

Tsuji, Arlene

2 — Thursday, Oct. 31, 1991 — Santa Cruz Sentinel

# ✓ Investigators to go airborne in search for Aptos woman

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• 10-31-91

APTOS — The search for a missing 25-year-old Aptos woman will soon take to the air, investigators said Wednesday.

Authorities said they'll go airborne within the next few days in the search for Arlene Kazuko Tsuji, who vanished the evening of Oct. 24 not far from her Vienna Woods home in Aptos. Local authorities believe Tsuji was abducted. They will conduct the airborne investigation with the help of FBI air-search capabilities and infrared scanning equipment from the CHP.

The infrared scanners display a temperature-coded picture of the ground below and can detect even minute changes due to the presence of body heat. Much of the terrain surrounding the neighborhood where Tsuji is believed to have been abducted is marked by rolling fields creased with foot trails and narrow, brush-covered ravines.

Investigators said Wednesday that Explorer Scouts would again be enlisted soon to painstakingly search the area where Tsuji is believed to have been abducted.

The popular Aptos High School graduate never came home from her "routine one-hour stroll along a route she always took" on Oct. 24. Searchers later found a piece of a Walkman-type tape player believed to belong to Tsuji on Haas Drive, about a half-mile from Tsuji's home.

Co-workers at the Capitola travel-tour company where Tsuji was employed notified authorities when she failed to report to work Friday morning.

Sheriff's Deputies, Explorer Scouts, the Sheriff's Motorcycle Posse, the Monterey Bay Search and Rescue Dog Team and numerous friends and co-workers of Tsuji have all repeatedly combed the area around the Vienna Woods and Thousand Oaks/Haas Drive neighborhoods of Aptos — located between Cabrillo College and the border of Nisene Marks State Park — in a generally fruitless search for clues to Tsuji's disappearance.

On Tuesday, agents from the FBI joined the investigation, vowing to bring in "behavioral science profiling" experts to develop a roster of possible suspects in the abduction.

The county Sheriff's Office determined earlier this week that Tsuji was probably the victim of a kidnap. One source close to the investigation said Wednesday that "there is no question in my mind that she's been abducted."

Tsuji is described as Asian, 5 feet tall, around 103 pounds, with straight, brownish-black shoulder-length hair and brown eyes. She was last seen wearing a gray, long-sleeve pullover sweatshirt with hood and black baggy cotton short pants with cuffs. Anyone with information about her disappearance is urged to call 425-2121 or or 425-2431.