

Every missing person is somebody's child...

Becky Marzo

December 18, 2009 by [Linda](#)
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Missing Since: 12/15/03
Missing from: Milwaukee, Wisconsin
Classification: Endangered Missing Adult
Date Of Birth: 05/03/80
Age at disappearance: 23
Height: 5'1"
Weight: 130 lbs.
Hair Color: Blonde
Eye Color: Blue
Race: White
Gender: Female
Distinguishing Characteristics: Glasses with oval silver wire frames. Scar on left wrist, tattoo on lower back (possibly a colored "rose"), double pierced ears, previously fractured nose, scarring in both ears from tubes, tonsils removed.

Details of Disappearance

Becky was last seen in the late evening hours at her residence in the vicinity of the 3100 block of N. 5th St. in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Her mother believes Becky was the victim of domestic violence resulting in death at the hands of her 37-year-old boyfriend, who had a prior record for domestic disorderly conduct and carrying a concealed weapon. Becky had pressed charges against him previously.

Co-workers at a Milwaukee Target store where Marzo worked later told her mother that she suffered beatings from her boyfriend and often came to work bruised and depressed. The death of Marzo's grandfather and a brother's accident occurred with no word from her.

Investigating Agency

If you have any information concerning this case, please contact:
Milwaukee Police Department
(414) 935-7403



Above Images: Marzo, circa 2003

A mother's desperate search

Sept. 4, 2006

Becky Marzo, 23, disappeared nearly 3 years ago; her mother has embarked on a relentless mission to find out what happened.

Karren Kraemer walks along a darkened Milwaukee street, stapling fliers to the trees and poles along her route.

It's 4 a.m. and deserted here, but for the occasional vagrant who calls out to her.

Three years ago, this 46-year-old mother of five could not have conceived of leaving her Oconomowoc home to haunt Milwaukee's central city in the middle of the night.

That was before Becky disappeared.

Since reporting her 23-year-old daughter missing in October 2004, Kraemer has become an almost daily presence at the Milwaukee Police Department, in person or by phone, and in the Milwaukee neighborhood where her daughter was last seen. She's hired private detectives and consulted with psychics, walked with prostitutes in Miami, changed jobs to gain inside information, and learned how to track public records at the county courthouse and online.

Kraemer has made it her life's work to find the daughter she now is convinced is dead, and to see convicted the man she believes responsible.

She got a boost in July when Philadelphia philanthropist Joe Mammana, who has thrown millions into searches for missing people – including Natalee Holloway, who famously disappeared on a post-graduation trip in Aruba – announced he would pay a \$100,000 “bounty” for Becky’s safe return or the recovery of her remains and conviction of those responsible for her disappearance.

Vickie Hall, one of the Milwaukee Police detectives assigned to the case, called Kraemer “the most active family member of any missing person we’re investigating.”

“My heart goes out to her,” said Hall of the Sensitive Crimes Division and the only investigator Milwaukee Police would allow to be interviewed about the case. “She’s a mother obsessed with finding her daughter, and I don’t know that I wouldn’t do the same if it were my child.”

Almost a vigilante

Becky Marzo was last seen by two friends about 2 a.m. Dec. 14, 2003, walking into the N. 5th St. apartment she shared with her boyfriend. Milwaukee police consider her to be a missing person, one of 600 or more active cases – the vast majority of those juveniles – being investigated at any given time by its sensitive crimes unit.

Most are located quickly, said Hall, and most choose to disappear, often going to great lengths to elude family, friends and authorities.

Marzo’s case is also being investigated as a possible homicide, said Mark Williams, who heads the homicide unit of the Milwaukee County district attorney’s office. Neither Hall nor Williams would say whether Marzo’s boyfriend is a suspect.

“Our investigation is not focusing on any one individual,” Hall said.

Both refused to comment on Kraemer’s contention that sealed search warrants have been executed at the N. 5th St. home, in which she said investigators dug up a portion of the basement floor and applied a chemical to walls to search for blood.

Kraemer is not so careful. She tells anyone who’ll listen that Becky’s boyfriend knows what happened to her. She speaks his name at missing person vigils, in e-mails and letters. She calls him a “person of interest” on the reward posters, a “killer” in conversation.

When Kraemer posts her fliers in Milwaukee's central city, it is in his neighborhood or those of his relatives, where she knows he'll see them. They're torn down a day or two later, and she returns to put up more.

She knows where he lives now, who his girlfriend is, what he drives, where he works. She tracks his movements and reports them to police.

"You almost get to the point where you're a vigilante," said Kraemer, who's taken cues from the television show "America's Most Wanted" and a "how to" video by the parents of a missing Indiana woman whose ex-husband has been convicted of her murder. "I feel confident he's going to make a mistake," she said. "I'm pushing so hard, something's got to give."

Everything Kraemer has done in the last 18 months has been to prove Becky is dead, and not, as her boyfriend has told police, working as a prostitute in Florida.

Asked what she believes, detective Hall declined to answer.

On one hand, Hall says, Becky's run away in the past. On the other, she'd always maintained contact with someone – a cousin, a friend. She hasn't this time.

Based on discussions with police, the FBI and private investigators, Becky's friends and former employer, Kraemer offers what she thinks is proof her daughter is dead: There has been no activity on her Social Security number or her credit cards. She's not been arrested. No bills have been paid. Her driver's license expired and has not been renewed.

Becky, who friends said loved her job at the Target store on N. 124th St., never reported for work again and left a paycheck unclaimed.

And then there's her cell phone.

Becky Marzo was the kind of girl whose mood you could chart by the songs on her voice mail. An ardent country music fan, she changed her messages frequently to feature a favorite tune.

After that December day, according to friends and family, Becky's voice mail message never changed again. Now, it's dead.

A violent relationship

Becky Marzo grew up Becky Kraemer, the second of five children of Dave and Karren Kraemer, who lived most of their married life in Oak Creek. A 1998 graduate of Oak Creek High School, the bubbly, petite blond was brainy but naïve, her mother said, a talented clarinetist who hung mostly with the band and DARE crowds.

There were some problems along the way. She saw a counselor for depression in her teen years and briefly ran away with friends at 18, though her parents knew where she was. She started smoking pot.

Just 20 and fresh off a failed marriage, Becky moved with her parents to Oconomowoc in 2000. She started working as a cashier at a nearby Menard's store.

It's not clear how Becky met Carl, a good-looking Milwaukee man 11 years her senior. She told her mother he'd come into the store as a customer and asked her out for coffee. One friend said they met while cruising on Highway 100. Carl has told police he found her prostituting in his neighborhood. Regardless, she was drawn to him, and within months she'd move to the Milwaukee duplex where he lived upstairs from his grandmother.

She never told her parents where exactly, according to Kraemer, and never brought Carl home.

"We started seeing changes in Becky after that," her mother said. "She stopped calling and quit coming home on Sundays – that had always been family day. As she got deeper and deeper into the relationship, we saw her less and less."

In time, she said, the two began fighting, and it was clear Becky was being abused. When the fighting escalated, Becky would move back home, but Carl always persuaded her to return. "He'd call a hundred times a day – our house phone, Becky's cell phone, my cell phone," her mother said.

Becky came home at Christmas in 2002 with bruises, scratches and black eyes, her mother said. In March, she was back again, so badly beaten that her nose appeared to be broken, hair was ripped from her head and there were choke marks across her neck.

"We told her the only way she could stay home this time is if she'd go to the DA's office and press charges," Kraemer said.

She did, but still she returned to Carl, and the case was later dismissed because Becky refused to testify.

"When she went back that time, we decided we were going to try tough love," said Kraemer, who grew silent at the memory, and then bitter.

"I can't believe I listened to my husband with that tough love (expletive)," she said, suddenly crying.

"I live with the guilt every day that I wasn't there when she needed me most."

Spiraling, and then gone

Becky was last seen by two girlfriends walking into the duplex in the 3100 block of N. 5th St.

The three had been out at a local club, something Carl never liked Becky to do, said friend Kristina Randall.

“He didn’t like Becky to go out without him,” Randall said. “He always wanted to know what time she’d be home, who she was with, what she was doing at all times.”

Randall said Carl rang Becky’s cell phone several times that night, but Becky ignored it, until she finally turned it off.

When she dropped Becky off about 2 a.m., she said, Becky promised to call her the next day. Randall said she’s never seen or heard from Becky again.

Karren Kraemer reported Becky missing in October 2004, 10 months after she was last seen by her friends.

Mother and daughter had been estranged since April 2003 when Becky, angry at her parents and fleeing Carl, went to Miami where she began working in a strip club.

Days before, she’d called her mother in a panic, saying her car had broken down in Milwaukee and begging Kraemer to come get her.

“I told her no,” said Kraemer, who offered to send a tow-truck to bring her home.

“She was screaming at me, saying I didn’t love her,” Kraemer recalled. “It’s not that we didn’t love her. But at that point, we’d had enough. We just couldn’t keep picking up the pieces.”

Tracked down by the FBI in Miami, according to Kraemer, Becky spoke to her mother one last time, by phone. “She said, ‘Mom, leave me alone. I’m trying to start my life over. I’ll call you when I’m ready.’ ”

Becky had returned to Milwaukee in June 2003, moved back with Carl, resumed her friendships and took a job at the Target store on N. 124th St.

Though they never spoke, Kraemer had kept loose tabs on her daughter through a niece, who’d stayed in touch with Becky even when she was in Florida.

It was the niece, Lisa Dietz, who told Kraemer in March 2004 that she thought something was wrong. She and Becky had visited in December, and Becky

promised to call soon. She never did, and repeated calls by Dietz had gone unanswered.

“I left messages for her for months,” said Dietz, 24, who now lives in Kissimmee, Fla. “Becky’s not the type of person to go missing like that. She couldn’t go without the contact.”

Changed her life

By the time Kraemer went to police in October, she’d hired the first of two private detectives, tracked down Becky’s friends, learned her place of employment. She said she called Milwaukee police in June but was told someone Becky’s age “has free will” and probably left on her own.

“From March until October, we tried to dig up as much as we could,” Kraemer said. “But by October, we’d had enough. It was time for the police to investigate this.”

Detective Hall concedes there were mistakes in the beginning.

A “clerical error,” she said, caused police to fail to list Becky as a “critical missing person” on the National Crime Information Center database for a year. The first officer who took Kraemer’s complaint questioned whether it was racially motivated – Carl is black, Becky white – and called Carl in for a confrontation with Kraemer at the police station. One of the first investigators was reassigned. Kraemer complained that both men had known Carl’s uncle, a fired Milwaukee police officer.

“I can see where these would have raised concerns for Karren, but I think we’ve overcome that,” Hall said. “I believe there is a level of trust.”

Still, Kraemer continued her own investigations. She’d left a six-figure job with a national copy chain to work for Target, where she ingratiated herself with co-workers to learn more about her daughter’s time there. She traveled to Miami handing out fliers and offering cash for information in the red light district and strip clubs.

“Nobody would take my money,” she said. “They knew she wasn’t there.”

She posted a \$30,000 reward and blanketed Milwaukee’s central city with fliers, with the help of such groups as Career Youth Development and Community Partners – evidence, she says, that race is irrelevant in this case.

“People of color have been my strongest advocates,” Kraemer said. “I’ve walked door to door. . . . There’s not one person who’s said to me, ‘Why don’t you have people in Oconomowoc help you?’ ”

Kraemer has combed the courthouse and online databases for information about Carl, including his previous arrests. She monitors his discussions on online dating and racing sites. She's followed a psychic's leads into dead ends and has arranged for off-duty officers from other jurisdictions to search county parks with cadaver dogs.

Efforts to reach Carl through his father and an attorney were not successful.

By her own admission, Kraemer sees evidence of a crime in every freshly turned mound of earth. Her relentless efforts have strained her relationship with police, her own investigator, her husband and friends. She has, in some ways, become someone else.

"You change your whole life to do what you have to do," she said.
Channeling her despair

Over the last year, Kraemer has become increasingly involved in a loose network of families of missing persons across the country. They offer one another emotional support and resources, attend vigils, distribute information and lobby lawmakers for changes in police procedures and tougher sentences for domestic violence and other crimes.

They are now hoping to formalize that relationship with the creation of a new non-profit organization called the Midwest Coalition for the Missing. The organization would provide resources to family members as soon as someone is reported missing and attempt to raise reward money.

For Kraemer, it is a way to channel her despair into something worthwhile for others.

"Of course, I want to find my daughter, but something should come out of my loss," she said.

"We want to educate the public. People have to understand, especially in domestic violence cases, when a woman disappears, whether she's running away and hiding, she's changed her identity or she's been murdered by her boyfriend, it has to be important enough to investigate."

If you have any information on this case please contact CUE Center For Missing Persons using the contact form below or contact Cue Center at (910) 343-1131 24 hour tipline (910) 232-1687.



All information submitted to CUE Center For Missing Persons is confidential.

Missing Persons Nationwide



PO Box 12714 Wilmington, NC 28405
(910) 343-1131 / (910) 232-1687

[Contact CUE](#)

Becky Marzo is also listed as missing at: [The Wisconsin Clearing House For The Missing](#)