

Two years later, Johnny's still missing

DES MOINES, Iowa (UPI) — Twelve-year-old Johnny Gosch set out with his dog and his red wagon on an Indian summer morning in 1982 to deliver the Sunday newspaper near his suburban West Des Moines neighborhood.

The dog arrived home a short time later, the wagon was found nearby, but Johnny still is missing.

Police appear no closer to finding him than they were Sept. 5, 1982, the day he disappeared.

Des Moines police now have another carrier to find. Eugene Martin, nearly 14, didn't return from his Sunday paper route Aug. 11.

For Gosch's parents, John and Noreen Gosch, Eugene Martin's disappearance brought back nightmares of the Sunday they were awakened at 7:45 a.m. by a customer complaining he hadn't received his Des Moines Register.

John Gosch found his son's room empty, the dog in the yard and the wagon on a nearby sidewalk, filled with newspapers.

Another carrier said he met Johnny as usual that morning on the corner where they picked up their papers. As they parted, the boy said he saw a motorist — a man — pull up in a car next to Gosch, apparently looking for directions.

The boy said he heard no commotion from the dog and continued on his way.

There have been hundreds of leads since and the emotions of John and Noreen Gosch rose and fell as, one by one, the leads fell flat.

The family received two calls about a month after the disappearance — one from a woman who said a religious cult was holding the boy, the other for a ransom. Police said they were both hoaxes.

A newspaper carrier disappeared a year later in Bellevue, Neb., and was found dead. Last December, in the same town, another teen-ager was found dead. Their killer confessed and police said he was not implicated in the Des Moines disappearances.

In January, a woman reported seeing two men chasing Gosch down a street in an undisclosed city — 10 months earlier.

"THE BOY RAN UP to the woman and said, 'Please, lady, help me. My name is John David Gosch,'" the investigators said. "At that point, one of the men grabbed him, twisted his arm behind his back and dragged him away."

Police shrugged it off as a family situation.

On Feb. 22, Noreen Gosch said she received three short, late-night telephone calls from her son within a few minutes. She told authorities each call lasted about 40 seconds and the boy sounded "mixed up, like he was on drugs."

Authorities said the calls were too short to trace. Telephone company officials refused comment.

In March, a Texas lawman said investigators were checking out at least a dozen reported sightings of Gosch in the Southwest.

"We did have some pretty good leads at that time — we thought," said Detective Guy Genovese in Corpus Christi.

In May, Noreen Gosch announced "one of the best leads we've had," but said the next day it was a "total washout."

The Des Moines Register's reward fund has grown to more than \$100,000 for information about either case. Posters and photos have been plastered in shop windows and at bus stops in Des Moines and to every daily newspaper in the United States and Mexico.

In Texas, Guy Genovese has the same gut reaction as other people — the same suspect is involved.

"It was two years, almost to the day (between disappearances). It happened on the same day of the week, the same time of morning, the same type of circumstances," he said.

"I have nothing to base it on, but maybe I think the guy who took this last one may be the same one who took Johnny Gosch. He may like little boys. But again, I have nothing to base it on. It's just speculation."

Des Moines police Sgt. Bill Mullins concedes the similarities, "but so far no proof or factual information has been found to link the two."

Authorities initially considered Johnny Gosch a runaway and didn't react very fast. The Gosch family, upset at the pace of the investigation, persuaded the Legislature to require all reports of missing children to be filed immediately with the national crime computer.

THE MARTIN disappearance was taken seriously from the start.

Police remain stymied for lack of solid clues, although there is no shortage of tips.

Mullins said the Martin case was still a major investigation, with 13 of the original 16 FBI agents still on the case, and more than 20 full-time police investigators and searchers. But a decision will eventually be made to lower the priority.

The Gosches and their private investigator are doing what they can to keep the case alive.

"If and when we find him, we can look him square in the eye and say we did everything possible to find him," Noreen Gosch said.

Martin's father didn't want his son to take the paper route anyway and says things will be different if his son returns home.

"He ain't never going back on that route," Don Martin declared.



Revolution remembered

A giant poster effigy of Libyan Col. Mommar Khadafi overlooks a military parade in Tripoli celebrating the 15th anniversary of the Libyan revolution. (AP)

Real Soviet men don't do the dishes

MOSCOW (UPI) — A newspaper article appealed for an end to "feminine" Soviet husbands who relinquish their traditional dominance over women.

"The worth of the husband — his prestige — should be the prime thing in the moral code of a family," said an article by Grant Bagraazian in the Communist Party newspaper Pravda. "A woman must remain a woman, a man a man."

The call for a return to a traditional role for men echoed an article a month ago that told mothers to raise their daughters to wear aprons, play with dolls and respect the "stronger sex."

"There was a strict hierarchy in a man's home," Bagraazian said. "A man's honor and worth were above all — he was the provider of the family, the builder, the keeper of the family foundations and women always felt the strong hand and kind strength of the man."

But he said too many men have abandoned their role as head of the family, "growing feminine," relinquishing "their masculine superiority to their wives" and wasting their time drinking or watching television.

"This has become one of the reasons for the many divorces, quarrels and badly brought up children," Bagraazian said. "Such concepts as feminine men and masculine women have even appeared."

Bagraazian illustrated the decay that is overtaking Soviet men with the story of a woman who "caught" her husband washing dishes one day.

The woman, seeing that he was embarrassed, felt sorry for him and tried to touch him.

"But, poor thing, he answered by raising a wet hand to his hair and told me meekly to leave him alone, that he has tired," the writer quoted the wife.

"I saw that my man had changed — even his voice wasn't what it used to be," she said. The wife, realizing she had been destroying her husband, knew it was time to act.

"Take off that apron," the woman said. "I don't want to see you in the kitchen, bent over the sink again."

"Be a man."

AFL-CIO chief lashes out at Reagan

WASHINGTON (UPI) — In traditional Labor Day messages issued Sunday, AFL-CIO chief Lane Kirkland lashed President Reagan for showing "icy disdain" for workers, but Labor Secretary Raymond Donovan lauded his boss for economic progress.

"When this administration came to power, claiming a mandate for the crackpot economic theories of the radical right, we were virtually alone in warning that Ronald Reagan's policies would bring great injury to millions of working Americans and their families," Kirkland said.

"We denied that phony mandate and fought those destructive policies every inch of the way and we were right."

Donovan, in an equally partisan Labor Day message, said Reagan's policies have given Americans "special reasons to rejoice in the strengthened economy we are enjoying."

Kirkland's entire Labor Day statement was devoted to an attack on Reagan.

"For three years in a row, the meaning of Labor Day has been dishonored by a president who professes warm regard for working people on that one day and exhibits icy disdain for them on the other 364," Kirkland said.

"Nothing is more important than that workers remember what really happened to them under the Reagan administration."