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HEADLINES

SHELTON: Officials search for missing Waterbury man under driveway

Tuesday, May 8, 2007

BY BEN CONERY

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Tips that missing Waterbury man Billy Smolinski Jr. was killed and buried under a driveway here led authorities on a fruitless search for his body Monday.

FBI agents and officers from Waterbury, Shelton and state police descended upon Fort Hill Avenue, a residential street of average-sized homes off Route 110, a main thoroughfare in this city of 38,000.

Investigators spent about five hours searching several locations, focusing on the driveway of 65 Fort Hill Ave.

State police dogs trained to locate human remains gave investigators some hope after the dogs indicated they picked up a scent near the driveway. But after investigators dug a small hole and drilled under the driveway, the dogs did not indicate they smelled anything. Investigators then abandoned the search.

Law enforcement officials were tight-lipped about the search. Though the FBI is the lead agency, a spokeswoman referred questions to Shelton and Waterbury police.

Shelton police Capt. Michael Madden said there were no further plans to search in Shelton. Waterbury police spokesman Lt. Christopher Corbett would only say the investigation into Smolinski's disappearance is ongoing.

Monday's search came after the FBI investigated tips that Smolinski was buried under the driveway on Fort Hill Avenue, a Colonial-style house that was built about the time Smolinski went missing at the age of 31 in August 2004.

According to information supplied to law enforcement agencies -

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- some coming from jailhouse informants -- Smolinski supposedly was killed by the son of his ex-girlfriend. The son buried Smolinski's body under the driveway before it was paved, according to the tips. The son, who has since died of a drug overdose, was said to have been working construction at the house while it was built.

A version of that tip was included in documents released after the state Freedom of Information Commission ordered Waterbury police to open most of their files into Smolinski's disappearance.

So far, investigators have not revealed any evidence to support that theory.

Smolinski's mother said Monday she was satisfied with the effort of law enforcement to follow up on the tips. Janice Smolinski had particular praise for the FBI, which took over the investigation from Waterbury police last year. The Smolinski family has been critical of Waterbury police in the case.

"We're happy that the FBI is heavily involved now and hopefully we'll get our answers, we need them," she said. The family has been aggressive in searching for answers and seeking information. Janice Smolinski said a new billboard of her son will be revealed this week along Interstate 84 in Waterbury.

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Updated Contact information on Billy Smolinski, Jr.

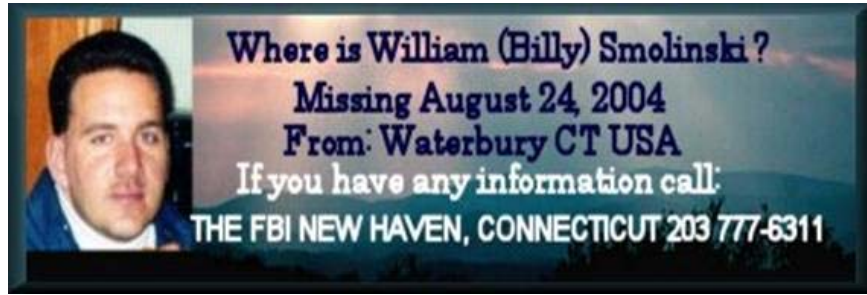
William (Billy) Smolinski, Jr's Official Family

Website is: www.justice4billy.com

**Please go to news articles and update tabs for all news stories on Billy.
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