

Hunt for Nurse at Dead End

Special to The Examiner

SOUTH LAKE TAHOE — Worried lawmen said today they have reached a "dead end" in the three-week search for a missing gambling casino nurse — and conceded they think she has met with foul play.

Donna Lass disappeared in the early morning of Sept. 6 after she got off work at the Sahara hotel-casino in Stateline, Nev.

"We're suspicious of foul play because of the nature of the disappearance and the type of girl she is," said Sgt. Richard Dunn, of the South Lake Tahoe police.

'Straight'

He described the 25 year old Miss Lass, who went to the resort center from San Francisco in June to work in the Sahara's first-aid office, as "very clean cut . . . straight."

She had worked the previous five months at Letterman General Hospital.

Her roommate in San Francisco, Jo Anne Goetsche, went to South Lake Tahoe to spend the Labor Day holiday with her. Miss Goetsche never saw her friend because she was missing from work. Hotel officials, a short time later, contacted police.

The circumstances of her disappearance, police said, have raised fears that it is connected with the March 7 disappearance of a Sacramento nurse.

Girl Murdered

Judith Ann Hakari, 23, vanished after finishing a night shift at Sutter Memorial Hospital in Sacramento.

Her apartment and car both were undisturbed. Police noted that Miss Lass' new apartment in South Lake Tahoe also was untouched and her car was parked outside.

Miss Hakari's body was found almost two months later in a shallow grave in the Placer County foothills. She had been "savagely beaten," police said.

Sgt. Dunn said investigators from Lake Tahoe were working closely with the Sacramento sheriff's office because of the possible connection between Miss Hakari's murder and Miss Lass' disappearance.

Saving For Trip

A native of Beresford, S.D., Miss Lass intended to save money while working at Tahoe for a trip to Europe next year. Relatives from Sioux Falls, S.D., arrived at Tahoe last week but have been unable to shed any light on her disappearance.

Sgt. Dunn said there was no evidence that Miss Lass was a party girl and she had no steady boy friend. "She did have lots of friends and she would never do this (run off) without notifying someone," he said.

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hughes3781
Sep 8, 2021