

Questions remain if Zodiac Killer struck in Tahoe

By Mike TeSelle, KCRA-TV

Why did Donna Lass disappear?

Was the then-25-year-old nurse killed?

Is she the 12th victim of Northern California's infamous Zodiac Killer?



"We don't know. ... Of course it captures one's imagination, because it's such an intriguing case," said Lt. Brian Williams with the South Lake Tahoe Police Department.

On Sept. 6, 1970, Williams said Lass signed a worker's log inside the old Sahara casino (now the Horizon) about 1:50am.

Shortly after that, Lass was never seen – nor heard from – again, Williams said.

Six months after her disappearance, Williams said Lass' case took a turn that, to this day, is still generating new tips, leads and theories of what happened to her.

"The Zodiac sent a postcard to the *San Francisco Chronicle* newspaper. It suggested a Lake Tahoe location for his 12th victim," Williams said. "Donna Lass would've been his 12th victim."

The postcard contained phrases and symbols similar to Zodiac mailings.

One phrase read "Peek through the pines." Another was written upside down: "Around in the snow."

In 2007, acting on a tip related to the Zodiac killings, South Lake Tahoe police participated in a dig of a possible burial site near Lake Tahoe, but found nothing.

To this day, even though one investigator said his hunch is that Lass' disappearance is not linked to the Zodiac, Williams said the department still can't rule out that possibility.

"Stranger things have happened, as we have seen with the Jaycee Lee Dugard case. We will never give up hope in solving this case for Lass' family," Williams said.