

Concert held in hopes of finding Md.'s missing

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QUEENSTOWN Nearly 15 years ago Robert John Bornos was playing pool with friends at the old Choptank Inn in Easton.

Feeling a little ill, he stepped out into the parking lot to get some air. No one has heard from him since.

His family and other families with missing loved ones who attended the Squeaky Wheel Tour stop at the Hunter's Oak Golf Club Tuesday are still holding out hope that one day they will get some kind of closure.

The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children reports that there are 145 missing person cases in Maryland. The Federal Bureau of Investigation's National Crime Information Center said in May 2006, there were about 110,063 missing persons listed in their information system.

To raise awareness for those who go missing every year, GINA for Missing Persons Foundation sponsors the Squeaky Wheel Tour and this year the Maryland Task Force for the Missing and Unidentified Adults and Children hosted the tour for two stops in Glen Burnie and Queenstown.

The Squeaky Wheel tour, a global series of concert events, is in its second year. This year the headline band of the U.S. branch of the tour is Clementine, an independent band whose lead singer, Jannel Rap, is the sister of Gina Bos, musician and mother who has been missing for seven years. Rap said the tour runs from Oct. 17, the date Bos went missing, to Nov. 4, her birthday. Bos' daughter was selling merchandise at the show to fundraise for the cause. Rap said last year, 10 people who were profiled at shows were found and this year, though no one has been found yet, many tips have been phoned in to local police in towns along the tour.

"If we can bring home one, that's huge to the family," Rap said. "Without big names and big stories, no one remembers."

Sam Bowerman, a retired detective lieutenant from Baltimore County and member of the task force said it's difficult to organize investigations when there's no federal agency in charge. The National Center for Missing Adults is in danger of losing its funding under reauthorization bill H.R. 423 that's stuck in committee right now, he said.

The funds had been drained when the group was tasked with finding the missing adults from Hurricane Katrina. Bowerman said the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children gets about \$35 million a year, while the CMA is only asking for \$4 million over 10 years.

Once a year Bornos' family gets an update on the case from the Maryland State Police in Easton, said his mother, Linda Blizzard.

His sister, Cheryl Graves, said there are still so many unanswered questions. She agreed with Blizzard and Bornos' aunt, Agnes Bridge, that they would like to see further investigation. The family felt their loved one has been forgotten by police, media and the community.

"Things have come to a standstill and we're pissed about it. How can you just let it go?" asked Johnny Scharch, Bornos' cousin.

He said there's not enough outreach to his family, especially Blizzard, who needs support to keep her son's name alive.

Bowerman and other task force representatives including Darlene Huntsman and Susan Bowerman, sisters of missing Bernadette Stevenson-Caruso, recently lobbied in Annapolis for legislation that would ensure more detailed and timely reporting and investigation, including more comprehensive DNA testing.

Sam Bowerman also suggest that "most people don't just disappear," and taking missing persons cases more seriously from the start could help lead to more closed cases.

Bornos' family along with the families of other local missing people, Tracey Lynn Mosley, Dr. Waldir M. Pedersoli, Donald Lee Izzett Jr., Heather Jean Anderson and Venu Shobana Dhanaraj, gathered to remember their loved ones and encourage hope that they'll be found.

"Deep down I think I know he's gone," Blizzard said. "I just want to know what happened."

In most cases police believe the missing person may have been taken against there will.

If anyone has any information about the Bornos case or other missing persons in the region, contact the Maryland State Police at 410-822-3101 or 410-290-0050.