

POLICE: Suspect descriptions released

Reprisal feared after teen gunned down

BY KATHLEEN GRIFFIN
Staff Writer

Police are afraid someone may try to get back at Sandy Ebrahim's killer.

One officer said yesterday he hopes police won't see a "reprisal shooting."

Family and friends, still reeling in shock and deeply saddened by the ruthless slaying, said their final goodbyes to the 16-year-old Mississauga teen yesterday at the Church of the Virgin Mary.

Ebrahim took one of two close-range shotgun blasts in the back in a Kennedy Road parking lot Monday at 3:10 a.m. York Regional Police are tracking the shooter and his accomplice.

The popular, religious teen would have turned 17 today and should have been beginning a month-long Egyptian vacation to see relatives.

"She was shot in the back. It's rather a cowardly way to take out a 16-year-old girl who, from all appearances, had done nothing wrong," said Det. Sgt. Denis Mulholland. "She's from a very good home, never in any trouble and it appears she was just out with friends about to eat fast food when she was shot. It's senseless and it's tragic."

The case has left Mulholland, a 29-year veteran of the force, and other officers shaking their heads in disgust and baffled as to a motive.



SANDY EBRAHIM
Funeral yesterday for teen killed by shotgun blast

"We are hoping this doesn't escalate into you shot one of ours, so we're going to shoot one of yours," said one officer.

"There's just got to be more to this."

An active member of the Virgin Mary and St. Athanasius Coptic Orthodox Church at Eglinton Avenue West and Creditview Road, Ebrahim left her family's luxurious Foxmill Court home late Sunday night with friends to celebrate the end of the school year and her birthday.

Her parents were not aware the girls planned to visit the North York nightclub, called Connections 2 but formerly known as Club Shock, to meet several male friends from Markham.

When they couldn't get inside the crowded club, the entire group left for a nearby coffee shop. The hungry teens then headed to the 24-hour Markham Burger King, police said.

Among the party-goers was Ebrahim's best friend, 17-year-old Kelly Berar — the two Grade 11 pupils attended John Fraser Secondary School in Erin Mills together and live across the street from one another — who had borrowed her family's silver Audi to help her friend celebrate.

Monique Berar said her sister was too dis-

traught yesterday to speak to reporters. She described Kelly and Ebrahim as "very close friends."

Kelly was in or near the car when her close friend was gunned down.

Mulholland said five of the seven youths in the two cars were standing near their vehicles and about to eat when a stolen 1998 black Lincoln Navigator sport utility vehicle carrying two men pulled up. The passenger, carrying a shotgun, stepped out and fired.

The force of the blast threw Ebrahim into the back seat of the car.

"It's amazing with that number of people all together that somebody else wasn't shot. They are extremely lucky," Mulholland said.

Investigators are still trying to piece together the events of early Monday morning in hopes of determining exactly when Ebrahim and her friends first came in contact with the shooter and his cohort.

They also want to learn who among the group of youths was targeted, and why.

Police said they aren't dismissing any possibilities, including the notion the youths were followed from the North York coffee shop to the Burger King in Markham.

About 30 minutes after the shooting, police recovered the Navigator, its engine still running, just north of the nightclub near Dufferin Street and Steeles Avenue. The vehicle was impounded for forensic testing in Orillia by the Ontario Provincial Police.

John Fraser principal Martha Wood described Ebrahim, who has been at the school since her Grade 9 year, as a well-liked person.

"It was just her spirit, that she was always involved in things, whether it was fundraising for a charity or taking part in multi-cultural activities at the school," Wood said.

Counsellors were at the school this week to help students cope with the loss.

Wood said the school will pay tribute to Ebrahim when classes resume in September, and that a scholarship in the slain pupil's name may be created.

The driver of the Navigator is described as a black or East Indian male, dark-skinned, about 18 to 22 years old.

The second culprit is described as a black male, with a medium to dark complexion, thin build, long lean face. He was wearing some type of cloth over his face.

Investigators are imploring anyone with information to do right by Ms. Sandy Ebrahim, come forward and assist in solving her murder case," Sgt. Dave Carnell said. "Anyone with information is urged to call York Regional Police at 881-1221, ext. 7865 or Crime Stoppers at 222-TIPS."

— with files from Declan Finucane

Police scale down search for woman

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same day Claassen was last seen with Lamondin-Gagnon in his blue 1994 Pontiac Sunbird at about 12:50 a.m. in Newmarket.

Kopko said it's not the first time one of his "professional" carpet cleaners has been suspected of being used to clean up a crime scene.

"I had one seized in a murder investigation last year," he said. "Blood is one of the many difficult stains the steam cleaner can be used to remove."

But Kopko said, like all stains, the key to removing blood is making sure it's cleaned as soon as possible.

Police believe Claassen was inside his sister's home with Lamondin-Gagnon between 2 and 6:40 a.m. on May 29.

He had keys to the house because he had been caring for his sister's small children while she was on vacation in Portugal.

Homicide investigators were called to the home June 21 after the owners noticed "subtle" changes

inside. The owners, Claassen's sister and her husband, were aware of his suicide and the link to Lamondin-Gagnon's disappearance.

Police have scaled down their search for Lamondin-Gagnon, since sending 25 officers on mountain bikes and on foot to search rural areas north of Stouffville.

York Regional Police have also used a "cadaver dog" provided by the Ontario Fire Marshals office to search specific areas, including Fairy Lake in Newmarket, where Claassen told police he had dropped her off.

Detectives will now rely on information uncovered in their investigation to provide clues to Lamondin-Gagnon's whereabouts.

Police have taken blood samples from the woman's brother and mother for a possible DNA match.

The samples could be used to identify Lamondin-Gagnon if she is found or to verify forensic evidence discovered inside the Millard Street house.

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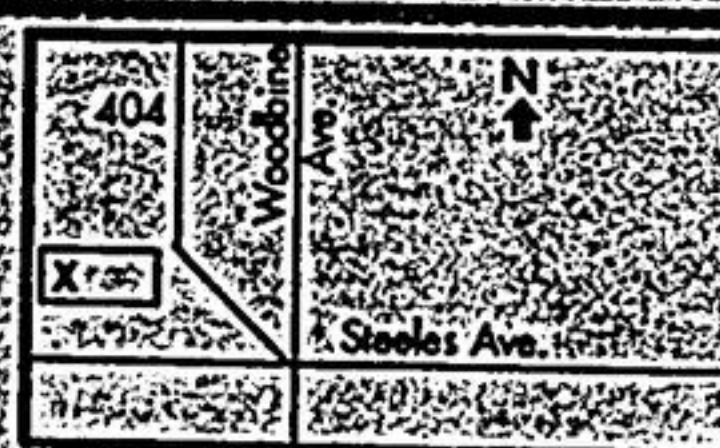
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