

Slain teen may have attended party at farm before being killed

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Police lab test results on a car found in Acton Sunday aren't expected to be available for two weeks.

The victim may have been at a party Saturday evening at the sprawling, Ninth Line hobby farm of Howard Peddle, whose daughter Melissa, 18, attended Acton High. "She just asked me if (she) could have a few friends over," he recalled. "I said sure, 'go ahead'."

"There was a party in the area. Whether he attended I have no idea," said Robb.

Peddle couldn't say with certainty if Virgin was among those who showed up but did said the injured man was not found on his property, but down the road a short distance.

"The road was closed for two days," said Ninth Line neighbour Glenn Sanderson, noting police cordoned off a section between Ballinafad Road and the Fifth Sideroad until supper time Monday.

The death had a chilling effect on this rural community of posh farms and estate properties.

"I hope they discover who's

behind that," said Ninth Line neighbour Joanne Baker.

Virgin's family, living in an upscale subdivision under construction on Belwood's east side overlooking a lake, were overcome with grief Wednesday and declined comment. Neighbours, though, fondly recalled the teenager.

"He was just a quiet, nice kid," said neighbour Eleanor Laugier, remembering how friendly he had been with her children. "He was pretty good with the kids.

"It's just sad," she said.

"My kids knew him from the school bus," added neighbour Ron Hache. "They said he was a good kid."

MacPherson said social workers were on call and guidance counsellors have also been available for students who wish to talk. For the most part, he said, students who knew Virgin have not been coming to school.

"A lot of senior students have been away from school," he said. "The staff has been supportive of the kids and have given the kids some flexibility in terms of dealing with this."

Visitation will be held at the MacKinnon Funeral Home in Acton on Saturday from 9-11 a.m. followed by a funeral service in the Shoemaker Chapel at 11 a.m.

Investigating officers are asking anyone who may have travelled on the Ninth Line between Sideroad 5 and the Halton-Erin Town Line between 2-5 a.m. Sunday to call the Guelph OPP detachment at 519-822-7250.

—Torstar News Service
with files by Herb Garbutt
and Lisa Tallyn, staff writers

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