

A mile a minute....
that is how fast your child can disappear



A MESSAGE FROM MARC

San Francisco Examiner
Sunday, October 17, 1993

Parents Plea: Free Our Polly

By Marc Klaas

The following plea for Polly was first published in the San Francisco Examiner on October 17, 1993, less than three weeks after Polly was kidnapped.

Our beautiful 12-year-old daughter Polly was kidnapped at knifepoint from her house full of friends and family in Petaluma, at approximately 10:30 p.m. Friday, Oct 1, 1993.

It is now 16 days later and there is no trace of Polly or her abductor. Our sorrow is so deep. Our soul is so empty. Words cannot express the tremendous emptiness that we feel.

We are angered and outraged that heinous, violent crimes are committed against our children. A child is a precious treasure. Children are our future. They must be nurtured and loved. They must be treated with respect, understanding and compassion. They are small, they are new and they are true. They should be allowed to grow and bloom and prosper. They should not be denied their age of innocence.

When a child is kidnapped as Polly was, measures and safeguards should be in place to expedite their immediate recovery. At present, it is illegal for a municipal police department to request the assistance of the FBI in a kidnapping. The FBI must be contacted by a third party.

We feel that all resources must be expedited immediately in this critical situation where every second counts.

Free postage should be accessible to the parents of confirmed kidnap victims. Parents should not have to waste valuable time begging and groveling for the stamps necessary to get vital flyers and appeals for help into the mail. It will take an act of Congress to make this happen. Contact your state and local representatives and ask or demand their assistance in getting the laws regarding child abduction changed.

If you know or suspect that a child is being abused, report the offending adult to the police. Violent acts against children cannot be tolerated, because if violence against our kids is allowed, that is an indictment against our society and a crime against humanity.

(Continued on Page 2)

PARENTS' PLEA TO DAUGHTER

Children should be wary of strangers. If they feel threatened, they should know that it's okay to scream, yell and run. When they're outside, children should be accompanied by at least one other person. They should be taught self-defense and survival techniques. Teach your children to call 911 or, if in a hotel, 9911. Secure your homes at night. Buy a dog with a loud bark. Purchase a baseball bat.

We pray for Polly and talk to Polly all the time, but we don't know if she can hear us.

We should not harm our children because they do not harm us. They should be raised with dignity. Their self-esteem, talents and interests should be encouraged and reinforced so that they can mature into valuable and constructive adults.

If a child is neglected, abused and ignored, that child can grow into the kind of injured adult that may commit violent crimes against the next generation of children.

We miss Polly so much. She is so sweet and smart and pretty and sensitive and full of the joy of life. We miss the twinkle in her eye and her sweet humor. We long to see her beautiful smile and hear her musical voice.

Whoever you are, wherever you are, please return Polly to her family. She belongs here. She is part of us. We are part of her.

Our darling, if you can read this, please know that your mommy and daddy love you so much and we will continue to search for you until we can hold you safely in our loving arms again. ■

On March 6, 2009 another father reached out to his missing daughter via the print media. Amber Dubois disappeared while walking to school on 2/13/09. This is her father's letter to Amber.

March 6, 2009

Amber,

Hello my sweetheart, this is Dad. It's late Friday night and I wanted to write you this letter since you are not here with me. This was supposed to be our weekend together and this afternoon at about the time I should be picking you up from the train station, I was thinking about what I could do to talk to you like we would be doing right now. So I decided that tonight I would write you this letter and get it out where you might get a chance to read it.

One of your friends brought over a CD with pictures of you and your friends at their birthday beach party. Some cool pictures of you guys, one is of you running in the water at night by the pier with a cool sunset behind you. It reminds me of

our midnight grunion run while camping last summer and all the fun we had that night catching all those darn fish with our hands. I guarantee on our next run, I will catch more than you!!!

Your Teacher Mr. Reyburn is keeping your lamb, (Nénette) for you till you get back. You can bet your Mom is looking as hard as she can for you since she will be doing your barn clean-up duties until you return.

This is still my weekend, so I will be waiting to hear from you so I can come get you. Next Friday is the 13th again and it will be a month that you have been away, I don't want to wait that long before I get my next hug from you. Well, I really just wanted to say we all miss you and love you very much. I hope you get to read this, or better yet I hope you are back in my arms soon, so I can tell you in person. Don't lose hope in our finding you. I will never lose hope in our search for you.

Always Loving You,

DAD xoxo

HELP FIND AMBER DUBOIS

The weather is warming up, heralding the end of the winter nesting season. Americans are storing their cold-weather gear and breaking out spring and summer fashions. Soon, children will dress down and congregate in parks, playgrounds and schoolyards.

Inevitably, schools will also issue parent notices that suspicious individuals have been observed at bus stops and school-walking routes. In a given community, such incidents may or may not be related, but parents will express concern, particularly in lieu of current high profile missing child cases.

On February 13, 2009, blue-eyed 14-year-old high school freshman Amber Dubois apparently disappeared as she was walking to school alone at 7:10 am in Escondido, CA. Now, more than a month later, Amber's family is desperately trying to keep her case in the public eye, and they are working closely with the authorities to coordinate volunteer and law enforcement searches in and around this San Diego suburb.

Amber Dubois remains missing today even though law enforcement is much better prepared to investigate missing child cases than they were when my daughter Polly was kidnapped in 1993. Despite a \$60,000 reward, tips and leads have been few and far between. A dedicated law enforcement task force continues to investigate, Amber's family continues to conduct professionally organized volunteer searches, the media continues to report and the community remains vigilant, yet time is slipping away at a mile a minute and a day at a time.

It is a well-known but little reported fact that children are particularly vulnerable going to and returning from school. Whether they are on foot, bike or bus they are often alone, taking known

paths that expose them to potential victimization. Therefore, I would like to share some simple strategies that should ease concerns and create a safer environment for all of our kids.

Some children, particularly very young ones either will not fully comprehend the concept of calling 911, or they may not even own cell

phones. Therefore, at the very least, parents should take the extra precaution of showing their children the safest routes to and from school. Children, particularly young ones, should walk in groups of

two or more. Whenever and wherever possible, children should walk against the flow of traffic. Groups of parents or neighborhood watch programs should organize to monitor bus stop activity and arrange to escort children who must walk to and from school. This can be done on a rotating basis.

Since 2005, Federal Communication Commission (FCC) regulations have required that all cell phones sold in the United States are equipped with technology that will allow 911 operators to locate cell phones in an emergency.

As of 2008, all of the major cell phone carriers have programs that use Global Positioning System (GPS) technology to provide families with a variety of features, including breadcrumb and geo-fencing capability. Many parents have found peace of mind in these low-cost, highly efficient locator programs that enable them to track their children's movements and know when they travel beyond a predetermined geographic radius.

*"Keep Amber in
your thoughts
and prayers".*

(Continued on Next Page)

MISSING CHILD ALERT

\$60,000 REWARD*



**MISSING
AMBER DUBOIS**

LAST SEEN: February 13 2009 -7:10 A.M.

LAST LOCATION: ESCONDIDO HIGH SCHOOL, ESCONDIDO CALIFORNIA

AGE: 14 YEARS OLD

GENDER: FEMALE

HEIGHT: 5'5"

WEIGHT: 130 lbs.

HAIR COLOR: BROWN

EYE COLOR: BLUE

LAST SEEN WEARING BLACK JEANS AND BLACK HOODIE

INFORMATION PLEASE CALL THE TIP LINE AT

760-743-TIPS
8 4 7 7

www.BringAmberHome.com

*\$50,000 FOR INFORMATION LEADING TO THE SAFE RETURN OF AMBER.
\$10,000 FOR INFORMATION LEADING TO THE ARREST OF PERSON(S)
RESPONSIBLE FOR HER DISAPPEARANCE.

Unfortunately, this was not enough to protect Amber from the convergence of forces that resulted in her disappearance. We can never protect everybody all the time. However, when one of our children is victimized we must

mobilize as a national community and do whatever is necessary to affect that child's return. Keep Amber in your thoughts and prayers. It is the least that we can do. ■

THE SUPER BOWL OF SEX TRAFFICKING

Anytime a major event such as the Super Bowl comes into town, a massive influx of tourists, money, and a no-holds-barred party atmosphere attract the prostitution scene.

In an effort to combat the inevitable proliferation of child prostitution that occurs during mega-events, the KlaasKids Foundation and the Florida Coalition Against Human Trafficking (FCAHT) teamed up to conduct an all-out blitz against sex trafficking during the Super Bowl in Tampa, Florida on February 1, 2009.

Operation: Tackle the Traffickers included more than 45 volunteers who targeted hotels, restaurants, gas stations and other businesses in Tampa, St. Petersburg and Clearwater during Super Bowl weekend. Morgan Dennis of the KlaasKids Foundation supplied the majority of the intelligence reporting during the event. Her analysis was conducted online using Craigslist as well as several other websites used by providers and customers. Areas that were targeted were selected based upon intelligence analysis derived from the Internet.

FCAHT event organizer Giselle Rodriguez recruited volunteers from the local Human Trafficking Coalition and several local colleges. She compiled an enormous amount of anti-trafficking literature that outreach workers then supplied to business owners prior to the Super Bowl.

Outreach workers received a tremendous response from the business owners. Several of the hotel managers requested follow-up training for their staff so that in the future they would be able to better identify sex traffickers in action. More importantly, the outreach effort

developed several leads regarding the sex trafficking of minors. All of the leads were turned over to law enforcement authorities. Ms. Rodriguez's efforts were instrumental in the success of the program. Plans are already in progress for next year's Super Bowl in Miami, Florida.

Super Defense – Tampa Law Enforcement

Area law enforcement agencies including the Tampa Police Department and the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Department conducted numerous sting operations during the days leading up to the Super Bowl. Their efforts produced impressive results.

Law enforcement's efforts to squash the proliferation of prostitution were apparent everywhere we looked. Street prostitution along popular tracks like Dale Mabry and Nebraska Avenue were nonexistent. Customers using the popular website www.usasexguide.info constantly updated their special thread to discuss the oppressive law enforcement presence.

Sting operations focused on street prostitution, strip clubs and massage parlors during the days leading up to the big game. On Monday, January 26th their operations netted 13 arrests. On Thursday, January 29th they had added an additional 19 arrests. By Friday night potential customers were hard-pressed to find any street prostitution in Tampa. ■

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POLLY KLAAS' KILLER HAS HIS DAY IN COURT

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When a jury found Richard Allen Davis guilty of the murder of Petaluma's 12-year-old Polly Klaas in 1996, Davis puckered his lips and extended a middle finger to TV cameras. Later, Davis was sentenced to death, and outraged California voters passed a three-strikes sentencing law.

From death row now, Davis still is puckering up and extending his finger at the public-and the public is paying for it. It's 2009, yet it was only this month that Davis' first appeal was argued before the California Supreme Court.

"Who would think it would take almost as long for this guy to get his hearing after he was sentenced to death than my daughter was on this Earth and she didn't reach her 13th birthday?" Polly's father, Marc Klaas, told me Tuesday.

Expect a ruling on that appeal within 90 days. Then there's a state habeas corpus appeal. Then Davis has a federal habeas corpus appeal. Before it's over, Davis, now 54, probably will have died of boredom. Or from another opium overdose, like the one for which he was treated in 2006, despite the fact that he was inside San Quentin.

How did it take this long? Davis was sentenced to death in September 1996 for the 1993 crime. Then it took the California Supreme Court office that handles appellate attorneys until mid-2001 to appoint attorney Phillip Cherney to represent Davis. As I've reported before, five years is not an unusual hiatus.

Then it took Cherney until July 11, 2005, to file an opening brief. Producing the appeal took longer than prosecuting Davis.

After another four years of delay, and back and forth with California attorney general's office, voila, there was a hearing in this month.

"I have no issue with the careful consideration of death penalty appeals or that it is an automatic process," said Klaas, and he wants a system that prevents the execution of an innocent man.

But the last 13 years were not dedicated to a hunt to find the real killer. Davis confessed on videotape. He led authorities to Polly's body.

So the basis of the appeal was legal contortion. Cherney argued that the trial should have been moved from Sonoma County, not to San Jose, but to San Diego. Also, while police had advised Davis about his right to remain silent and consult a lawyer, they did not do so before one pre-confession talk. As if a man with an 11-page rap sheet might be unaware of his rights.

According to the Associated Press, Cherney even complained that California's inability to quickly carry out executions has forced Davis "to endure the uncertainty and ever-present tension on Death Row for such an extended time constitutes cruel and unusual punishment."

Shameless.

"I was expecting some kind of brilliant argumentation," Klaas told me afterward. After all, the five-year process to appoint an attorney is supposed to limit the pool to highly qualified specialists. Instead, Klaas watched "some guy with a ponytail making pretty weak arguments."

In Cherney's defense, weak arguments were all he had.

How much has this exercise cost taxpayers? No one knows. That information is restricted.

(Continued on Next Page)

VICTIMS' RIGHTS WEEK 4.26 TO 5.02.09

PLEASE JOIN US

**District Attorney Rod Pacheco
Invites you to attend the 3rd Annual...**

Victims' Rights March

**Thursday, April 30, 2009
11:30 AM**

**From the Riverside County Administrative Center
4080 Lemon Street (corner of 10th & Lemon) • Riverside, CA 92501**

**To the steps of the Riverside Historic Courthouse
4050 Main Street • Riverside, CA 92501**

For more information visit <http://www.rivcoda.org/VS/rightsweek.html>
or call (951) 955-9888

NATIONAL CRIME VICTIMS' RIGHTS WEEK ★ APRIL 26 - MAY 2, 2009

(Continued from Page 6)

Ron Matthias, the supervising deputy attorney general handling the case told me, "The frustration that you are describing is shared widely."

Here's the worst part: If Davis said tomorrow that he wanted "the big jab," the state could not comply.

In 2006, U.S. District Judge Jeremy Fogel suspended all California lethal injections. Later the U.S. Supreme Court upheld lethal injection. Didn't matter, because a Marin County judge had ruled that there must be public comment on the new Fogel-inspired lethal injection protocol before it is adopted.

When will the public comment occur? "I don't know," a California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation spokesperson answered.

It's funny how the folks who want to parole criminals to pare the state budget never look at the high cost of glacial appeals. Klaas believes that the decades long delays are the result of "a silent protest against the death penalty by the defense bar, abolitionists and other death-row apologists." If there ever is an innocent person on death row, he'll die before the courts find out. ■

JOIN THE FOUNDATION AND HELP FIGHT CRIME!

Name: _____

Address: _____

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E-Mail: _____

Enclosed please find my tax-deductible donation.
Please make donations payable to the KlaasKids Foundation.

Credit Card Number: _____

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Thank you for your contribution and support!



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