

Missing Napa man sought

By JOHN ROBINSON
Sentinel staff writer

SANTA CRUZ — Family and friends are searching for a Napa man who disappeared while driving to Santa Cruz Tuesday afternoon.

No word has been heard from Gary Phillip West since he left San Francisco Tuesday afternoon. West, a car collector, was driving to Santa Cruz to look at a Lincoln Continental he wanted to buy.

"He just totally vanished Tuesday afternoon," Steve Claspell, a close friend of West's said. "I hesitate to even guess what has happened. We've tried to follow through on everything. We've called the FBI the Highway Patrol, missing persons and we have called

all of the morgues."

West's friends have also visited all of the San Francisco Bay area hospitals, including those in Santa Cruz. Saturday they visited the Oakland morgue to look at unidentified bodies, none of which was West's.

West left the McArthur Park Restaurant in San Francisco, where he works as a waiter, around 2:30 p.m. and told co-workers that he was on his way to Santa Cruz.

According to Claspell, West was extremely responsible and well established in the San Francisco Bay Area. He lived with his mother in their family house in Napa.

"There is absolutely no way he wouldn't have been in touch,"

Claspell said.

Claspell said that West's mother is extremely upset. With each unearthing of a body in the collapsed 880 freeway in Oakland, she expects the worst.

"Everyone keeps pointing at the Oakland freeway," Claspell said. The freeway, however, was not on West's route into Santa Cruz.

West is described as a white male, 41 years old but younger looking, 5-feet, 2-inches tall, weighing 130 pounds with dark hair, brown eyes and good teeth. He was driving a black 1974 Lincoln Continental sedan with a California license plate of 119 PAL.

Anyone with information is asked to call (702) 735-6003, or (415) 398-5700.

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