

Body found outside Grafton on Thursday afternoon

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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GRAFTON – A body was discovered by a fisherman two miles south of **Grafton** in the Mississippi River around 1 p.m. on Thursday afternoon.

Grafton Police confirmed a body was pulled from the river after a fisherman's call. The family of Heather Bardsley of Grafton went to the scene after it was announced a body had been found to see if it was Heather.

Heather Bardsley was last seen on Dec. 26, 2015. **Jason Bardsley**, her brother, was included in the members of Heather's family who made the trip to Grafton on Thursday. Authorities have speculated that Heather Bardsley may have been swept through a culvert that runs into the Mississippi River in Grafton. The Illinois Department of Natural Resources and Jersey County are investigating the discovery. It may take a few weeks to come to a conclusion of how the person actually died.

Jason Bardsley said his family members observed the body of the person taken from the river but were not 100 percent certain it was his sister, Heather.

“We feel it almost has to be her because no one else has been reported falling into the river close to there or is missing close to there in the river,” he said. “It pretty much has to be her. At this point, closure is what we are looking for. We know Heather pretty well and if she were alive, she would have come home or reached out to us. We also want to confirm whether or not there was any wrong doing.”

Chrissy O'Dell, a close friend of Heather's, said she feels it almost has to be Heather, but it won't be definite until the investigation is concluded.

“I pray to God it is her and we can bury her and find some answers,” O'Dell said.