

*In April 2005, this letter was sent to me by a former teacher of Valerie-Vanessa:*

Since you asked about the "unfortunate circumstances" surrounding Valerie's death, I have copied the news items I found. Not pleasant reading, especially for anyone who cared for Val.

I knew her and was one of her instructors during the two year period when she completed an associate degree in her home town of The Dalles, Oregon. Surrounded by her large family and accepted by a group of students who sensed her gentle nature, she had a very positive experience and was relatively stable during that time. (Also, probably medicated consistently enough to help.) After graduation she drifted off and I only saw her one more time--approximately 7 years ago.

At that last time, she appeared at a College function which did not involve her at all. She wandered around, had numerous conversations--including one with me--and then tried to talk her way onto a school bus from out of town. They kicked her off because she clearly was not a high school student. I heard her say to the bus driver "It is time for me to go. Hood River (the town the bus was from) is OK." She disappeared that day and I

never saw her again. I retired and left The Dalles soon after that last event.

Her obituary was sent to me by a woman who was a fellow student of Val's who still lives in The Dalles. Many people cared about her and tried to help but in the end Valerie always seemed to need to slip away one more time...

Here are the articles about the the circumstances of her death. Very sad.

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### **Death ruled probable suicide**

By: Shawn Charniga, The Record (Troy NY)

04/16/2005

GUILDERLAND - Suicide is being considered as the probable cause of death of a 55-year-old Troy woman whose burned body was found in the back yard of 6 Zoar Ave. in Guilderland, Police Chief James R. Murley said Friday. An autopsy was performed at Albany Medical Center Hospital Friday morning, but full results were not available prior to a 6 p.m. press conference in Town Hall, according to Albany County District Attorney David Soares.

State Police BCI Sr. Inv. Karl Meybaum said carbon monoxide poisoning appeared to be the cause of death. During the press conference the decedent was described only as a 55-year-old female who lived locally and was a year-long acquaintance of the homeowner who discovered her body. Authorities said her identity would be withheld pending notification of her next of kin. However, in a press release distributed to reporters at the briefing, she was named as Valerie A. Ingebo of 2316 Fifth Ave. in Troy. The homeowner who reported her death is Leslie Craigue, who authorities said was at the center of a bomb scare in January.

Despite persistent questioning from reporters, Murley brushed aside the idea Craigue, who was said to be an acquaintance of Ingebo, could be involved, saying relatives had given State Police an apparently reliable alibi stating he had been out of town since Monday.

"We feel very confident he's not involved," the chief said. Despite initially being treated as a suspicious death, Ingebo's death is now being

treated as a suicide, according to police. The investigation involved local and State Police, Soares' staff, the Albany County Coroner's office and the state Office of Fire Prevention and Control, Murley said.

Soares said when he arrived on the scene at about 2:30 a.m. authorities were in the process of obtaining warrants that would allow them to step onto Craigue's property and process the scene. Ingebo's body was removed from the scene later that morning, officials said. The DA said gasoline cans were found on the property, but what accelerant was used is not known and will remain unclear pending full autopsy results.

According to reports, the neighborhood, already on edge from the January incident involving Craigue, who spent several weeks afterward in the Capital District Psychiatric Center, was shaken by Friday's events. Letters reassuring neighbors the incident was a suicide, not a homicide, were distributed during evening hours, Murley said.

Both he and Soares commended neighbors for their patience during the investigation.

When asked if Ingebo had suffered from mental health issues, Murley replied, "From what I understand, there were a few issues, yes."

When asked if a note was left, the chief said "There was a ... maybe two notes. I believe one of them was in her pocketbook, but I'm not sure where the other one was."

Meybaum, who is assigned to the New Scotland barracks, confirmed both notes were found in her handbag. Officials declined to elaborate on their content and said they offered no clues as to why she apparently committed suicide in Craigue's back yard. It was not immediately clear what role burning played in her death, Meybaum said.

According to Soares her approximate time of death will be included in the full autopsy report.

He did not specify when this would be available.

In a strange twist to an already bizarre story, a 44-year-parolee from Watervliet was caught red-handed Friday while burglarizing a nearby apartment.

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## **Body found, now called suicide**

Updated: 4/16/2005 10:04 AM

By: Capital News 9 web staff

What first looked like a brutal murder in Guilderland, has now been ruled a suicide. Officers found the body of a woman on 6 Zoar Avenue around midnight Friday. Police went knocking door to door right afterwards, asking neighbors if they had seen anything suspicious. The late night call from officers was worrying to some neighbors.

"Until we find somebody who did it, I mean we live here and mean how many times you find a body in your next door neighbor's yard you know in the middle of the night, you know it scared my wife, my kids, they come banging on the door in the middle of the night, first thing they say is they thought something happened to me at work," said Jim Lee.

Guilderland Police identified the woman as 55-year-old Valerie Ingebo of Troy. They said she had a history of mental illness.