

*Caughlin Homicide
Detective Inspector Ian Maule – Speaking Notes
Press Conference 2010 03 08*

Good afternoon and thank you very much for attending today's media conference. My name is Ian Maule. I'm a Detective Inspector with the Ontario Provincial Police Criminal Investigation Branch in-charge of the Unsolved Homicide Investigative Team, and presently overseeing the murder of Karen CAUGHLIN.

I have with me today Mary Lou SCHWEMLER, Karen's sister representing the Caughlin family.

Thank you for being here today and your continued support. Mary Lou will be providing some comments from the family.

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Today I'm appealing to all Sarnia and area residents for help in resolving this "solvable", senseless crime.

During the next six (6) weeks the OPP have partnered with Sarnia Transit and Pattison Outdoor Advertising to utilize signage and billboard advertising to help promote the \$50,000 Reward offered by the OPP. We do this to create awareness and new leads into the murder of then 14-year-old Karen Caughlin.

The one thing I know for certain is that there is a person or person(s) in our community that knows

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who was responsible for Karen's death. This case is well known in the Sarnia / Lambton area. The Caughlin Family and the OPP will not let it be forgotten.

The OPP Unsolved Homicide Investigative Team is committed to finding out how and why Karen was murdered. We have the means to identify this person, the OPP just need a name.

Karen was only 14 years old when she was murdered. A grade nine (9) student at Sarnia Collegiate Institute and Technical School in Sarnia, Karen would be

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forever denied a chance at a life full of promise and hope. She leaves behind a loving family whose lives have been suspended for the past 36 years while they continue to search for those responsible for her death.

Today I'm asking anyone who is listening or reading this story to take your minds back to Friday, March 15th, 1974. I'm appealing to her teachers, friends, or anyone else who may have heard or seen anything out of the ordinary that day to tell me what they observed. By now it's quite likely that the person or person(s) responsible for this murder have told

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someone. I'm asking you to do the right thing and share that information with my investigative team.

So what happenedWe know that Karen went to school on the 15th of March, 1974. After school she went to a friend's home and they walked to the Rose Garden roller rink located in Point Edward around 7:00 p.m. Karen had made tentative arrangements to stay overnight at her girlfriend's house. Karen and another female friend left the rink around 11:00 p.m. and accepted a ride from a couple of boys that they knew, leaving in a pick-up truck. Karen's girlfriend was dropped off at her home a short time later.

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Karen continued to drive around the area with her friends for a while before picking up a third teenage boy.

The four teenagers continued to drive around the City, stopping at the A & W for a root beer and visiting other friends until Karen was dropped off near her friend's house on Brock Street shortly after 1:00 a.m. on the 16th of March , 1974. This was the last time Karen was seen alive.

I can tell you that these boys, who last saw Karen, have been cleared and are Not Suspects.

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I can't imagine the pain and anguish the Caughlin family has endured and continues to experience in dealing with the loss of their child and sister. Karen was just a young child when she was struck by the suspect's vehicle and left for dead in a ditch.

Karen's body was located on the 16th of March, 1974 around 9:50 a.m., by an area farmer. She was in a shallow ditch on the side of Plowing Match Road (formally known as Side Road 6-7) in Enniskillen Township a couple kilometres northwest of the town of Petrolia. Her coat and shoes were located a short

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distance from her body in a pile of branches. Her purse was discovered several days later in a ditch just north of Petrolia, south east of where her body was located. Clearly someone knows how her shoes, coat and purse came to rest at separate locations from where her body was found. They were specifically placed there.

Today we have included photos of the types of vehicles that may have been associated to this homicide. Paint chips were found on Karen's clothing which indicates that the vehicle involved in this murder is a 1970 – 1971 Chrysler / Plymouth /

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Dodge product with metallic purple paint, commonly known as “Plum Crazy Purple”. This type of paint was used predominantly on Chrysler’s performance vehicles such as the Barracuda, Challenger, Charger, Dart, Demon, Duster, and Superbee. This paint was also used on Chrysler’s Belvedere, Coronet, Satellite, and Valliant models. I’m confident that the person or person(s) with knowledge of this murder know all too well who’s vehicle was involved and probably even who the driver was. Do the right thing and tell us what you know.

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From an investigative position I can say with certainty that this case is solvable. To the person or person(s) responsible for this murder I think it is important for you to know that investigators have secured DNA evidence and it's only a matter of time before this case is solved.

To everyone listening to me today I encourage you to take a good look at the billboards and posters of Karen Caughlin. Karen was a young, spirited child whose chance of a promising life ended with her murder half way through Grade 9. Please help us identify the person or person(s) responsible for her

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death no matter how insignificant the information you have may be. If you know someone that has direct knowledge of this case, please encourage them to do the right thing and come forward or come forward on their behalf.

I'd like to thank those who continue to help the OPP and continue to provide information on this case. I'd also like to thank Sarnia Transit and Pattison Outdoor Advertising for helping front this information campaign promoting the \$50,000 Reward being offered by the OPP.

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I'd also like to thank the Mary Lou and the entire Caughlin family for their trust, support and patience as we continue to work toward finding Karen's murderer.

So how do you get your information to us; you can call the OPP at 1-888-310-1122, or you can go the **OPP.CA website** where I have posted these comments and all of the information you see here plus many other details. This website also includes a tip area that information can be sent directly to the UHIT investigators.

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You can also call your nearest Police Agency or Crimestoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS (8477) were anonymous information can be provided.

Thank you for being here today and helping us get this message out to as many people as possible.