

Jennifer searchers move staging area, set up fund

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The hunt for Jennifer Schweiger continued yesterday, as volunteers moved their rendezvous point to Holy Family R.C. Church in Westerleigh and set up a fund for donations to support the search effort.

According to Donna Cutugno, a member of the group called the Friends of Jennifer, a portion of the money sent to the fund will be used to increase the \$5,000 reward currently being offered for information leading to the return of the 12-year-old Westerleigh girl who has been missing since July 9. Jennifer has Down's syndrome and congenital heart disease.

The rest of the donations will be used to pay for some of the outside resources being used in the search and for paying some of the Schweiger family's expenses, Ms. Cutugno said.

Ken Schweiger, Jennifer's father, was trying to find signs of his daughter again yesterday. His involvement with the hunt for Jennifer has kept him from returning to work at New York Telephone since the day the girl vanished from the street near her Wardwell Avenue home.

People offering to help track down traces of the girl continue to call the police 24-hour hotline number, 447-4168, according to Officer James O'Donnell. Volunteers are being told to meet with search organizers each day at noon and 7 p.m. in the parking lot of Holy Family Church at 366 Watchogue Rd.

Corrections officers and members of the Emergency Services Unit have been assisting in what has become primarily a volunteer effort to scour lots, shorelines, cemeteries and just about any spot on the Island where there might be a chance of finding new clues in the case. The officers joined volunteers searching through dense woodlands of a section of the Greenbelt near Rockland Avenue in Sea View yesterday, Ms. Cutugno said.

A brush-filled lot on South Greenleaf Avenue in Westerleigh was also targeted by searchers yesterday.

Detectives have been focusing their energy on tracking down tips, looking for witnesses who may have seen the girl, and re-interviewing people, according to Lt. Louis Fiori of the Crimes Against Property Squad. Investi-

gators from Fiori's squad have canceled vacations and regularly worked 16 hours a day since the search first began.

According to the lieutenant, detectives trying to track down Jennifer are also looking for any evidence that would indicate the girl has fallen victim to foul play. The girl's trail ended at Staten Island Developmental Center, and as of yesterday there were no new clues as to her whereabouts or her fate, police said.

She was last seen walking with a man described as about 60 years old, 5 feet, 11 inches tall, with a bald spot on the back of his head.

"In a missing person case, our aim is to find the person," Fiori said yesterday. "Part of that is to determine if a crime has been committed, and if so, what crime."

Detectives yesterday were still awaiting results of tests being conducted on a small amount of blood found in a sink in a building at SIDC during the search.

Anyone wishing to contribute to the Friends of Jennifer and their efforts to help the Schweiger family can send donations to the Jennifer Schweiger Fund, P.O. Box 961, Staten Island, N.Y., 10314, according to Ms. Cutugno.