



Diana, and Kathleen Hester speak to reporters about the death of Rita Hester, who was murdered last year in Allston.

Police take murder mystery to the television screen

Boston Crime Stoppers offers cash reward for clues

By Debra Goldstein
TAB Staff Writer

The Boston Police Department was scheduled to launch a television campaign this week in an effort to gather clues about the brutal murder of Rita Hester, a transsexual stabbed to death in her [REDACTED] apartment in Allston last Nov. 28. The advertisements were to begin airing on local TV stations on Feb. 16, and the department's Crime Stoppers unit planned to simultaneously distribute informational fliers about the murder in Hester's general neighborhood.

Police are also offering a reward of up to

\$1,000 for information about the murder.

Hester's birth name was William Hester. He changed his name to Rita while in his 20s, and began living full time as a woman. She was 6 feet 2 inches tall and strong, according to her best friend, Brenda Wynne, who suspects it would have taken two strong men to commit the crime.

According to police reports, there were no signs of forced entry when they responded at 6:19 p.m. Nov. 28 to a call from a neighbor about a disturbance in Hester's apartment. Police found Hester lying on the floor suffering from multiple stab wounds to the chest. Paramedics were called, but were unable to revive her.

Although police say homicide detectives conducted a thorough investigation of the apartment, including fingerprinting, they still

MURDER, page 19



Treating maladies of the spirit

..... see **State of Health**

WORKING

"A SECTION WORTH EMPLOYING"

see classifieds

FROM PAGE ONE

Police seek information about unsolved murder

MURDER, from page 1

have no suspects.

"Nothing was taken. She had jewelry all over her," said Wynne, who is convinced that robbery was not a motive. Family members also reported that they found \$400 in a vase in the apartment after the murder.

Police have concluded that Hester, who was a cabaret performer at area nightclubs and a professional freelance escort, probably knew her assailant or assailants, and friends and family agree. The front door was locked when police arrived at the scene, said Sgt. Detective Herbert Spellman. The assailant or assailants are presumed to have fled out the unlocked back door of the first-floor apartment.

Initial tips from Hester's friends and acquaintances have led nowhere. Two men who were seen talking to Hester at the nearby Silhouette Lounge at 200 Brighton St. in Allston shortly before her murder have been interviewed by police and cleared of all suspicion.

Hester was well known in the neighborhood because of her friendliness and outgoing nature, and police are asking anybody who knows anything at all to come forward. That information includes anything as simple as whether they knew if Hester was scheduled to meet anybody at a particular time.

"Everybody in this area knew Rita," said Spellman. "She was

everywhere. Never caused trouble with anybody."

Wynne said detectives have been checking in with her every two to three weeks to update her on the case, but no new leads have emerged. She is optimistic that the renewed spate of media attention generated this week will encourage people to come forward with new information.

"I have a really good feeling about this," said Wynne.

Hester's sister, Diana Hester, said "somebody knows something" and that she hopes they will come forward to help police in their investigation.

"There's not a day that will go by that I don't think about my brother," said Diana Hester. "I mourn for

him. I cry for him."

Rita Hester's mother, Kathleen Hester, echoed her daughter's grief and frustration.

"Please come forward with any information that you have," said Kathleen Hester. "Regardless of cross-gender or whatever, he was a human being." □

Boston Police Crime Stoppers is not interested in your identity, just your information. The toll-free number is 1-800-494-TIPS. It is not recorded or traced, and callers who provide information leading to the arrest and conviction of a suspect are eligible for a reward of up to \$1,000. All information is confidential and you can remain anonymous.



Police are searching for clues in the murder of Rita Hester