

City of Clemson, South Carolina Police Department



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Jimmy Dixon, Chief of Police



Sunday, April 12, 1998

PLEASE HELP FIND JASON ANDREW KNAPP

An letter and plea for help from Jason's Mother



My son, Jason Andrew Knapp, disappeared on Easter Sunday, April 12, 1998. He was a twenty (20) year old student at Clemson University in Clemson, South Carolina where he was a sophomore majoring in mechanical engineering. He was last seen at approximately 10:30 PM on Saturday, April 11, 1998 by one of his roommates.

Jason and his three roommates would not see each other for two or three days at a time and did not find it unusual that they did not see Jason until some of his fellow Army ROTC friends became concerned that he had not attended physical training and ROTC classes for a few days and called the apartment inquiring about him. It was at this time that the roommates became concerned.

At first they thought that he just took off for a few days and would be back. They contacted a close friend of Jason's who was attending college in Pittsburgh, PA thinking that maybe he had gone to visit her for a few days. She informed them that they had not talked to each other for over a week. When Jason did not return by Friday, April 17, 1998 the roommates decided to call me. The same roommate who had last seen Jason placed the call. I immediately contacted the police and they went to the apartment searching for him.

His locked white 1990 Chevrolet Beretta was subsequently found at Table Rock State Park in Pickens County, South Carolina on April 21, 1998. The park admission ticket indicates that the car entered the park between 3 and 5 PM on Easter Sunday. Many search and rescue teams, including dog teams from North and South Carolina, conducted over 3400 hours of extensive searching in the park. Not a single clue was found that could prove Jason was ever at the park except for his car. After having the FBI analyze the ticket for fingerprints and discovering that three of his were on the ticket another extensive search was performed in March of 1999. Again, no clues were found.

Jason has always been a good, clean-cut young man. He was in good spirits the before his disappearance,

and had just been inducted into the elite Pershing Rifle Corps at Clemson University. According to a conversation we had on Saturday afternoon he was enjoying his first free weekend in weeks. He had spent that morning with a friend looking for an apartment for the fall semester. He was looking forward to school ending and making plans for the summer. He told me that he was planning on just "chilling out" around the apartment watching movies and just relaxing.

Even though Jason called me almost everyday, and sometimes several times a day if he was upset about something, I did not find it unusual that he did not call me that week. I knew that most of the problems that were upsetting him had been resolved and that he would be studying for finals and getting all his assignments up to date. I just assumed that we would be talking over the weekend and making final arrangements about a new apartment for the following school year, and deciding on a date for me to come down and help him get packed up to return home for the summer. How wrong my assumption would be.

There is no evidence that he planned personal harm to himself. His personal rifle and some ammunition were found in the closet of his bedroom in the apartment untouched. His bed had been stripped and the bed linens rolled into a ball, as if he had planned to return to do laundry. He had apparently stopped at a Wendy's at approximately 2:00 PM that Sunday afternoon according to a receipt in a bag from that restaurant found on the front seat of his car. A six-pack of soda and a container of fruit juice were also found lying on the back seat of his car. These items had been purchased from a local Ingles Supermarket.

There is no evidence that he had planned to run away. According to an ATM receipt he had withdrawn only twenty (20) dollars from his bank account the day before his disappearance. Fifty (50) dollars in change was found in the console of his car. His checkbook was found in his apartment and contained a considerable amount of money, which had been untouched. His suitcase and, from what we can tell, all of his clothes and other personal belongings were still in the apartment.

We have no idea what happened to Jason. He never talked to me or anyone else about this park. Table Rock State Park is well known in South Carolina and the surrounding states, and being a holiday weekend, had a large number of visitors. We feel in today's mobile society that it is essential that information regarding Jason's disappearance be spread as widely as possible in order to reach people who might have been at the park and perhaps saw him that day. It has been six years since his disappearance and every day the trail gets colder in our search to find him. The police need your help and, as Jason's mother, I need your help to find him.

On December 26, 2000 I was diagnosed with breast cancer. Even though the doctors assured me that all of the cancer was removed, and I received a clean bill of health in November 2001, it has made me acutely aware that something could happen to me before I find out what has happened to my son. I have made a pact with God to keep me healthy and give me the strength to find him. I will not die without knowing what has happened to Jason.

I have spent the past four years trying to get Jason's story on national television. It has all been so frustrating. I want to find my son. I need to find my son. He was my whole world and I miss him terribly. The longer he is gone the harder it gets. The pain does not go away. There is this gaping hole in my heart that will never heal.

I sincerely hope that you can help us in our search. Perhaps your help could provide the clue that would help the police locate him. Please find it in your heart to help me find my only son, my only child.

Sincerely,
Deborah A. Boogher

IF YOU HAVE ANY INFORMATION:
PLEASE CONTACT CAPTAIN KARRY WALKER, CLEMSON POLICE DEPARTMENT AT (864) 624-2008
OR THE ANONYMOUS TIP LINE AT (864) 624-2011.