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"Working for a better community"

'Police jumped to conclusions', mother says

From page 1.

both Staff-Sgt. Tom Carrique and I have personally apologized to Mrs. Montgomery for our error and expressed our sympathy to the family."

Janette was giving a friend a ride home shortly after 9 a.m. Aug. 29 when she changed lanes to pass another car on Green Lane in East Gwillimbury.

It was raining heavily and she lost control, crossed in front of the other car and hit its front bumper. Her Cadillac left the road and hit a pole. The Cardinal Carter Catholic High School student was taken to hospital, where she died.

Three months later, York Regional Police issued a media release stating a toxicology report from the Centre of Forensic Science indicated Janette had drugs and alcohol in her system and was

impaired.

But toxicology reports do not indicate impairment, only a level of drugs or alcohol present in a test sample of a subject's blood, urine or saliva. As such, a copy of the toxicology report obtained by the York Region Newspaper Group did not indicate she was impaired, only that she had levels of THC (the active ingredient in marijuana) and trace amounts of ethanol and benzoylecgonine, a metabolite of cocaine, in her blood.

Claiming police jumped to conclusions without scientific proof, Mrs. Montgomery demanded officers retract the assertion her daughter was impaired.

But while police admitted the original media release was wrong about the toxicology report, traffic unit Staff-Sgt. Carrique said the force stood by the determination of a drug recognition

expert, a breath alcohol technician and a collision investigator that Janette was impaired. The latest news release does not retract that claim.

"They haven't really solved the problem, they've just tried to put a Band-Aid on it. I appreciate that the chief called personally to apologize, but they really haven't retracted anything. They have just apologized for all the grief they've caused," Mrs. Montgomery said.

"It's tough. It's very upsetting. Nobody should be put through this. But we got them to admit they made an error and that's probably the most we're going to get. I'm not sure what to do. We may not want to keep dredging this up because what are we really going to accomplish? All I really wanted was to clear my daughter's name. She was not a bad person. They just made it look like she was."



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