

No physical signs in E. Side death Police await autopsy and toxicology results

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By Lou Michel

January 22, 2009

There were no signs "of a physical nature" that indicated the cause of death for the 20-year-old Lewiston woman whose frozen body was found stuffed inside a garbage tote early this month on Buffalo's East Side, authorities said Wednesday.

For that reason, police say autopsy and toxicology results will play a significant role in whether Buffalo investigators move ahead with charging anyone in the disappearance and death of Amanda L. Wienckowski.

The results should be in the hands of investigators by the end of this week or early next week.

"We're anticipating the results from the medical examiner within the next few days. With an expedited case, the results are usually available within one to two weeks," said Kevin Montgomery, spokesman for the Erie County Health Department.

Wienckowski's family believes someone killed her and then tried to hide the crime by dumping her body in the tote, which was found outside a church directly across from the Spring Street house she visited the night of Dec. 5, when she was last seen and heard.

"I want justice in this case. My daughter, an innocent person, has been murdered. Every day we sit here and try to figure out who would do such a horrific crime," Leslie Brill Fink said. "I'm struggling because we don't know. I want to know my daughter's last words."

Relatives of Antoine Garner, whom Wienckowski visited on Spring Street for what authorities believe was a sexual encounter, say police are wrong to classify him as a person of interest in the case.

If any foul play occurred at the Spring Street home where Garner lived, family members inside the house would have been aware of it, said Sonya Garner, his mother.

Sonya Garner said that when she visited 157 Spring St., first at 7:20 p.m. Dec. 5 to drop off her 13-year-old daughter, and again at 10:15 p.m. to pick the daughter up, nothing seemed out of the ordinary.

But Brill Fink says that Wienckowski's cell phone bill shows that she sent a text message at 6:47 p.m. to the man who dropped her off on Spring Street, Adam Patterson. This would place Wienckowski at the residence more than 30 minutes before Sonya Garner dropped off her daughter.

Patterson told police he drove Wienckowski to the Spring Street house and received a text message and cell phone call from her, saying she would be delayed inside the residence.

After waiting two hours, Patterson said, he left Spring Street without Wienckowski.

A check of court records shows that Antoine Garner, 22, has had two orders of protection issued against him in recent years, one involving a woman and another involving a man he allegedly fired a gun at.

When Garner was 16, he was remanded to a juvenile detention facility for assaulting a woman, according to his mother. Garner, just hours after he was picked up Jan. 9 as a person of interest in Wienckowski's death, was charged by Buffalo police with an Oct. 18 rape during which he allegedly choked a woman into unconsciousness by tightening a piece of cloth around her neck.

And while the autopsy and toxicology results are pending in the Wienckowski case, Buffalo homicide investigators and state troopers are continuing their investigation into the death.

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