

Girl Found Dead Is Missing Teen

By Jim O'Neill

Lindenhurst — The body of a girl found in a wooded area here on Monday was identified yesterday as that of 14-year-old Laura Parker, who was reported missing in May, but police were unable to determine what killed her.

"We're still doing crime scene work, taking sand and soil from below the body. We don't know the cause of the death on this youngster yet," Suffolk Chief of Detectives John F. Gallagher said. "The feeling is she may have died of natural causes. From the remains, there is nothing to indicate fractures or anything like that . . . We'll have to wait for the X-rays to see if we can pinpoint anything."

The girl's parents, James and Patricia Parker of 808 S. Seventh St., reported their daughter missing to the FBI on May 23, Gallagher said. The FBI, he said, investigated for about a week.

"They determined that it was not an abduction and they called us and we took it as a missing person. The best we could learn was that she had told her friends that she had been having arguments with her father."

Gallagher said Laura's friends told police they had seen her on various occasions, but that she told them she wouldn't go home.

The body was found in a hole in a wooded area off North Monroe Street, about two miles from Laura's home. "The kids have there what they call 'The Hut,'" Gallagher said. He said it is a 4½-foot-deep hole, about 11 feet in diameter. "It's covered with old pieces of plywood and has [cardboard] boxes over it. Kids were in the hole there, but did not spot the body."

On Monday, Gallagher said, three teenagers went into the hole to clean it out. "They removed some of the debris, saw the shoe, moved the carpet that was over the body, saw the skull, went home and told their parents. And the mothers came down, saw what was there and called the police," Gallagher said.

Laura would have been a sophomore at Lindenhurst High School. Her father said, "I've had 3½ months of false hopes. I wish I had those 3½ months back."

A neighbor, Carol Brennan of 636 S. Seventh St., said Laura "was a quiet little girl, always clean and cute. Every morning we'd see her walking to the school bus and back home every afternoon. Mr. Parker, the man had been out constantly combing the area. He put fliers up on the beach, on poles, on trees. He was walking the streets every night. What more can you say of a parent?"



Laura Parker

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