

Rafting in raging Pennypack Creek turns tragic for young man

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Ashley Adams said she was shocked to hear that her friend Saulius Kvaraciejus disappeared Tuesday evening, after he and friends decided to go rafting in the Pennypack Creek.

"I just wish someone was there to tell him how stupid that idea was," she said.

Kvaraciejus, 20, of Holmesburg, and two other men decided to ride blow-up pool floats down a raging, rain-swollen Penny-



Kvaraciejus

pack Creek. But after they went down a man-made waterfall near Winchester Avenue and Roosevelt Boulevard, Kvaraciejus and at least one other man fell into the water at around 6:50 p.m., police said.

Friend David Zolinas, 22, of Holmesburg, said Kvaraciejus — whose body has not been recovered — fell headfirst and then tried to swim against the current but the current was just too strong.

"He was a solid, dependable person," said Zolinas, who searched the creek for Kvaraciejus' body for eight hours yester-

day, adding that he and others would return today. "We're not going to stop trying until we find him or until someone else finds him. If I had perished, he would do the same thing."

Kvaraciejus was a sophomore at Penn State. A woman who identified herself as his aunt said he was set to leave for the Marines today. She said her nephew "enjoyed everything that a boy his age would enjoy."

She added that it's unfortunate that "something like this has to happen before young people realize" the dangers of swimming in the city's creeks.

Police officials said that every summer, people swim or play in the city's creeks,

streams and rivers, which are unpredictable and extremely dangerous.

"It's not a good idea," said Joanne Dahme, general manager of public affairs for the Philadelphia Water Department. "We want people to visit the streams because it's important to appreciate them. But we just ask that people not try to swim in them. They're not safe."

Hours before Kvaraciejus disappeared, Andrew Watts was rescued Tuesday morning from the Pennypack Creek a few miles away, when the water rose from a few inch-

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