

Mother of child missing 6 months refuses to give up

By Eliot Kleinberg

Staff Writer of The News

For six months, Laura Proctor has waited for her daughter, Christie Proctor, to return.

It has been a roller coaster ride of emotions; glimmers of hope surface and are dashed. But Ms. Proctor refuses to give up and refuses to close the book.

"I've not wavered on my feelings that she's alive," Ms. Proctor said this week. "It's a matter of odds. Every time I mail out a poster, I knock more of those odds out of the way."

On Feb. 15, exactly six months ago Friday, 10-year-old Christie disappeared from her northeast Dallas neighborhood as she walked home from a friend's house. Searches by police and friends eventually ended. The news coverage tapered off. A \$20,000 reward remains uncollected.

"I have periods where I stay up and I'm very optimistic and going 200 miles an hour and have no problem," Ms. Proctor said. "And I wake up some mornings, and my strength is gone. It just swings back and forth, up and down."

On a wall at the Dallas police youth division, 22 yellow dots on a map of the United States indicate the places — from Portland, Ore., to Duluth, Minn., to Philadelphia — where people have reported seeing

Christie. They said they recognized her from television or posters.

"That doesn't even count the (sightings) we've gotten from psychics," youth division Lt. David Clary said.

The sightings have led to nothing, and police put little stock in them. Christie has been reported seen in Fort Worth and Charleston, S.C., the same day, and in Little Rock, Ark., and Southern California one day apart.

Police investigate every reported sighting, hoping the next one might lead them to Christie. But without new leads, the case is at a dead end.

"We're now working on other big cases," Clary said, "and as more information comes in on her we'll pursue it."

The FBI also continues to investigate sightings and has checked on numerous people around the country who have been arrested on child molestation charges. But nothing has turned up, said Joel Hershey of the Dallas office of the FBI.

Investigators said they have been inspired by the effort and continuing hope of Ms. Proctor.

"We're all amazed by the fact she's continuing to work on it as long as she has," said police investigator M.C. Pena.

Donations to the Christie Proc-



The Dallas Morning News; Evans Caglage

Laura Proctor says more than \$4,000 has been donated to the Christie Proctor Search Foundation, allowing her to post more than 100 billboards and mail out thousands of posters around the country.

tor Search Foundation — operating from a storefront next to the Richardson office where Ms. Proctor works — have allowed her to post more than 100 billboards and mail out thousands of posters around the country. More than \$4,000 has been

donated, she said.

She said the group will help with other missing-children cases after Christie's safe return, which she has no doubt will happen.

"She is out there," Ms. Proctor said. "I have to just find her."