Vicious rape never occurred

Rosalind Raby, Midnorth Monitor
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An alleged rape did not occur in Espanola last month.

Espanola Police Service Sargeant Steve Edwards said on Wednesday, July 9, the Espanola Police Service received a complaint of a serious sexual assault that occurred in the community of Espanola involving a young female victim being abducted and assaulted by two native males operating an older red pick-up truck. He added it appears the allegation is false.

“As part of the investigation, assistance was requested and provided by the Ontario Provincial Police Behavioural Sciences Section,” said Edwards. “It was determined during an interview of the complainant on July 6th that the abduction did not occur.

“The Espanola Police Service is no longer looking for the two native males or a red truck.

“It is important to get this message out to the community and surrounding areas that the allegation made at this time appears to be false.”

The complainant alleged she was abducted in front of the Espanola Royal Canadian Legion Branch #39 at around 10:30 pm on Tuesday, July 8. According to information released to media at the time, she said after a brief conversation, she was forced into an old beat up red pickup, taken to a remote location and sexually assaulted by men described by police as Native.

The first was described as having dark hair and a dark complexion, the other as in his late 30s, bald and also with a dark complexion.

Police canvassed the neighbourhood and launched an appeal to the media for public assistance the next morning.
Espanola Police Constable Ed Stortz had asked the public to keep an eye for the alleged red tuck, which was also described in great detail as being red with a black box line and no cap on the box, a single bench seat and with automatic transmission. It was also described as being rusty, beaten up and full of Tim Hortson and McDonalds garbage, as well as hand tools including a hammer and wrench.

A warning was released to women in the small town to be wary and on alert. The Mid-North Monitor was also told at the time by Stortz, "a 13-year veteran of the police service told him he had never seen such a vicious assault in all hit time on the force."

Edwards said there is a criminal charge pending.

Edwards added the public response was unusually high.

"Numerous tips had been received both directly from citizens and also through Crime Stoppers, this information and assistance was greatly appreciated."

The investigation is continuing.

With Files from Craig Gilbert