

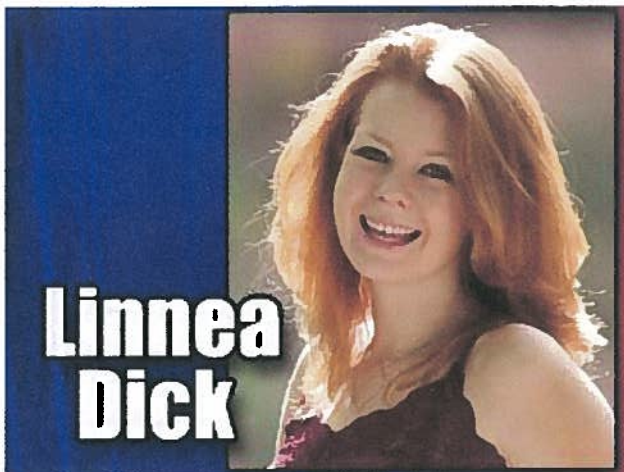
Police: Victim Strangled to Death Before Fire
Fort Collins house fire appears to be arson

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FORT COLLINS - The Larimer County Coroner's office has ruled Friday's death of Linnea Dick, 20, as a homicide and police believe the fire burning in the home where she was found was deliberately set.

The Coroner's office determined the cause of death to be asphyxiation due to strangulation. She had also been sexually assaulted.

Dick was found in her upstairs bedroom when firefighters arrived at approximately 11:15 a.m. Firefighters carried her outside of the burning home, determined she was dead and returned into the house to extinguish the fire that had been deliberately set in the upstairs bedroom and the basement.



Police are investigating the murder of Fort Collins resident Linnea Dick. 6/1/08

Fort Collins police and Poudre Fire Authority investigators are working with an Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms Agent with expertise in fire investigation and will be conducting a forensic reconstruction of the fire today.

Police continue to look for the victim's car, a teal 1997 Nissan Altima with front and back license plate holders with small red skulls that look like cherries or dots from a distance, and Colorado license plate 015KFH. A nationwide BOLO (be on the lookout) alert has been issued. Police believe the vehicle was stolen by the suspect.

Fort Collins police have been interviewing family, friends and associates in an attempt to learn more about the victim and who may be responsible for this crime.

Anyone with information about the missing car, the fire or her death is asked to contact Detective Kristy Volesky at 970-224-6116.

Crime

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Officials: Fire Victim Was Sexually Assaulted



Reporting
Kartyn Tilley

FORT COLLINS, Colo. (AP) — Larimer County coroner's officials say the death of a woman found in a house where two fires were burning was a homicide.

They identified her Saturday as Linnea Dick, 20, of Fort Collins and said she was sexually assaulted and strangled.

"At this point anybody and everybody is a suspect," Rita Davis with Fort Collins police said. "We have been working with the housemate, who has also been her boyfriend and he has been very cooperative and at this time in the investigation, no one has emerged as a suspect."

Firefighters went to the house Friday after a neighbor called 911 to report smoke. Police say firefighters found the house on fire and Dick's body in an upstairs bedroom. Another fire was burning in the basement.

A cat died in the blaze. Another cat and a small dog were unharmed.

A neighbor brought flowers after hearing the fire was murder.

"I was just moved to come out and pay respects and to try to wish good karma for all of the people involved and the families involved," neighbor Margaret Helenschild said.

Police are investigating. They also are looking for Dick's car, described as a dark blue 1997 Nissan Altima with a rear spoiler with Colorado license plate 015-KFH.