



## I-Team Investigation

### Missing Man Mystery in Waterbury

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WATERBURY -- A local man from Waterbury has been missing for nearly two years, and his parents say someone is trying stop them from finding out what happened to their son.

Billy Smolinski's parents have taken video that they say proves someone is trying to slow down the investigation.

Eyewitness News has also learned that tracking dogs will return to the place Smolinski was last seen alive.



Smolinski's family believes he was murdered. But with few facts and no evidence or eyewitnesses the case has come to a screeching halt.

Smolinski was last seen at his Waterbury home on August 24, 2004.

"There's not a day that goes by that I don't think about it," says his father William Smolinski. "Going to work, coming home...it's tough."

Billy told a neighbor he was going up north to look at a car and asked him to let out his dog Harley, he'd leave a key.

When the neighbor didn't find a key or Billy he called a friend.

Billy's truck was parked at the end of his driveway. Inside were his wallet and keys.

"When the neighbor called his girlfriend of eight years because there was no key we knew there was a problem," says Janice Smolinski, Billy's mother. "We called police and said he was missing."

Police would not classify him as missing for three days.

"We did a thorough search of his home," says Chris Corbett of Waterbury Police. "There were no physical signs of a disturbance at the home. There were a number of events that had occurred in his life including a break up with a girlfriend also the loss of his job. There is no sign of foul play and by that I mean no physical signs of evidence and no witnesses."

Neighbors John and Elaine Ramsey remember that week.

"We'd been on vacation and I came home and Billy was over there stripping paint off the side of

the house and he'd been doing that for about three days and then I didn't see him," said John Ramsey.

Billy had just returned from a trip to Florida where the family suspects he had found out his girlfriend was cheating on him.

"That's why there's so much more to this case than just 'Billy missing,'" Janice says.

The I-Team has learned that the day Billy disappeared he left a threatening message on the answering machine of the other man. Police confirm they have a tape, but aren't saying who the took it from.

"As part of the investigation we took custody of a tape recording from an answering machine and we have that as evidence," says Corbett

Billy's family started hanging missing posters and they were stunned at what they happened next.

"They pull up behind our car and rip them down right in front of us," said William Smolinski

They say it was Billy's ex-girlfriend tearing down the posters. The family has video of what appears Madeline Gleason and another woman tearing down the signs.

"We were hanging flyers in Woodbridge and they were constantly being torn down sliced slashed," said Janice Smolinski.

And, then another twist as Woodbridge police arrested Billy's mother for trespassing for putting up a missing poster on a poll. You can see it's been torn down but a piece of it remains.

In the arrest affidavit. Mrs. Smolinski was charged with trespassing and disorderly conduct, charges the state's attorney would later drop.

The I-team tried many times to contact Gleason, but were told to come back to her house 'another time.'

Police tell the I-Team they are entering a new phase of the investigation. Later this month K-9's will comb the woods behind Billy's house, searching for clues.

The Smolinskis believe there is someone out there who knows what happened to their son, and they are offering a \$15,000 reward for information leading to an arrest.

Anyone with information to call the Waterbury police department.

NOTE: After several unsuccessful attempts to contact Madeline Gleason, I-Team reporter Diana Rocco was able to get in touch with Gleason's attorney -- John Williams -- Seven hours before this story aired. He hung up on us and has not returned calls for comment.



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