feb. 9, 21-year-old University of Massachusetts at Amherst nursing student Maura Murray disappeared after she was involved in a minor one-car accident on Route 112 in the town of Haverhill, N.H.

A little more than a month later, 17-year-old Brianna Maitland of Sheldon, Vt., disappeared after she left work at the Black Lantern Inn in Montgomery late the night of March 19. Maitland's vehicle was found about a mile from the Black Lantern Inn, partially ensconced inside an abandoned building.

Sheriff Roger Marcoux said Whitney's white Jeep Cherokee was found within a 5-mile radius of her home by a citizen Friday afternoon.

Marcoux is not releasing where the vehicle was found because it's part of the ongoing investigation. He said the vehicle is being looked at by a Vermont State Police crime lab team.

Kellie Maitland, Brianna's mother, was heartbroken to learn another woman had disappeared. "I believe it's (the work of) a serial killer," Maitland said. "And the clock is ticking.

"One is too many," she went on to say. "Enough is enough! They (law enforcement) should pull out all the stops."

Marcoux said there isn't anything to lead investigators to believe there is any connection between Whitney's disappearance and the disappearances of Maitland and Murray.

"We have no evidence to tie them together at this point," he said.

Marcoux said police are conducting a missing person's investigation into Whitney's disappearance because nothing so far has indicated a criminal act has been committed.

He said Whitney is a reservations supervisor at Stoweflake Resort. She was supposed to be at work at 8 a.m.

When she had not returned home by 10 p.m. Thursday, her husband reported her missing.

"This is very out of character for her," Marcoux said. "She seems to be a very responsible person ... she has a young 3-year-old child at home."

Co-workers and members of Whitney's family have been interviewed, he said.

"Everything seemed fine," Marcoux said, referring to Thursday morning when Whitney's husband last saw her.

THE CALEDONIAN-RECORD (2004)

Investigators are tracking down some leads. One, according to Marcoux, came from officials at Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center.

They reported they had a woman in the hospital possibly fitting Whitney's description. Investigators went to Dartmouth, but the woman was not Whitney.

Marcoux said about 50 law enforcement officers and the New England canine team, led by Vermont State Police Search and Rescue, conducted a ground search Saturday of an area consisting of a 1-mile radius of where Whitney's vehicle was found.

That search area was expanded, but nothing was found. An aerial search was conducted Sunday. Authorities also searched about 3 miles of the Gihon River.

Whitney is described as being 5-feet, 3-inches tall and weighing 110-pounds. She has shoulder-length brown hair and brown eyes.

People with any information about Whitney should call the Lamoille County Sheriff's Dept. at 802- 888-3502.

June 3, 2004

"Police Say Husband Confesses To Murder - Missing Woman's Body Believed Found"

Gary E. Lindsley

The husband of a missing 35-year-old Johnson woman has confessed to killing her, Vermont State Police said Wednesday evening. Police also announced that a woman's body, believed to be that of Jodie Whitney, had been found that afternoon.

Lt. Leo Bachand, the state police Troop B Criminal Division commander, said Edgar Whitney, while being interviewed at Fletcher Allen Health Care in Burlington late Wednesday afternoon, confessed to killing his wife.

Whitney notified police around 10 p.m. May 27 that his wife, Jodie, had not returned home. She had not arrived to work at the Stoweflake Resort in Stowe that day. He reported last seeing her that morning before he left for work.

Jodie's white Jeep Cherokee was found by a citizen within a 5-mile radius of the Whitney home Friday. Authorities from the Lamoille County Sheriff's Department, state police Search and Rescue Team, the state police Criminal Division, and police officers from Stowe and Morrisville, have been working together to find Jodie, according to Bachand.

Lamoille County Sheriff Roger Marcoux, during a press conference in front of the Lamoille County Courthouse late Wednesday afternoon, said the pace of the investigation was stepped up after authorities received a phone call that Edgar had taken some pills. Authorities are not releasing what the pills were.

"Right now, he is our best suspect," Marcoux said.

Bachand said family members called for an ambulance around 6:30 Wednesday morning after Edgar had taken an overdose of pills.

Edgar was first taken to Copley Hospital in Morrisville after overdosing before being transferred to Fletcher Allen Health Care.

According to Marcoux, it was information from family members which led to the discovery of what they believe to be Jodie's body.

He would not say what had happened between Tuesday night and Wednesday which led him and other investigators to believe Edgar was involved in his wife's disappearance.

While Marcoux was holding a press conference late Wednesday afternoon about Edgar Whitney's apparent suicide attempt Wednesday morning, and the finding of a woman's body during the afternoon, Edgar was confessing to killing his wife, Bachand said.

Wednesday afternoon, according to Bachand, at 1:45, a search team of about 25 combed an area beyond the original 5-mile radius already searched. They found the body of a woman at 2:03 p.m. who Bachand said was believed to be that of Jodie. He said the body matched Jodie's description.

Marcoux said a positive identification is pending.

After the press conference Wednesday, Marcoux would not say exactly where the body was found. He also said more information about the cause of death will be available once an autopsy is conducted.

THE CALEDONIAN-RECORD (2004)

Both Marcoux and Bachand said they had not seen the body because once it was discovered, the crime scene was sealed off to everyone except for the Vermont State Police crime lab team.

The body, according to Bachand was found deep in the woods, a ways off "the beaten path."

Bachand said Medical Examiner Paul Morrow will be conducting the autopsy in Burlington this morning.

Marcoux said he did not know if Edgar had a criminal record. And when asked whether there was a history of domestic violence in the Whitneys' marriage, he would not comment.

However, later Wednesday, Bachand said there was a restraining order requested against Edgar Whitney last year but was withdrawn. He said the information is available in court records.

Edgar, he said, is still in the hospital. As of Wednesday night, charges had not been filed. Bachand said State Attorney Joel Page will decide what charges to file once the investigation is complete. An arraignment, if there is one, will take place at the Lamoille County Courthouse.

Prior to the discovery of the body, Edgar's overdose and his alleged confession, Marcoux and Bachand had set up a meeting for 10 a.m. Friday with New Hampshire State Police and FBI agents to discuss the disappearances of Jodie Whitney, Brianna Maitland and Maura Murray.

On Sunday, Marcoux said there wasn't any indication Jodie's disappearance was tied to the disappearances of 22-year-old University of Massachusetts at Amherst nursing student Murray and 17-year-old Maitland of Sheldon, Vt.

Although Marcoux and Bachand now do not believe there is any connection between the three cases, the meeting will still proceed at the Lamoille County Sheriff's Department office.

"We want to keep the other cases in the spotlight," Marcoux said. Bachand agreed. He said it is important to have everyone together talking about the cases.

Besides Bachand, also assisting Marcoux and his department with the Whitney investigation are Sgt. Tim Clouatre and Detective Bob Cushing, both from the St. Johnsbury area.

June 4, 2004

“Body Identified - Johnson Woman”

Gary E. Lindsley

A body found Wednesday afternoon by a search team in a heavily wooded area near Johnson has been positively identified as that of a 35-year-old woman missing since May 27.

In a press release issued late Thursday afternoon, Lamoille County Sheriff Roger Marcoux stated Chief Medical Examiner Paul Morrow identified the body as Jodie Whitney, of Johnson.

Edgar Whitney, the woman's husband, was taken to Copley Hospital in Morrisville Wednesday after intentionally overdosing on pills. He was transferred to Fletcher Allen Health Care in Burlington.

It was reported on statewide television Thursday that if Whitney is released from the hospital today, he will most likely be arraigned in Lamoille County Court in connection with his wife's death.

According to Marcoux, it was information from family members after Whitney's suicide attempt which led to the discovery of what they believed to be Jodie's body.

She was found about 2 p.m. Wednesday well off the beaten path, deep in a wooded area within five miles the Whitneys' home.

While Marcoux was holding a press conference late Wednesday afternoon regarding Whitney's suicide attempt and the discovery of the body, Whitney was allegedly confessing to killing his wife, according to police.

Whitney notified police around 10 p.m. May 27 that his wife had not returned home. She also had not gone to work at the Stoweflake Resort in Stowe that day. He had last seen her that morning before he left for work.

Jodie's white Jeep Cherokee was found by a citizen within five miles the Whitney home May 28.

Prior to the discovery of Jodie's body, Edgar's overdose and his confession, Marcoux and Lt. Leo Bachand, state police Troop B criminal division commander, had set up a meeting for 10 a.m. today with New Hampshire State Police and FBI agents to discuss the disappearances of Jodie, 17-year-old Brianna Maitland of Sheldon, Vt., and 22-year-old Maura Murray of Hanson, Mass.

The meeting has been postponed until 10 a.m. Thursday.

Murray, a University of Massachusetts at Amherst nursing student, has been missing since she was involved in a minor one-car accident on Route 112 in Haverhill, N.H. Feb. 9.

Maitland has been missing since she clocked out of work at the Black Lantern Inn in Montgomery, Vt. late the night of March 19. Her car was discovered early the next morning partially ensconced in an abandoned building about a mile from the inn.

June 10, 2004

“Letters To Editor - Help bring Bri home,”

Laurie Gilman

To the Editor:

I was so glad to see the article about Brianna's case in your paper. I do not live in Vermont but will be a resident of Victory in a few years. I read your paper online every day which is how I became aware of the disappearances of Brianna Maitland and Maura Murray.

I have been following her case on her family's Web site, www.bringbrihome.org, and I have downloaded both Brianna and Maura's missing posters and will be leaving them at rest stops and with truck drivers as I travel from Maryland to Vermont the first of June.

It is hard to help from so far away but I have written letters and e-mails, etc., to do what I can.

If there are others in Vermont or nearby that want to help, I suggest they go to the Web site for downloads of the missing girls' posters, the petitions and information on the upcoming garage sale. Brianna's family and the local people that are helping can use anything anyone can offer in the way of assistance.

Please check it out and do what you can to help them bring Bri home. Laurie Gilman
Sunderland, Md.

June 10, 2004

"Parents Of Missing Vermont Teen Heartened By Dubie Meeting"

Gary E. Lindsley

The parents of a missing 17-year-old Sheldon woman are feeling a bit more optimistic they will be receiving help from law enforcement authorities after meeting with Vermont Lt. Gov. Brian Dubie, Wednesday.

Kellie and Bruce Maitland of Franklin met with Dubie and Public Safety Commissioner Kerry Sleeper at the Williston state police barracks to talk about their daughter Brianna, who has been missing since she clocked out of work at the Black Lantern Inn in Montgomery 11:20 p.m. March 19. Kellie said she left the two-hour meeting with guarded optimism.

Dubie and Sleeper told the Maitlands they will ensure Brianna's disappearance will gain exposure with the national media, according to Bruce Maitland.

Both Maitlands, after Tuesday's press conference in which state police said at one point Brianna had been a runaway and had become involved in the world of illegal drugs, were surprised by the tenor of their meeting with Dubie and Sleeper - especially Dubie.

"They are starting to give an honest appraisal of what the case really is," Bruce said. "It's either drug-related or she has been killed. They have dropped the runaway (listing)."

Although he is glad authorities will drop the runaway characterization and start treating the case as being criminal, he cannot miss the reality of what that means.

"It's kind of disheartening," Bruce said, "because every night we pray she is a runaway."

If she was a runaway, the Maitlands believe they would have a better chance of finding their daughter unharmed.

Wednesday was a change for Bruce after having heard what authorities said about his daughter, and Maura Murray on Tuesday. Murray is the 22-year-old University of Massachusetts at Amherst nursing student who hasn't been seen since she disappeared after having a minor one-car accident on Route 112 in Haverhill, N.H., the night of Feb. 9.

Tuesday, state police from New Hampshire and Vermont said there wasn't any connection between the disappearances of Brianna and Maura.

They also said they weren't going to waste any more time on any more worthless leads.

"I think it's almost character assassination of the victims," Bruce had said on Tuesday. "They said Maura wanted to disappear. Brianna, they said she chose an unhealthy life choice."

He said Wednesday's meeting with Dubie and Sleeper was a complete turnaround, just the opposite, from Tuesday's press conference.

"The lieutenant governor was super," Bruce said. "We went into the meeting that it was a setup. But, the lieutenant governor really wants to do what's in his power to help us out."

The Maitlands were assured by Dubie the case was of a very high priority.

"When the lieutenant governor called us a couple of days ago, I hoped he was sincere," he said.

June 16, 2004

“State Police Discard Runaway Theory - Drugs May Be Connection To Disappearance”

Gary E. Lindsley

The passing of seven days has resulted in a huge turnaround in the way Vermont State Police are treating the disappearance of Brianna Maitland.

Maitland, 17, was last seen at about 11:20 p.m. March 19 when she clocked out of work at the Black Lantern Inn in Montgomery.

VSP had originally said Maitland was a runaway and had run away in the past. During a press conference June 8, they said they were tired of wasting time tracking down worthless leads.

They said Maitland had made some bad life choices which may have led to her disappearance.

The next day, June 9, Bruce and Kellie Maitland, Brianna's parents, met with Lt. Gov. Brian Dubie and Public Safety Commissioner Kerry Sleeper at the Williston state police barracks.

The Maitlands came away from that meeting with guarded optimism. They said Dubie said he was treating Brianna's disappearance as a serious case and would do what he could to help.

Tuesday, another press conference was held.

This time, the state police said they and the Maitlands were united in their request for factual information which will lead to finding Brianna.

They also acknowledged that it is not a case of a teenager running away.

"With each day that passes without a solid trace of information on her whereabouts, it becomes more apparent that she may have been the victim of a violent crime," the VSP said in a press release.

"Brianna had been living away from home and was socializing with community members involved in the use of illegal drugs," the press release continues. "Investigators with the Vermont State Police are interested in solid fruitful information that may assist in furthering this investigation."

While the Maitlands have said all along they believed their daughter was the victim of a crime, they do not necessarily agree with the VSP position Brianna had been socializing with drug-related people.

They have said she had been turning her life around. She was working two jobs and was living with a friend in Sheldon.

Brianna was driving home to Sheldon after leaving the Black Lantern when something went wrong. Her green 1985 four-door Oldsmobile 88 was found early the morning of March 20 partially embedded in an abandoned barn off of Route 118 at the Dutchburn Farm. The car was about a mile from the Black Lantern.

"It is just kind of strange," said Bruce Maitland, who attended Tuesday's press conference, referring to the VSP's change regarding Brianna's disappearance. "I feel, in some ways, this is a major step.

They have admitted she may have been a victim of a serious crime and was not a runaway."

Regarding VSP's position Brianna had had recent contacts with people connected to drugs prior to her disappearance, he said state police told him two people had said Brianna had had a drug debt.

THE CALEDONIAN-RECORD (2004)

However, that doesn't mesh with what Brianna's friends have been telling the Maitlands.

"I am a little discouraged they are bringing up the drug stuff," he said. "Everything I have gotten from her friends doesn't indicate that. No one has seen her high."

The state police, according to Bruce Maitland, are offering to make deals, even with people connected to drugs.

"They are desperate for really good information because I don't think they have any," he said.

Unlike the case of 22-year-old Maura Murray, the University of Massachusetts at Amherst nursing student who has been missing since she was involved in a minor one-car accident the night of Feb. 9 on Route 112 in Haverhill, N.H., state police in Vermont have enlisted the help of the FBI.

They have received help from the FBI's Burlington office as well as the agency's Behavioral Science Unit in Quantico, Va. They also have been in contact with the U.S. Marshal's Office.

New Hampshire State Police have not asked the FBI to become fully involved in the Murray disappearance. They have said they have all the resources they need to work the case.

People with information about Brianna's disappearance should contact VSP at 802-524-5993 or Crime Stoppers at 1-800-427-8477.

People with information about Maura Murray should call New Hampshire State Police at 603-845- 3333 or 603-271-3636.

June 23, 2004

“Letters To Editor - Reservations about officers' attitudes”

Helena Murray

To the Editor:

Since February, I have been reading the articles on the disappearance of Maura Murray. I believe that The Caledonian-Record has covered the story extremely fairly. I do, however, have serious reservations about the approach the various police agencies have taken and their apparent attitude about Maura's disappearance.

I took particular note of some comments that have been made ... "They also said they weren't going to waste any more time on any more worthless leads."

This would seem to discourage anybody from reporting anything. I would ask the law enforcement agencies this question: "How do you know a lead is worthless until you investigate?"

"I think it's almost character assassination of the victims," Bruce had said on Tuesday. "They said Maura wanted to disappear. Brianna, they said she chose an unhealthy life choice."

Mr. Maitland is absolutely correct in this statement, but it doesn't go far enough. Whatever Brianna and/or Maura may or may not have done, why would the law enforcement agencies punish the families.

As to one other comment: "Capt. Bruce W. Lang, chief of Vermont's Bureau of Criminal Investigation, said there is no serial killer on the loose as has been speculated in the media," I would ask whether the person involved in the murders in the later '80s was ever caught. If not, then isn't he probably still on the loose somewhere?

And, yes, as you might guess I am related to Maura, although distantly. Helena Murray
Weymouth, Mass.

July 1, 2004

“Lieutenant Says Major Crimes Involved Since Beginning - Police Secure Murray Items For Evidence”

Gary E. Lindsley

State police say they have secured items from a missing 22-year-old University of Massachusetts at Amherst nursing student as possible evidence.

Lt. John Scarinza, commander of New Hampshire State Police Troop F, says the items are being held, possibly for further investigation. However, Scarinza also says it's not true the state police Major Crimes Unit is only now getting involved in the Maura Murray case.

Murray has been missing since she was involved in a minor one-car crash on Route 112 in Haverhill, N.H., about a mile east of Swiftwater Feb. 9. She has not been seen since the night of the accident. He said the Major Crimes Unit, and specifically, Sgt. Charles West, has been involved in the Murray disappearance since three days after she disappeared.

Scarinza also said detectives from Troop F and the Major Crimes Unit have been used during the missing person's investigation. He was emphatic that the items from Murray's car are not only now being looked at. "The items have already been gone through once," Scarinza said.

When asked whether any of the items, including clothing and books, had been analyzed for forensic evidence in the beginning of the investigation, he said, "You don't just send a bag of stuff down there."

However, he did say the items in Murray's black 1996 Saturn were inventoried by Haverhill police officers during the first week of the investigation back in February. In addition to diamond jewelry, books, clothing and some alcohol found in the vehicle after the accident, some items were missing.

"She had a (black) backpack when she left Massachusetts," Scarinza said. "We have not been able to locate the backpack in the car or her (dorm) room. That was the pack she used at school."

Scarinza also said when Murray left the Amherst campus, she had with her a box of wine, and bottles of vodka, Kahlua and Bailey's Irish Cream. The box of wine, of which most had been spilled, was found in the car. But some of the other bottles were not found.

Also found in the car, specifically on the back seat, was a book written by Nicholas Howe, titled, "Not Without Peril." Scarinza said the book is about tragedies regarding search and rescues in the White Mountains.

"Mrs. (Sharon) Rausch tells me that is Maura's favorite book," he said. "What does that mean? I don't know." Haverhill police, in a press release issued two days after Murray's disappearance, said she possibly was suicidal.

Because it has been nearly five months since the night Murray disappeared, and because state police believe there is not a lot to look for, Scarinza said it's appropriate to have the items in the car at the time of the accident returned to investigators so they can be held as possible evidence.

"I don't know what we will do with them," he said. "We want to have all the items if we need them. At this point, we are holding them for evidence." That includes Nicholas Howe's book. "For instance," Scarinza said, "is there something significant about that book? I don't know." If there is something highlighted in the book which may help with the investigation, they will have the book readily available.

[Back to Top ↑↑](#)

July 3, 2004

"Maura Murray Family, Friends Say State Police Lied"

Gary E. Lindsley

Family and friends of a missing 22-year-old University of Massachusetts at Amherst nursing student say New Hampshire State Police are misinforming the public.

"You don't try to provide spin unless you are trying to cover something up," said Sharon Rausch, mother of Maura Murray's boyfriend, Billy Rausch of Fort Sill, Okla.

Murray has not been seen since she was involved in a minor one-car accident Feb. 9 on dark, and curvy Route 112 in Haverhill, N.H. "They are a bunch of liars," Rausch said. "I am at the point the only people I am worried about offending are Billy and Fred."

Fred is Fred Murray, Maura's father. Murray and Rausch are upset about comments made this week by New Hampshire State Police Troop F commander Lt. John Scarinza. Scarinza pointed to a book by Nicholas Howe, "Not Without Peril," as a possible source of why Maura disappeared. The book was among items found in her car.

In the book, there are stories about tragedies and rescues in the White Mountains of New Hampshire, areas in which Maura and her father had hiked. Scarinza has said Murray told police his daughter was suicidal.

However, the first mention of Maura being suicidal was in a press release issued by Haverhill Police Chief Jeff Williams two days after Maura's car accident and disappearance.

Murray says he never told police his daughter was suicidal.

"I want to set the record straight," he said. "Scarinza is using (Howe's book) to reinforce his suicide theory. It's nothing like that.

"Maura liked the book," he said. "She was making her way through it. The reason she liked the book was because she likes several different areas in the White Mountains. There are all kinds of landmarks. That's all it was."

Although he is upset about Scarinza's comments, Murray isn't surprised.

"If he goes with the suicide theory, that means nothing happened on his turf and during his watch," Murray said. "However, when you have a bad guy (involved), it's in (Scarinza's) back yard and he can't solve it."

"He's pushing it hard," he continued. "He's to the point he's making things up."

Rausch, equally upset with Scarinza's comments, says, "It's pretty pathetic that 41/2 months later, the state police want to secure the evidence."

She says it's comparable to the state police not searching for Maura until 36 hours after she disappeared. "They never did a forensics study," Rausch said. "And Lt. Scarinza is providing a lot of misinformation to the public - including that she ran away to a new life; she froze to death; she committed suicide."

"When I lay awake at night," she continued, "I wonder how well Lt. Scarinza is sleeping." And Rausch is adamant when she says she never told Scarinza about "Not Without Peril." "That angers me because this is just another thing that is a lie," she said.

"Why didn't he ask me what that meant?"

THE CALEDONIAN-RECORD (2004)

Rausch was referring to Maura saying the book was her favorite.

"She told me (the White Mountains are) a favorite place she likes to go," she said, adding Maura told her, "And most of all it's my favorite place on earth." Scarinza could not be reached for comment Friday afternoon."

July 10, 2004

“Woman Missing Since July 5”

Gary E. Lindsley

Burlington Police are seeking the public's help in locating 26-year-old Ligia Rae Collins, who disappeared July 5. Her disappearance is being treated as suspicious.

Collins was last seen by her live-in boyfriend around midnight July 4, according to Detective Cpl. Shawn Burke. Police were told Collins was headed to a male friend's residence in Burlington. She never arrived. Burke said her boyfriend reported her missing about 9 p.m. on Monday.

Collins is a biracial female of Korean descent, according to Burlington police. She is 5-feet, 4-inches tall and weighs between 180 and 200 pounds. She has a nose ring and long, dark blond hair.

Collins' car, a blue 1996 Ford Escort station wagon bearing Vermont plates DLD 818, is also missing. She left behind two small children who are staying with family members, as well as personal belongings. Police are following up on several leads, which include conducting field interviews and physical searches of locations where Collins may have been.

Burlington Police are also talking to other police agencies about two other missing women. "We are talking to state police about similarities," Burke said. "We are still in the infancy stage of the investigation."

Friday marked the fifth month since a 22-year-old University of Massachusetts at Amherst nursing student, Maura Murray, disappeared after she was involved in a minor one-car accident on rural Route 112 in the town of Haverhill, N.H., about one mile east of Swiftwater the night of Feb. 9.

Thirty-nine days later, 17-year-old Brianna Maitland of Sheldon, Vt., disappeared after clocking out of work at 11:20 p.m. at the Black Lantern Inn in Montgomery. Her car was found a mile from the inn early the next morning, March 20, partially ensconced in an abandoned barn.

Information about Collins' disappearance has been placed in the National Crime Information Center data base.

Anyone with information about Collins' disappearance is asked to contact the Burlington Police Department at 802-658-2714 or Crime Stoppers at 802-864-6666.

July 14, 2004

“Another Search For Maura Murray Turns Up Little - Missing Since Feb. 9”

Lorna Colquhoun

HAVERHILL, NH - Nearly 100 searchers from across New Hampshire combed a one-mile radius in Swiftwater, N.H., Tuesday, in search of clues that could shed light into the perplexing mystery of what happened to Maura Murray.

August 5, 2004

“Family, Friends No Closer To Finding Maura Murray”

Gary E. Lindsley

Maura Murray's friends and family are no closer to finding out what has happened to the 22-year-old nursing student than they were six months ago after learning she disappeared the frigid night of Feb. 9.

Murray, a University of Massachusetts at Amherst student, has not been seen since she was involved in a minor car accident after failing to negotiate a sharp left-hand curve on very rural Route 112 in Haverhill, N.H.

Her father, Fred, still travels to New Hampshire every weekend to search for his daughter. Maura left her dorm room the afternoon of Feb. 9.

She had researched destinations in Vermont and New Hampshire on her computer before leaving in her father's black 1996 Saturn.

Maura had some of her semester's books with her as well as expensive diamond jewelry and other items. She also had alcohol in the vehicle.

An area contractor, months after the accident, told investigators with New Hampshire State Police he may have seen her running along Route 112 toward the North Woodstock area, about four to five miles from the accident scene.

Maura has not been heard from or seen since - except for a reported sighting in a bar in Rochester in early July.

Although two women have stated they believed the woman was Maura, state police have discounted the alleged sighting without saying why.

Since Maura disappeared, she has not accessed her bank accounts nor used her ATM card.

State police are treating Maura's disappearance as a missing person case and have not brought the FBI into the case.

Fred Murray has spent nearly every weekend searching for her.

Monday marks six months since Maura disappeared and family and friends are asking people around the nation to pray for her.

Sharon Rausch, whose son, Billy, is Maura's boyfriend, said Maura's friends, family and loved ones have been praying for Maura's safe return.

Now, they are asking for others to join with them in the hopes Maura will be safely returned to them.

"I am also asking that you request your church to have a moment of prayer for Maura in your worship service on Sunday, Aug. 8, and to request that each member make it a priority to pray throughout the week that God will comfort, strengthen and provide answers to all of the people that love Maura as they deal with her being missing for six months," Rausch said. "Most importantly, please pray that God will bring Maura home.

"We fear that Maura is no longer with us, but we need her home," she continued. "Please help us."

Rausch said she has sent out 350 e-mails to churches in Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine, Massachusetts, Rhode Island and across the country.

She said she has received between 75 and 100 responses, including two from churches in Haverhill, Mass., stating people will be praying for Maura as Monday marks the sixth month since she was last seen.