

COBBS CREEK ABDUCTION

INVESTIGATION INTO 5-YEAR-OLD'S ABDUCTION, SEX ASSAULT

One Year Later, Questions Remain in Child Abduction Case



By Queen Muse | Thursday, Feb 20, 2014 |

Last week marked one year since Christina Regusters was arrested for her alleged role in the abduction and rape of a 5-year-old elementary school student from the Cobbs Creek section of the city.

On January 14, Regusters allegedly donned Muslim garb to appear as the child's mother and kidnapped the kindergartner from William C. Bryant Elementary School. According to investigators, Regusters walked the child to a home on the 6200 block of Walton Avenue, where the girl was sexually assaulted.

The child was found by a passerby one day after the abduction. She was sitting alone in the cold at an Upper Darby playground, before sunrise, wearing only an over-sized T-shirt. Investigators say they later found Regusters' DNA on the T-shirt the child was wearing and used that evidence to arrest Regusters on February 14.

Waiting Behind Bars

Since then, Regusters has seen her 20th birthday come and go while sitting behind bars at the Northampton County Correctional Facility. Regusters was moved to the county prison after she was assaulted in a Philadelphia prison facility.

Northampton County Director of Corrections Arnold Matos said Regusters' stay at the county facility has been largely uneventful.

As of late May last year Regusters had not had a single visitor. Since then, Matos said Regusters has had a total of four visitors, two in the summer and two in the winter, whose identities were not disclosed.

As far as violent incidents like the one she experienced at the Philadelphia facility, Matos said, "there have been none whatsoever."

Unanswered Questions

Shortly after the case broke in January last year, Tahsiyn Ismaa'eel started a Facebook group called [Before They Strike Again](#). The group is dedicated to keeping the community updated about the details of the case, many of which Ismaa'eel felt were confusing.

Ismaa'eel, 58, said she believes that there were other people involved in the crime.

"I know that pretty much from the group and just people that I talk with in my immediate circle, they've never believed that there was just only one person involved. Just by the level of the crime, I never believed that one female would go and do such a heinous crime," she said.

"Everybody is painting her as a monster right now but I still view her as a human being. She's a female and I believe she's a female that was likely manipulated by a male."

In the weeks following Regusters' arrest, both her attorney W. Fred Harrison, Jr. and the attorney for the family of the victim Thomas Kline were vocal about their belief that more people were involved in the abduction.

"The information I have suggests that there are other individuals probably involved in this case," Harrison told NBC10.com shortly after Regusters was charged.

The Philadelphia District Attorney's Office convened a grand jury investigation in March last year. The results of that investigation led to Reguster's indictment in late April. The full findings from the investigation, which may shed some light on the reasoning behind the single arrest, have yet to be released to the public.

Attorney [Tom Kline](#) says he and the victim's family remain hopeful that all of the people involved in the crime will eventually be arrested and charged for their involvement in the crimes.

"We're hopeful that the DA's office will continue to vigilantly hunt down the remaining individuals involved. We have heard Ms. Regusters' own lawyer, Mr. Harrison, state that there were additional individuals involved and we also believe that there were other individuals involved," Kline said.

"There are some answered and many unanswered questions that remain in this terrible tragedy but there is the pressure of an upcoming criminal trial in the summer and we hope to uncover fully what happened here."

For Ismaa'eel, the single arrest is an eerie reminder that, if others were involved in the crime, they are still out there. Still, she said she remains hopeful that the full truth of what happened will eventually be revealed.

"I don't know why she's the only one who got arrested. If Regusters was only a pawn, then that means that you have a monster out there that can still strike again; that means none of our children are safe," she said.

"Eventually the facts come out. At this point we're just being patient and I anticipate she will talk at some point. I know she has a story to tell."

Reguster's civil trial is currently scheduled for August 18.