



October 28, 2008

He loved helping Senior who was a busy volunteer gunned down near home

By MICHELLE THOMPSON, SUN MEDIA

Until the night a gunman shot him dead, Larry Bosiak made a career of helping others.

The 77-year-old grandfather was gunned down in the stairwell of his northeast apartment late Sunday, moments after dropping his girlfriend off at home, and telling her he loved her.

"Everyone who knew him liked him - a lot," said Joyce Froehlich, his partner of eight years.

"I don't think you'll find anyone who had a bad word to say about him."

The elderly man was found lying in a stairwell by a resident of a 3757 139 Ave. apartment complex about 10:45 p.m. Sunday.

Homicide Det. Dave Schening, at the scene early yesterday, said the victim had been shot to death.



LARRY BOSIAK

Map: Homicides 2008

Police later seized a wallet from the northwest entrance of the complex's parking lot.

Several witnesses described to police a man seen running from the area about the time of the incident.

As police hunted for the killer yesterday, Bosiak's relatives said they were left baffled by the slaying.

"I'm still in shock from it, OK?" his nephew, Robert Bosiak, said from his Calgary home.

"He was a very nice man."

Before retiring, Bosiak worked as an ambulance driver, Robert said.

After retirement, he became immersed in volunteering, often spending time with nursing home patients.

A colleague who met the senior in 1972 said he worked primarily as a first-aid instructor.

Lyle Sproat, who worked with the victim at St. John Ambulance, said his longtime pal's desire to help others stayed strong as he grew older.

"He was very helpful in various organizations," Sproat said. "If things needed to be done, he seemed to take hold and see that they were."

Bosiak spent much of his time volunteering at St. Michael's Health Group, where he was liked and respected by employees.

"We thought very highly of him," said Pat Wilkes, volunteer co-ordinator at the centre.

"We were devastated to hear of his death."

As those who knew Bosiak grieve, strangers who lived in the same apartment building said they were feeling frightened by the homicide.

"I worried last night," said Nikita Iron as she pushed a baby carriage toward a bus stop. "I called my landlord and she told me to stay in the suite."

Others struggled to understand who might want to do harm to a senior.

"That's just terrible," said Don Benincasa, who lives on the second floor of the complex.

"What kind of a threat is a 77-year-old?"

Cops are looking for a person of interest in connection with the shooting death.

He has a dark complexion and is about five-foot-11. He is in his mid-20s to early 30s.

He has short, dark hair with a goatee and was wearing a dark blue sweater and light-coloured pants.

Police don't know what role, if any, the man had in the victim's death, but said they wish to speak to anyone who was in the area at the time of the slaying.

A clerk at a Mac's convenience store, blocks from the scene, told Sun Media that police were expected to collect surveillance video from the store.

An autopsy is scheduled for today.

The city was horrified in April when another 77-year-old, Hans Alberts, was repeatedly stabbed in a parking lot at Stony Plain Road and 149 Street.

He died later in hospital.

Alberts had just finished lunch with his wife in celebration of their 29th wedding anniversary.

In that case, Haldane Jenson-Huot, 23, was charged with first-degree murder.