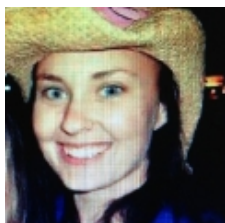


Autopsy inconclusive in determining Byrne's cause of death

By Kathryn Reed

The definitive cause and time of death for Alyssa Byrne could not be determined based on results from the Jan. 8 autopsy.

Byrne's body was found in a snowbank Jan. 4 off Pioneer Trail in El Dorado County near South Lake Tahoe. She had not been seen since New Year's Eve where she had been attending the SnowGlobe Music Festival about a half-mile way on the ball field adjacent to the Lake Tahoe Community College campus.



Alyssa
Byrne

"The date of death is unable to be determined because the body was frozen," El Dorado County sheriff's Lt. Pet Van Arnum told *Lake Tahoe News*. For the same reason the cause cannot be determined.

Blood samples have been sent to a laboratory that should tell authorities what Byrne died from.

Speculation is the 19-year-old Petaluma resident succumbed to hypothermia. Her jacket was found away from her body and footprints near the scene show signs of someone who was disoriented. These are classic indications of someone affected by hypothermia.

Van Arnum said the blood sample and toxicology reports should be available in about a month.

"Why she ended up there we still don't exactly know why," Van Arnum said.

His department is working with South Lake Tahoe police and Douglas County sheriff's officials to try to figure out the details leading up to her disappearance and subsequent death. The concert was in the city limits and her hotel at the Horizon is in Stateline, which is in Douglas County.

A friend of Byrne's remains adamant he saw her after midnight on New Year's at Horizon.

"Right now we have no reason to disbelieve him," Van Arnum said. "Even if he saw her, she could have come back over here."

Douglas officials are still reviewing video from the casino. The last time they have her on video is at 11:45am New Year's Eve. Her room key was used shortly after that.

Deputies are following up on leads that continue to come in. Call (530). 573.5300 if you have information.

"The problem was at that time of night literally thousands of people were walking away from SnowGlobe. It's hard to determine if anyone saw her because there were so many people that night," Van Arnum said. "We may never find out how she got there or why she walking that way."