





Username Password Remember me [Lost Password?](#) [No account yet? Register](#)

 [Jobs](#) [Classifieds](#)
 [Autos](#)  [Place an ad](#)
 [Homes](#)

[Home](#) [News](#) [Our Towns](#) [Obituaries](#) [Sports](#) [Life & Style](#) [Opinion](#) [Forums](#) [ePeople](#) [Advertising](#) [Reader Services](#)



**** ADVANCE FOR SUNDAY, APRIL 27 **** Lynn DeJac poses in her home in Buffalo, N.Y., Wednesday March 5, 2008. Back in 1994, jurors didn't look kindly on Lynn DeJac. She was a tavern manager in blue-collar south Buffalo, a single woman with long hair and long nails who'd been pregnant by 15, had a couple kids, and her share of boyfriends. (AP Photo/David Duprey)



2 images total in slideshow, click an image to begin.

Sunday, 27 April 2008

N.Y. detective's dedication saves a life

Carolyn Thompson - THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

When Lynn DeJac learned her boyfriend had paid someone to follow her on a girls' night out, she knew what she had to do. She didn't always make wise decisions, particularly about men, but this was a no-brainer.

During the drive home from the wedding of friends, she told Dennis Donohue their two-month relationship was over. She'd had enough of his jealousy and possessiveness.

But Donohue followed her into her house and started up again, this time in front of her 13-year-old daughter. When she called the police, he knocked the phone out of her hand, uttered an obscenity and stormed out.

DeJac needed to get out of the house. She had two young children to think about. And she could use a drink.

With her daughter puttering around before bedtime, DeJac headed for the corner tavern her mother owned. It was her hangout when she wasn't managing the place. Donohue couldn't -- he wouldn't -- try anything stupid with people around, she thought.

But Donohue turned up there too -- again trying to start a row. He was asked to leave.

DeJac left later with a friend, another man who witnessed Donohue's unpleasant side. Donohue, still seething over the earlier argument, pressed a Swiss army knife to the man's throat. That confrontation was defused before anyone

Last 6 Days - Nation/World

Sorted by popularity

Monday, 28th of April 2008

[Miley Cyrus says Vanity Fair photo spread embarrasses her](#)

[Scholars run down more clues to a Holocaust mystery](#)

[Economy shakes world food supply](#)

[Tax rebates start showing up in bank accounts](#)

[Texas polygamists: 31 of 53 teen girls have been pregnant](#)

[Miley Cyrus photo 'scandals' reveal phenom's growing pains](#)

[Nation briefing 4/28](#)

[World briefing 4/28](#)

Sunday, 27th of April 2008

[Another quake hits northern Nevada](#)

[No TV, no white bread, and of course, nothing red](#)

[World Briefing 4/27](#)

[N.Y. detective's dedication saves a life](#)

[Return to Afghanistan](#)

[Nation briefing 4/27](#)

[Clinton to Obama: Let's do it like Lincoln and Douglas](#)

[What's in a word? Portugal to adopt Brazil spelling](#)

Saturday, 26th of April 2008

[Sweep of FLDS kids raises legal questions](#)

[National Briefing 4/26](#)

[Arbor Day gets a makeover](#)

[Three NYPD officers cleared in killing of groom-to-be](#)

[Iraq militia leader: Open-war threat for U.S. only](#)

Friday, 25th of April 2008

[Physics world faces kilogram crisis](#)

[Nation briefing 4/25](#)

[World briefing 4/25](#)

got hurt.

When she got home the next afternoon, Valentine's Day, her daughter, Crystallynn Girard, was dead.

DeJac, a single mother with a son who needed her, found herself convicted of the killing and facing 25 years to life in prison. There she sat for 13-plus years before Dennis Delano walked into her life, and suddenly changed her fate.

...

Detective Delano moved to homicide from the auto thefts division, he made a practice of reviewing cold cases in Buffalo to see how the old-timers did things.

Before the proliferation of computers and long before DNA would pinpoint the most likely suspects from a list of possibles, cops relied on common sense and street smarts to solve cases. They didn't always get it right. Sometimes they didn't get their man at all.

Delano, 56, is a straight-talking, full-size Columbo-type whose work doesn't end with his shift. He takes files home with him -- to pick apart witness notes, see where the trail went dead.

Back in grammar school, Delano, even then a stocky kid, would stick up for the underdog. "I was always a big kid so it was no big deal for me to stand next to someone" who was being bullied, he said. That intimidation usually scared the bully away.

In 30 years on the police force, Delano's credo hasn't changed: "Somebody has to speak for people who can't speak for themselves."

Trisha Razikowski knew about Delano and his cold case work through church, where they were in a Christian Bible study group. She found a sympathetic ear when she approached him about her older sister's unsolved murder from 1993.

Delano pulled the file for Joan Giambra. Something about the case seemed familiar.

Among the files on his desk at headquarters were two that his brother, a retired sergeant, had asked him to take a closer look at: the unsolved 1975 slaying of a woman named Carol Reed and the 1993 murder of a teenager named Crystallynn Girard.

During both of those investigations, a bartender named Dennis Donohue had come up, though he had never been charged.

The detective studied the case of Crystallynn Girard. Her mother, Lynn DeJac, was convicted of second-degree murder.

What was it about the murders of Crystallynn Girard, Carol Reed and Joan Giambra that was so troublesome?

The similarities.

"All three were female. All three were found face up. All three were found nude. All three were strangled," Delano said.

While reviewing the Giambra case, Delano and his cold case partners discovered she had dated someone named Dennis. No last name.

"One of my partners, Charlie Aronica says, 'I wonder if that could be the same Dennis'" as the one who surfaced in the Carol Reed and Crystallynn Girard investigations, Delano said. It was. And what the detective found propelled two cases forward.

Carol Reed and Joan Giambra both met a violent end 13 years apart, on Dennis Donohue's birthday, Sept. 9. Donohue and Reed lived in the same apartment building. The old files showed Reed had told someone that Donohue made advances toward her.

Furthermore, Donohue had dated Giambra and Lynn DeJac, Crystallynn's mom.

In Delano's mind, the bartender deserved another look.

The cold case team -- Delano, Aronica and Lissa Redmond -- tracked down Donohue and found that his DNA matched evidence preserved from the Giambra crime scene.

Fourteen years after Joan Giambra was killed -- and largely because of the dogged persistence of one detective -- Donohue was charged last September with second-degree murder.

While the Giambra case moved toward a long-sought resolution, it would unravel completely another case and thrust Delano into the public eye, fighting to right an old wrong that sent an innocent woman to prison.

This was a familiar place to Delano. He'd been here just months before.

The detective had been relentless in pushing to get an innocent man named Anthony Capozzi out of prison. Capozzi had served 22 years for rapes he did not commit.

Even before DNA cleared Capozzi and set him free, Delano, a member of a task force that caught the real attacker, was all over the television and newspapers saying an innocent person was in prison. It had made prosecutors squirm.

Now he was saying it again, this time about Lynn DeJac, the mother of Crystallynn Girard.

Weeks after Donohue was charged with Giambra's murder, a DNA analysis placed him in Crystallynn's bedroom. Not only was Donohue's DNA found in a smudge of blood on Crystallynn's wall and in her bedsheet, it turned up inside her body.

Then came a stunning revelation: Donohue was given immunity in Crystallynn's murder after passing a polygraph test and testifying before the grand jury that indicted Crystallynn's mother.

He could never be charged.

...

Jurors didn't look kindly on Lynn DeJac. She was a party girl, they were told, pregnant by 15 and juggling boyfriends.

[3 NYPD detectives acquitted in 50-shot killing](#)

[Confidence in polygamy search warrant now shaky](#)

[U.S. alleges baby-selling in Vietnam](#)

[Children from polygamist sect moved to foster homes 'Jihadist' booted from lexicon](#)

Thursday, 24th of April 2008

[Mom's diet may influence baby's gender](#)

[700 lb. Hollywood bear turns on, kills handler](#)

[25 mothers taken from FLDS ranch now believed to be minors](#)

[World Briefs 4/24](#)

[China's plan for taking torch up Everest draws media concerns](#)

[High court sustains police authority](#)

[Confidence in polygamy search warrant now shaky](#)

[Clinton's donations surge after Pennsylvania victory](#)

Wednesday, 23rd of April 2008

[Hillary Hangs On: Pennsylvania win keeps Clinton's hopes alive](#)

[Grizzly bear kills man at Southern California training site](#)

[Mom's diet may play role in whether baby is boy or girl](#)

[Scientists study Arctic haze for clues to global warming](#)

[Bin Laden's deputy says Iran trying to undermine al-Qaida](#)

[World Food Program warns of 'silent tsunami' of hunger](#)

[Zimbabwe denied arms shipment](#)

[Petraeus picked to lead Mideast command](#)

TOP JOBS


Customer Service Associates PeopleScout

LEGAL ASSISTANT Full Time Brad Myler & ASSOC.

American Community Classified Advertising Network Business Opportunities

COOK Part Time Aero/Wencor/Kitco

Recruitment Telemarketer The Daily Herald

Pacific States Cast Iron Pipes General Help  Wanted

Auto Technicians Needed Barber Brothers Spanish Fork

[See All Top Jobs](#) 

TOP HOMES



Provo 3100 sqft 6bd, 3ba Real Estate Provo/Orem

PG East 6bd, 4ba .60 Real Estate North County

Orem Starter Home 3bd, all Real Estate Provo/Orem

Provo .5 acre lot, upscale Lots and Acreage

Orem Berkshires lot #5 .63 Lots and Acreage

Springville FSBO Restored Historic Brick Real Estate South County

3bd 2ba home, on 11 Lots and Acreage

[See all Top Homes](#)

While under indictment and awaiting trial in 1994, she gave birth to twin boys. At 29, DeJac was an unwed woman with three children.

When prosecutors told those sitting in judgment of her that after a night of bar hopping, DeJac used her bare hands to choke the life out of her daughter, they obliged with a guilty verdict.

DeJac spent 13-1/2 years in prison for Crystallynn's murder before Delano uncovered the DNA evidence that convinced a judge to set aside her conviction on Feb. 28.

Today, as she settles into a new life with the twins, now teenagers, and their father, whom she married in prison, she has had little cause to celebrate. While she was away, a son, Ed Girard, grew into an adult and went off to war in Iraq -- twice.

Although DNA tests were enough to gain DeJac's release -- by implicating Donohue -- it took an even more alarming finding for prosecutors to drop plans to retry DeJac on the 1993 murder indictment.

A forensics expert who reviewed the case determined that Crystallynn was not murdered after all. Instead, he said she overdosed on cocaine.

Absolutely ludicrous, say DeJac and Delano.

As painful as it was to endure her own lifestyle being held up for public ridicule all those years ago, DeJac said, hearing her dead daughter's name sullied is worse.

"My daughter was not a drug user ... My daughter was murdered," DeJac said. "There's no question my daughter was murdered."

Look at the way Crystallynn's body was found, says Delano: in bed, naked -- except for a pair of red socks.

"I'm not saying a mother wouldn't have killed her daughter ... but this way that it happened, something was wrong," Delano said. "If on a long shot a mother was going to undress her daughter to make it look like something else, she would have taken the socks off."

DeJac, now 44, believes her daughter's killer must have transferred cocaine from his finger. But the medical examiner back then didn't think there was enough cocaine to contribute to her death.

Forensics expert Dr. Michael Baden, who was asked to examine the 1993 crime scene photographs and autopsy report, concluded that frothing from Crystallynn's mouth and nose was a strong indicator of a drug overdose. The froth may have been wiped away by the time the autopsy was done, he said.

"Forensic science can be misinterpreted," Baden explained at a news conference in which the new cause of death was ruled as drug related.

Delano is convinced Baden is wrong. He said bruising on Crystallynn's head and a cut across her left breast further point to a struggle.

DeJac wants the cause of death changed back to strangulation on Crystallynn's death certificate.

"This is about a little girl wronged," DeJac said. "We already fixed mine, now it's time to fix this."

Whatever the reason Crystallynn died, Donohue is untouchable and cannot be charged. He is considered a person of interest in the murder of Carol Reed.

But he still must answer for the death of Joan Giambra. He pleaded not guilty. Jury selection in his trial began April 21 and continued through the week.

...

Delano has put his career on the line to stand by Lynn DeJac, who filed a lawsuit against New York state in late March seeking almost \$14.5 million in damages for her wrongful imprisonment.

The detective was suspended Feb. 29 after pursuing old witnesses, on his own time and against orders. After forensics determined Crystallynn overdosed, Delano released crime scene video of her bedroom to a television station to show why he believes she was murdered.

Police Commissioner H. McCarthy Gipson recently went before the city council to explain the decision to suspend his popular detective.

"This is the first time in the history of the Buffalo Police Department that I am aware of that evidence has been released like this -- through a media outlet," Gipson said. "The line in the sand had to be drawn someplace."

Delano has pleaded not guilty to departmental charges. He could lose his job if the charges hold up.

"I did what I thought I had to do at the time. I don't think I did anything wrong," he told reporters after a March disciplinary hearing.

Family members of Lynn DeJac, Joan Giambra and Anthony Capozzi all call Delano a hero. He gets calls urging him to run for public office -- take on the whole system, crusade for everyone.

But he's not ready to let this fight go. He said he thinks of Crystallynn when he looks at his own 13-year-old granddaughter.

"If we can't get a definitive answer, that's fine too, but I'm not satisfied until we have exhausted every avenue," he said recently over coffee with DeJac in her home. "When that time comes and I say, 'Well, there is nowhere else to go on this, we've got to accept it and move on.' But the bottom line is, I don't believe the truth was told in this case. ... It would be a lot easier (not to pursue it) but I have to live with myself."

Two weeks after Delano was suspended, more than 250 supporters showed up at a benefit in his honor. The crowd cheered when he stood for a photo, one arm around Capozzi, the other around DeJac.

Article views: 243

User Rating:  / 0

Poor  Best [Rate](#)

No Comments.

TOP RENTALS

Provo Adorable 3bd, 1ba, small House Rentals

Orem S New 3bd, 2ba House Rentals

SF Twinhm 3bd 2.5ba 2 House Rentals

SF Jumbo sized 3bd, 2bth Apartments unfurnished

Home for rent or rent House Rentals

Provo Prime Office Space. Univ. Commercial Rentals

GENOLA - 4 bd home House Rentals

[See all Top Rentals](#)

TOP VEHICLES

00 Ford Expedition, xlt pkg Sports Utility

See These Cars At: Duanes Auto & Truck Parts

84 Ford F150, low grandma 4-Wheel Drive

95/96 Winnebago, 23K miles, sleeps Motor Homes & R.V.

03 Chevrolet Suburban Z71, 92,500 Sports Utility

99 Chev Corvette, loaded, silver Autos

98 Ford Ranger, lifted 4x4 4-Wheel Drive

[See all Top Vehicles](#)

Discuss this article on the forums. (0 posts)

provo commercial property title

Critical sales data on 1000s of recently sold commercial properties.

www.LoopNet.com

Ads by Yahoo!

Copyright © 2008 Daily Herald and Lee Enterprises | [Privacy Policy](#)

Generated in 1.12712 Seconds