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Terrilynn Monette's car has been found with her body inside, Rep. Austin Badon says

Terrilynn Monette's car found in Bayou St. John

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(Gallery by Michael DeMocker, NOLA.com and the Times-Picayune)

Ramon Antonio Vargas, NOLA.com | The Times-Picayune By **Ramon Antonio Vargas, NOLA.com | The Times-Picayune**

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The car of **missing West Bank teacher Terrilynn Monette** was found Saturday in Bayou St. John, near the corner of Harrison Avenue and Wisner Boulevard, authorities said. Monette's body was believed to be in the car, state Rep. Austin Badon said.

A Slidell police officer who had volunteered to dive in the water and search for the car located it shortly before noon. The car -- matching the license plate, make, model and color of Monette's -- was pulled from the water around 3:25 p.m.

The discovery came more than three months after Monette disappeared after leaving a Lakeview bar early on March 2. For weeks, large groups of volunteers turned out to search for the 26-year-old woman, whose disappearance was covered in national media. New Orleans police led the search efforts and reviewed hundreds of hours of surveillance tapes to try to determine what happened to her. Numerous other cars were also pulled from nearby water bodies as the search proceeded.



Monette's family has been flying back and forth from her native California to continue to look for her. Monette's mother, Toni Enclade, watched with Badon from the bank of the bayou as her daughter's car surfaced. Shortly afterward, Enclade was sobbing when she was reached by telephone.

"I don't understand why it took them so long to find her car," Enclade said between tears. "This is supposedly one of the first



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Terrilynn Monette, a 26-year-old teacher, has been missing since early March 2.

NOPD

places they would have checked. I'm just overwhelmed. It doesn't make sense."

Sobbing, she politely excused herself and hung up.

Badon has been **spearheading car retrieval and other efforts** for the past

several weeks.

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"It's a really sad moment," he said. I've gotten to know the family extremely well. I'm heartbroken for them. There's some sense of closure for them and I'm glad, though it wasn't the outcome i had hoped for."

The diver who found the car is Slidell police officer Mark Michaud, said Slidell police spokesman Daniel Seuzeneau.

Badon said authorities will perform routine toxicology tests and investigate whether any foul play was involved.

Monette was last seen leaving Parlay's Dream Lounge in the 800 block of Harrison Avenue about 5 a.m. on March 2. The second-grade teacher at Woodland West Elementary School in Harvey would have had to cross the bayou to return to her home.

Missing teacher's mother pleads for her return

Toni Enclade, mother of missing teacher Terrilynn Monette, pleads for her safe return outside Parlay's in Lakeview during a vigil praying for the 26-year-old. Dozens of people met at sunset on the sidewalk in front of the bar where Monette was last seen in the early morning hours last Saturday.

A tow truck arrived at the scene about 1:55 p.m. Saturday. The Orleans Parish coroner's office was notified of the situation.

When three women who had been missing for a decade were discovered alive in Cleveland last month, Enclade **told The Huffington Post** she was thinking of her daughter.

"The news that those girls were found so close to where they came up missing leads me to believe that there's a possible chance she's still in New Orleans," Enclade said, according to the report. "All this is doing is giving me hope that she's still out there somewhere."

Stay with **NOLA.com** as more details emerge.

Staff writer Naomi Martin contributed to this report.

Raw video of Terrilynn Monette's car being pulled from Bayou St. John

Raw video from the scene as the Honda belonging to missing teacher Terrilynn Monette is pulled from Bayou St. John near the Harrison Avenue bridge on Saturday, June 8, 2013.

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