

“VIGIL FOR SPRING” FACT SHEET FOR MEDIA:

Why is it so important to publicize my “adopted daughter” Spring Doe when there are so many unidentified persons across the United States? Every time publicity is received for one Doe, this is a wonderful opportunity to educate and inform the public about resources available to help bring home other missing and unidentified. The Ninth Anniversary of Spring Doe’s discovery in Chicago is today, April 28th, 2014. Thank you for attending my “Vigil for Spring.” If my nieces Diamond and Tionda are in a morgue somewhere unidentified, my hope is that someone there will do the same for them.

Here are some facts that I encourage media to publicize when covering Spring Doe.

1. Spread the word that family members can enter their missing loved one’s information and a family DNA sample into NamUs for comparison with unidentified persons. Spring Doe was the first Chicago Cook County Doe listed with [NamUs](#) . **NamUs:** Wonderful database for missing and unidentified that works with [National Center for Missing/Exploited Children](#). Many people have no clue what NamUs is. That needs to change.

2. Family Members of missing persons: Make sure any advocacy work you do for a Doe serves as an example for what can be done for all Does in your area. And be sure and thank the individuals in law enforcement who do the follow-through and hard work to utilize NamUs and other resources. I am so grateful for all the work Spring Doe’s detective, the Chicago Police, the Cook County Medical Examiner, NamUs and NCMEC have done for Spring Doe, including most recently having her facial approximation constructed and then published on our [Medical Examiner’s Unidentified Site](#) and [Spring’s NamUs profile](#).

3. Not all missing persons have been reported missing and entered into NamUs. Educate family members that this is important. Make that missing person report!

4. Family Members of Missing Persons are our primary target audience for the Facial Approximation. The approximation can’t help if the right person doesn’t have the opportunity to see it. When publicizing a facial approximation, the goal is that hopefully a close friend or family member will see it and something about it with spark recognition of their missing loved one. That alone does not identify a Doe. It is just a catalyst for more investigation.

5. Facial Approximations are NOT portraits. The more evidence and details that remain for anthropologists and forensic artists to work with, the better chance of getting a likeness that a family member can recognize. Some facial approximations are made with more information to work with, such as hair color and eye color. In Spring Doe’s case, her approximation was based on skeletal remains. Working with an anthropologist and the scientific information available, a forensic artist gave her an approximation of a face based on her skull.

6. Identifying a Doe is NOT a “guessing game.” Make sure the public knows that the best way they can help is to keep passing on the facial approximation through social media, etc. so that eventually a family member or close friend may see and recognize the victim. Don’t waste law enforcement’s time with guesses.

7. Most important, if a family member of a missing person contacts you about a possible match, tell them to contact law enforcement directly. There is contact information for the Doe’s law enforcement case manager in that NamUs entry and also physical facts about the Doe that the family member can compare their missing person to. If the family member feels strongly that this might be a match, it is important for them to contact law enforcement directly.

Blessings and thank you all for your help, Shelia Bradley-Smith