

Pregnant Marine is missing

[BY LINDELL KAY](#)

January 8, 2008 - 2:31PM

Onslow County Sheriff's Department investigators say they have found the abandoned car of a pregnant Camp Lejeune Marine who has been missing for three weeks.

The blue 2006 Hyundai Sonata belonging to Lance Cpl. Maria Frances Lauterbach was discovered Monday night at the Jacksonville Bus Station, said Onslow County Sheriff Ed Brown.

Lauterbach, 20, of Midway Park, is with the 2nd Marine Logistics Group. She last spoke to family Dec. 14 and was reported missing Dec. 19 by her mother who traveled here from Dayton, Ohio.

Lauterbach was eight months pregnant when she went missing, according to the Sheriff's Department.

"She should be right at delivery time now," Brown said.

Lauterbach was a witness to an incident on base and was supposed to testify in the matter, according to the Sheriff's Department, which declined to specify the incident.

The missing woman's cell phone was found Dec. 20 near the main gate at Camp Lejeune.

Lauterbach shared a boarding house with several people in Midway Park, which was searched by the Sheriff's Department, Brown said.

"There are several findings and pieces of evidence that have been discovered that cause law enforcement to be concerned with the circumstances surrounding Maria's disappearance," Brown said in a news release.

Brown did not reveal any information on the evidence for fear of jeopardizing the investigation.

"Things I know bother me; things I don't know bother me more," Brown said.

Lauterbach joined the Marine Corps on June 6, 2006, and has never deployed, said 1st Lt. Richard Ulsh, a public affairs officer with the 2nd MLG. She is currently assigned to the Group Consolidated Administration Center, Service Company, Combat Logistics Regiment 27, 2nd Marine Logistics Group, II Marine Expeditionary Force, base

officials said.

Ulsh said Marine Corps and U.S. Navy investigators are assisting with the Sheriff's Department's investigation.

The State Bureau of Investigation is also working on the case, according to the Sheriff's Department.

Lauterbach is described as 5 feet, 4 inches tall and weighing 140 pounds. She has blond hair, blue eyes, a Marine Corps tattoo on the upper right arm and a birthmark in the middle of her back.

Anyone who comes in contact with Lauterbach is asked to contact their local law enforcement agency. For the Onslow County Sheriff's Department call 910-455-3113; NCIS 910-451-8071; SBI 910-346-2121; Jacksonville Police 910-455-4000, or the local law enforcement where you live.

People with information also can contact Crime Stoppers at 938-3273. Those callers do not have to reveal their identities.