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Evidence indicates missing woman murdered in Stouffville house

BY RICK VANDERLINDE
Staff Writer

Police now know exactly what happened to Tammy Lynn Lamondin-Gagnon, the missing 20-year-old Newmarket woman they believe was murdered in a Stouffville home last May.

"We have quite an extensive amount of forensic evidence," said Det. Sgt. Denis Mulholland of the homicide squad. "We know what happened to Tammy. Now we have to find her."

DNA evidence confirms an original theory that Lamondin-Gagnon was killed at a Millard Street home in Stouffville May 29. Mulholland said investigators are also confident their only suspect is 27-year-old Pol Claassen, who committed suicide one week after Lamondin-Gagnon's disappearance.

Mulholland said investigators

believe Claassen acted alone, eliminating the possibility of an accomplice. "We went down that road but found no evidence whatsoever of an accomplice," he said.

Lamondin-Gagnon was last seen with Claassen in his 1994 blue Pontiac Sunbird (licence ACAE 258) in Newmarket at about 12:50 a.m. May 29.

Police believe Claassen drove the petite brunette to his sister's Stouffville home, which he was watching while she was overseas.

Lamondin-Gagnon was inside the house with Claassen between 1 a.m. and 6 a.m. when Claassen went to a nearby grocery store to rent an industrial carpet cleaner. While there was evidence of foul play in the home, Mulholland would not say if there were any clues pointing to a motive.

"I don't think it would be

helpful to comment on that," he said. "The Gagnon family has been through enough. All we need to do now is find her."

Mulholland said police dogs were searching for evidence of Tammy's whereabouts in Uxbridge earlier this week based on a tip. Police are asking residents in rural areas surrounding Stouffville to search their properties, especially the first 50 metres from a roadway. He said most police searches have been initiated by sightings of a vehicle similar to the blue 1994 Sunbird owned by Claassen.

He said he believes Lamondin-Gagnon was transported in the car following "foul play" inside the house.

Anyone with information should call police homicide squad at 895-1221 ext. 7865.

—With files from Joan Ransberry

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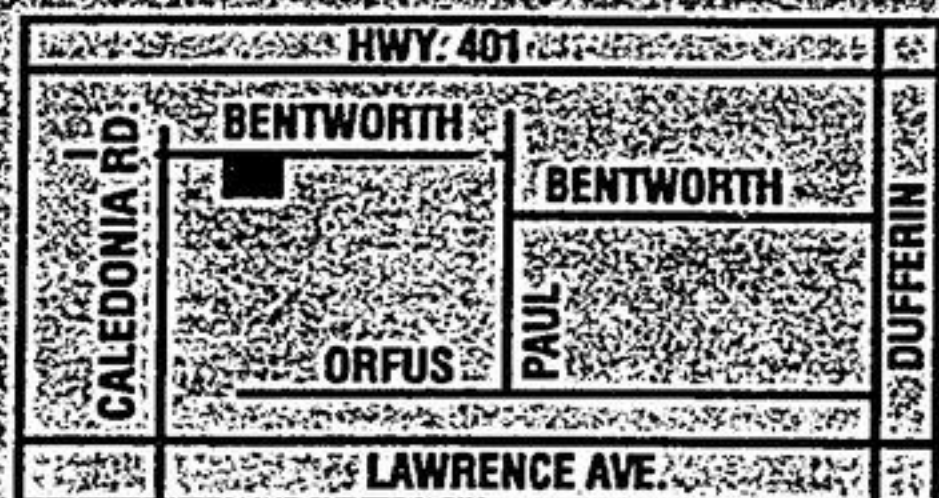
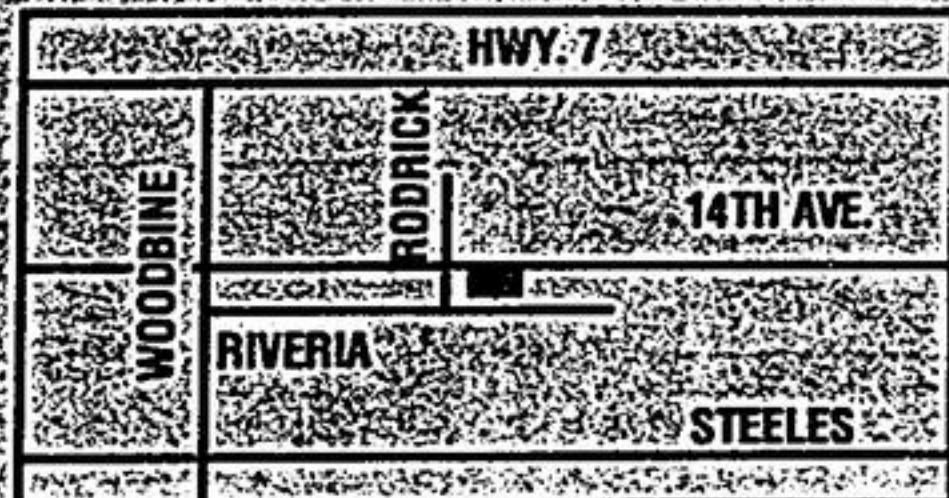


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