

Centre Daily Times

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Ten years after woman's disappearance, a call for help

By Mike Joseph

Editor's Note: This story first appeared in the Centre Daily Times on February 27, 2001.

A decade after Brenda Coon Condon vanished from a Centre County bar, Iris Coon Myers isn't asking for much. Myers just wants to know where her little sister's body is.

"I don't know how they can live with themselves — don't they have a conscience?" Myers, 50, said Monday. "Yes, I'd like to see the person pay for it — but for right now, just tell me where she is."

Ten years ago today, Condon disappeared. She was last seen tending bar after midnight at what was then known as Carl's Bad Tavern in Spring Township. Later that day, a Wednesday, Condon's boots were discovered in the men's bathroom of the tavern, which is near the crossroads of state Route 550 and Musser's Lane. Her car was in the parking lot.

But Condon herself, 26 years old at the time, was nowhere to be found. Investigations since then, first by Spring Township police and later by state police at Rockview, have come up empty.

Although the case remains a missing persons investigation on the books, state police Trooper Joseph Cigich suspects Condon probably "met with some type of foul play."

"Even though we suspect it's a homicide, there's no real evidence that points that up, " Cigich said Monday. "So it's a missing person under suspicious circumstances." Cigich said a few people in the state who may have helpful information have stopped talking to police.

"We do have some suspicions, " Cigich said. "There's two or three that we've spoken with that we'd like to ask some more questions of, but they don't want to talk to us anymore."

There are theories outside the realm of foul play, Myers acknowledged, but they don't pass the gut-instinct test.

Condon's two children were left behind. Shauna was then 10 years old and Todd was 12. Myers said her sister wouldn't have gone away without her kids, inasmuch as Myers' and Con don's own mother died when Condon was just 3.

"She grew up without her own mother -- she would never have done that to her kids because she knew what it was like," Myers said. "I feel that she was gone that night. She never walked away from that site."

Myers said Condon's children, now 20 and 22, need closure on their mother's fate. For that reason above all, Myers said, she's calling for whoever is responsible to reveal where the body is, even without revealing their own identity.

"Just tell us where she's at, and at least we can put that part to rest," Myers said.

Trooper Cigich took over as investigator about two years ago, spent several "solid" months on the case and then last year at this time called a news conference to try to draw out new information in the case.

"We did get quite a few calls," Cigich said Monday, "but unfortunately none of them panned out. ... We're still at a dead end, kind of."

Police orchestrated no such effort to arouse recollections this year, and Cigich acknowledged that cases with more promise of being solved command most of his time now.

Condon grew up in Clearfield, married young and divorced young. She was a feisty young woman, her sister said, and Cigich pointed out that Condon was known to strike up conversations with strangers. One theory, he said, is that she ran into someone she knew at the bar "and they didn't want to take no for an answer."

Carl Easterling, owner of Carl's Bad Tavern 10 years ago, said in an interview Monday that he was not at the tavern the night Condon disappeared. He refused to comment further on the case.

Condon had worked only three days at Carl's Bad Tavern when she disappeared. Myers said her sister was to close the bar after last call that night a decade ago and was to reopen next day as the day shift bartender, with her shift due to end at 6 p.m.

The next day, Myers said, a cigarette vending machine serviceman walked into the unlocked bar, re stocked the machine and departed without realizing anything was amiss. But when Condon's relief arrived at 6 p.m. for the night shift, Myers said, he noticed Condon's car but could not find her inside. The 10-year search began.

Cigich said investigators may never know what happened "until we actually discover her, alive or deceased." He added that, although he doesn't have a lot of time to spend on the case these days, it's always on his mind.

"You never really forget about it and you're always hoping that maybe tomorrow that one break will come," Cigich said. "It's going to be a case that never goes away."

Read more here: <http://www.centredaily.com/2014/08/09/4298160/ten-years-after-womans-disappearance.html#storylink=cpy>