

Edmonton police investigate bizarre events around arrest in young woman's murder

By SHANNON MONTGOMERY

April 8, 2007

EDMONTON (CP) – Police are investigating a case in which a man, suspected of assaulting a cab driver, was discovered sitting in the back of a police cruiser and then ended up also being charged with a woman's murder.

Police spokeswoman Karen Carlson said police were investigating the assault Friday night when a man let himself into the back seat of one of the police cars that had responded to the call, surprising the officers inside.

“While he was in the police car, the canine unit that was at the scene and was searching picked up a strong scent . . . and the scent took them directly to the cop car, and that's what allowed them to confirm that he was the suspect they were looking for,” Carlson said.

When the man was taken in for questioning, police received a call that a woman's body was found in a home in the same area.

Police say the father of 25-year-old Stephanie Rae Butler found his daughter's body after her husband, who was out of town, grew worried when he couldn't reach his wife.

Carlson said police believe the suspect headed to the couple's house after the assault on the cab driver.

“He forcefully entered through one of the basement windows, and it's believed that at that time, this vicious assault occurred.”

A 24-year-old man is charged with murder, break and enter and commit, and breach of recognizance. He also faces a charge of aggravated assault, Carlson said.

Police said the suspect is related to the woman's husband.

Butler's husband returned to the house Saturday night, Carlson said, “obviously visibly and understandably shaken at the scene.”