

# Police determine body of man found in park result of foul play

**BY NATHAN LIEWICKI, EDMONTON JOURNAL**

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Police are investigating the city's third homicide of 2011 after the discovery Thursday morning of a man's body in Hermitage Park.

The body of 26-year-old Daniel Nickel was found by a man walking his dog, said Lisa Sobchyshyn, spokeswoman for Edmonton police.

An autopsy was done, but police are not releasing the cause of death, Sobchyshyn said. Investigators say this does not appear to be a random act, though they don't believe gangs are involved.

His family, many of whom live in Regina and Edmonton, were in shock Friday.

"You could have knocked me over with a feather," said Raymond Nickel, Daniel's cousin. "He was a beautiful person. He never did any harm to anyone that I know of."

Raymond said his cousin was born in Burnaby but raised in Regina.

He arrived in Edmonton in 2003. He was involved with the church and helped out with a youth group.

Daniel did not have a wife or children, Raymond said. He did leave a brother, David, who is about a year older and is devastated.

Daniel also had two step-sisters and a stepbrother.

Raymond said Daniel worked in a variety of jobs, including carpentry and waste management. He's not sure where he was working recently.

Kaila Janes was a good friend of Nickel's. The two of them met at the Freedom Centre Church a few years ago and dated for a short time.

"The Dan I knew had a heart for God. He loved to laugh and smile.

"He will be missed, and my heart breaks because so many people loved him and it upsets me to know he is gone," Janes said through a Facebook message. "Something about him was that even if he had a lot going on, he still managed to stay strong and keep smiling.

"He wanted to go places in life, he wanted to be somebody."

Police are asking anyone, pedestrians or motorists, who may have seen or heard suspicious activity within the area of 137th Avenue and 20th Street to contact them.

Det. Dan Collins said they are interested in the period of time stretching from 7 p.m. Wednesday to early Thursday.

Collins said they believe Nickel went into the park on foot.

"We believe he was likely killed there."

[nliewicki@edmontonjournal.com](mailto:nliewicki@edmontonjournal.com)