

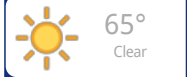


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One year later: Who killed Jessica Lee?

Mother of slain Brooklyn Park woman still seeking answers

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By Jennifer Donatelli, Correspondent

Jessica Lee

Ann Burke holds her 2½-year-old granddaughter, Maygan Marie Burke, and a photo of her daughter, Jessica Lee. Lee disappeared last spring after a fight with Burke. Her remains were found Aug. 6, 2012 in a wooded area of Pasadena.

[View all 2 images in gallery.](#)



Jessica Lynn Lee

Posted: Wednesday, August 14, 2013 4:00 am | Updated: 7:31 am, Wed Aug 14, 2013.

By JENNIFER DONATELLI Correspondent

Reminders of Jessica Lee fill Ann Burke's Brooklyn Park home.

Photographs are in the china cabinet and on shelves, forever freezing her daughter as a blond 20-year-old. She will never see her 2½-year-old daughter, Maygan Marie Burke, grow up, graduate high school and college, get married and have her own children.

Maygan is the image of her mother, especially when she runs through the home, stomping her feet like a herd of elephants, just as Lee used to do at that age, Burke said.

The reminders are all Burke has left after Lee's remains were found Aug. 6, 2012, in the woods behind Ollie's Bargain Outlet off Ritchie Highway in Pasadena. Lee had been missing for nearly three months. Her killer still has not been found.

"I know someone out there knows what happened to her. I need closure. Our family does. I need peace," Burke said. "I ask them to come forward."

Lt. T.J. Smith, Anne Arundel County police spokesman, said the investigation remains open and active but that there is no new information to release to the public.

That is frustrating for Burke, who said she calls Detective Regina Collier, the case's lead investigator, every couple of months for an update.

The past year has been rough, Burke said. She felt numb on the anniversary of the day her daughter's body was found, and expects to feel the same Saturday, one year since police told her DNA testing had identified the remains as her daughter's.

"It's been a roller coaster," she said, her voice cracked and her eyes welling with tears. "It's been hard."

Maygan sometimes calls for her mother in the middle



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Can you help?

Jessica Lynn Lee, 20, left the Magie Street home she shared with her mother in Brooklyn Park following an argument with her mother in May 2012.

She had no money, cellphone or identification and only the clothes she was wearing. After a few days went by with no call, Ann Burke reported her daughter missing to police.

Area residents told police they saw developmentally disabled mother of one at the Shoppers Food Warehouse in Brooklyn Park.

On Aug. 6, a man found what appeared to be a human skull in a wooded area behind Ollie's Bargain Outlet, located in the 8100 block of Ritchie Highway in Pasadena. Police searched the area and found additional remains.

Investigators initially did not connect the discovery with Lee, but a few days later the police crime lab identified them as hers using DNA testing, police spokesman Justin Mulcahy said.

The subsequent autopsy revealed Lee suffered trauma to the upper body.

Police say the investigation is ongoing, but have no new information to release as the case passed the one year mark. Anyone who saw Lee last summer or has information about her disappearance and death is asked to call Detective Regina Collier at 410-222-3417 or 410-222-3450.

One year later: Who killed Jessica Lee? - : For The Record

of the night. She sleeps with her mother's blanket, and tells anyone who tries to take it, "That's Mommy's blanket."

Burke took a photo of Lee — the one circulated by police last year — out of the china cabinet and asked her granddaughter who was in the picture.

"Mommy," Maygan said.

Christmas and Lee's birthday were both tough to get through.

"I just don't feel like celebrating them. It's just not the same," she said.

Burke said she still has Lee's clothes and keeps her room as it was, as if she is waiting for Lee to come through the door.

She was waiting for that return visit or a phone call in May 2012, after Lee took off following an argument with her mother. She would leave for a few days to cool off, but she always checked in with her mother. That missing call convinced Burke early on that something was wrong.

"I just want to know who did this and why. What could she possibly have done to deserve this?" she said. "I'm asking the public for help."

Burke is selling turquoise wristbands with the words, "Justice for Jessica Lee," imprinted on them to raise reward money. She asked anyone interested in buying one to contact her on Facebook at www.facebook.com/ann.burke.1650.

She also has continued to post photos of Lee on Facebook as a reminder to the public, but said it's hard to get the word out as the public's memory of the case has dimmed.

Meanwhile, all Burke and her family can do is hope and pray her daughter's killer is found and brought to justice, she said.

"I hope they catch the person who did this and they burn in hell," she said.

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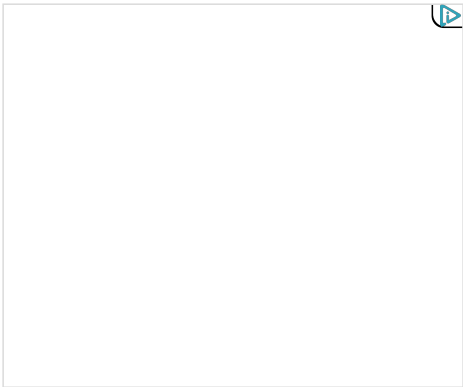
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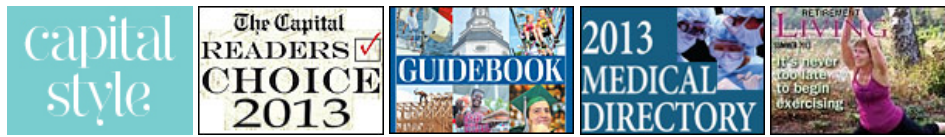


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