

Media Release

News Release No. 8

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VIRGINIA STATE POLICE IMPRESS IMPORTANCE OF LOCATION IN MORGAN HARRINGTON DEATH INVESTIGATION

Investigators Seek Out Those Familiar with Farm Property

RICHMOND – Virginia State Police Thursday provided media with an investigative update regarding the ongoing criminal investigation into the death of Morgan Harrington, the 20-year-old Virginia Tech student who went missing from the University of Virginia campus in Charlottesville during a Metallica concert on the night of Oct. 17, 2009.

Morgan's remains were discovered Jan. 26, 2010, by the landowner of Anchorage Farm in southern Albemarle County. The skeletal remains were located in a field on the 700-acre property. Morgan's death is being investigated as a homicide. The specific cause and time of her death are still undetermined at this time.

"The investigators and profilers are of the opinion that this location is of the greatest significance at this point of the investigation," said Lt. Joe Rader, Virginia State Police Bureau of Criminal Investigation's Appomattox Field Office. "Of all the events that transpired between Morgan and the person(s) responsible for this tragic incident, the person(s) responsible had complete control of deciding to choose the specific farm where Morgan was discovered. Therefore, investigators need to understand who knows this area."

"Those citizens that live in, have lived in, or frequent the Anchorage Farm area are of tremendous importance in providing vital information about that particular area because you understand and observe the activities of the area. Individuals who know others who have visited the area are also encouraged to contact police."

Virginia State Police have established a tip line just to receive information specifically related to the Anchorage Farm property: (434) 709-1685.

In addition, State Police have identified six key points regarding the probable relationship the individual(s) responsible for Morgan's tragedy might have with this particular property and exact location of where her remains were found.

1. The person responsible may or may not have a formal connection to Anchorage Farm where Morgan was recovered, but investigators believe the person(s) responsible is likely to have traveled, worked, recreated, or lived in close proximity to this farm or some other nearby property.
2. The person(s) responsible in this tragic incident may have been inclined to return to the farm location during a period of increased stress.

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STATEWIDE MEDIA CONTACTS:

VSP HQ	Richmond	Culpeper	Appomattox	Wytheville	Chesapeake	Salem/
Roanoke	Fairfax					
Ms. C.Geller	Sgt. Molnar	Sgt. Tyler			Sgt. Cotten	Sgt.
Carpentieri		(804)674-2789	(804)553-3494	(540)829-7713	(434)352-7128	(276)228-3131
(757)424-6827	(540)375-9598	(804)674-2789				

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3. Investigators are confident that persons, through no fault of their own, know the person(s) responsible or have knowledge of specific instances whereby the person(s) responsible visited or traveled through the general location of where Morgan's remains were recovered.

4. Investigators believe the person(s) responsible had specific knowledge, and was comfortable operating in the area, which is a considerable distance from the nearest roadway.

5. This choice of location is quite different from the decision to leave a body on or adjacent to a major public roadway, or some other area accessed with little or no risk.

6. Traveling to the Anchorage Farm location would have created a significant risk for any person unfamiliar with the area, and not comfortable to this type of setting. Farmland like the place where Morgan's body was discovered presents difficult obstacles such as fences, streams, and difficult terrain variations - such challenges a person unfamiliar with this particular location would most likely have avoided.

"I ask the public to please think about these six perspectives and based on your knowledge as a local citizen, contact law enforcement with information even if you do not want to leave your name," said Lt. Rader.

The core investigative team actively pursuing this case includes representatives from Virginia State Police, University of Virginia Police, Charlottesville Police, Albemarle Police and FBI.

For information related to the aforementioned key points and/or the location Morgan was discovered, please call (434)709-1685. Those with other information and tips related to the Morgan Harrington case are encouraged to call Virginia State Police at (434)352-3467 or UVA Police at (434)924-7166 or by email at bci-appomattox@vsp.virginia.gov.

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