



Family of missing man not giving up hope after a decade of searching

by Cory Davenport, Contributing Writer
March 26 2018 1:37 PM



ALTON – A decade has passed, but the family of Michael Anthony Womack has not lost hope their brother may return to their lives, or at the least they may find closure on what happened to him.

Womack was last seen in Alton on March 31, 2008, when he was leaving his friend's home in his Ford F-150. That truck was discovered two weeks later in a parking lot in Cahokia with the keys in it, undisturbed. Womack's sister, Apryll Pittman, said she did

not know anyone in Cahokia, nor did she believe her brother had any friends, family or associates in that area. She said the only reason he would have been in that area is due to his work at the Wood River Wal-Mart. She said the corporation was opening a new location in that area during the time her brother's truck was found, and said he may have been in the area to assist with that.

No credible leads have arisen since the discovery of that truck, Pittman said. She said in the initial days and weeks following her brother's disappearance, people were calling the Alton Police Department and her family with several possible leads and information. None of those leads led to closure of the case, however.

“I think at first people just wanted to get involved and help out in any way they could,” Pittman said. “None of those leads turned into anything, but the Alton Police Department said they won't close the case. All we can do now is wait. After 10 years, I still have that side of me that hopes my brother can walk right back into our lives and tell us what happened.”

In the wake of his disappearance, six children wonder what happened to their father. The youngest of them was still in utero when Womack disappeared. He only knows his father from photographs and memories of other people.

Those children and many other friends and family of Womack will gather at Riverfront Park in Alton Saturday, March 31, 2018, at 5 p.m. for a balloon release. Pittman said the gathering is an annual event, and each year, red balloons are sent into the air in remembrance of Womack with hopes he will return.

“We've held it down at the riverfront by the casino a few times now,” Pittman said. “The environment down there is so nice, and it's beautiful to watch those balloons go up in the air.”

Poems and prayers will be offered for Womack before the balloons are to be released at 5:15 p.m., Pittman said.

Anyone with information on Womack's disappearance or current whereabouts is asked to contact the Alton Police Department at (618) 463-3505.

“We have nothing to cling to,” Pittman said. “We just don't know. It's a struggle for us to not know anything.”