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SAN FRANCISCO Hit-run victim's family slams investigation

[Elizabeth Fernandez](#), Chronicle Staff Writer

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Anguished by the hit-and-run death of Ashlyn Dyer in the Presidio in March and frustrated by an investigation that has produced few answers, her family is lambasting the U.S. Park Police, accusing the agency of foot-dragging and lacking sufficient expertise.



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"It's like they are waiting for someone to give them a tip," Bruce Dyer, father of the 27-year-old woman, said in an interview Thursday. "I'm saying, go get your own tips -- check out insurance records, body shops, cell phone records. From minute one, they should have turned it over to people who had experience in dealing with this kind of incident."

Bristling at the criticism, the investigator on the case said Thursday the fatal accident has been the agency's top priority.

"He's making these accusations -- it is unfortunate," said Detective Sgt. Robert Jansing. "I've seen it happen when a parent suffers a loss like this. ... Whenever there's a smaller agency involved, people express this type of feeling.

"We haven't had any fatal hit and runs, but we've had many hit-and-runs and we've done criminal investigations for years," Jansing said. "We handle 20 to 30 death investigations a year."

Dyer, a broadcast journalism major at the University of Southern California, moved to San Francisco shortly after her graduation in

2001. A volunteer with the San Francisco Ballet, she worked in the retail industry, most recently as a buyer for Red Envelope, an Internet gift company.

An accomplished athlete who was training for a marathon, she was struck by a vehicle at around 7 a.m. on March 2 while running on Washington Boulevard near Kobbe Avenue in the Presidio. A park maintenance worker found her shortly after, lying unconscious in a ditch off the roadway.

Dyer was taken to the hospital in critical condition. She was taken off life support March 12, and her organs, including her heart, liver, kidney and pancreas, were donated.

According to the San Francisco medical examiner, the cause of death was "multiple blunt force injuries." In its report completed in May, the medical examiner's office found that Dyer sustained numerous profound injuries to her head, neck, torso, arms and legs.

A \$20,000 reward posted by the city was increased to \$50,000 by the family.

Disheartened by what they consider a lack of progress on the case, Dyer's parents, Bruce and Marsha Dyer, recently hired a private investigator. They say he learned of possible evidence of glass and green paint found on Dyer's clothing that might point to the involvement of a government vehicle.

"Our private eye said that if there was enough (paint), they could tell the year and the make of the vehicle," Bruce Dyer said. "The question becomes why have they not been sharing this information? We want to know if the paint matches any of the vehicles in the Presidio."

The Dyers, who split their time between Phoenix and Manhattan Beach (Los Angeles County), where they raised their three daughters, returned Monday to San Francisco, visiting the site of the car accident. They also met with the park police but left disappointed.

"Part of my disenchantment is that we thought that after this big meeting we would walk away with a lot more information," he said.

Bruce Dyer said he was under the impression that the FBI wanted to take jurisdiction of the case. The FBI told The Chronicle on Thursday, however, that it is not interested in taking over the matter.

"The FBI was called into the investigation by the park police at the very start and our Evidence Response Team assisted with the collection of evidence," said FBI Special Agent LaRae Quy, the spokeswoman for the federal agency. "That evidence was forwarded to the FBI lab in Quantico, Va. Those results will be provided to the park police."

Jansing, the park police detective, said he participated via

telephone in the Monday meeting on his day off. He said he is eagerly awaiting the results of the lab tests, including whether paint was found on Dyer.

Jansing said that 98 percent of Park Services vehicles are "either white or dark blue. Three or four vehicles might be green or tan, but they are few and far between," he said. "We haven't gotten any confirmation of green paint, so we have nothing to compare it to. There might be paint, we don't know."

Dyer's family and friends have established the Ashlyn Dyer Foundation for Neurological Research and Support, which to date has raised \$500,000. A fundraiser in early June, hosted by family friend Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., and his wife, Cindy, generated \$300,000.

"This has been frustrating for me, but I can't even imagine what it's like for Ashlyn's family," said Joseph Harper, a San Francisco businessman and Ashlyn's best friend since childhood. "You hope at some point there will be resolution so that we can find out what happened."

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