



**Lincoln County
Sheriff's Office**
Sheriff Adam D. Shanks

225 W. Olive Street
Newport, Oregon 97365
(541) 265-4277

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Sheriff Adam Shanks
541-265-0652
lcsheriff@co.lincoln.or.us

RESPONSE TO INQUIRIES ABOUT PAULSEN CASE

In response to several community and media inquiries about the recent Grand Jury Indictment of Aaron Paulsen, father of Dane Paulsen, our Office has the following statement to share.

In March 2025, the disappearance and later recovery of Dane Paulsen in the Siletz River shook our communities, first responders, and searchers. As responders and community members, our hearts remain heavy with this tragedy.

In collaboration with other local responders, community members, and agencies through Oregon and beyond, we worked tirelessly to search the local area. In partnership with other law enforcement agencies, including the FBI, we conducted a criminal investigation congruent to the search efforts. Before his disappearance, Dane was reported to be playing out of sight in his yard. Evidence suggests he wandered down to the river. While evidence consistently pointed to the Siletz River, 40 investigators continued to pursue leads by interviewing, investigating, and following up on community tips. Countless tips lead to investigative interviews, review of surveillance footage, and further investigations on possible leads. At the conclusion of this multi-agency investigation, evidence pointed to Dane being at the river's edge before falling in. An autopsy confirmed his cause of death was drowning with no additional trauma to his body.

Following the completion of the investigation, our Office submitted the investigation and all evidence to the District Attorney (DA) to review this case in its entirety. It is standard for the Lincoln County DA's Office to review all death investigations. On October 16, 2025, DA Jenna Wallace presented this case before a Lincoln County Grand Jury. After hearing the evidence related to this case, the Grand Jury found sufficient evidence to present a true bill with a charge of Child Neglect II against Aaron Paulsen. Aaron Paulsen was subsequently cited and released by Lincoln County Sheriff's Office investigators.

Due to the fact this is an ongoing case within their office, any questions relating to this matter should be directed to the DA's Office.

Lincoln County Sheriff's Office

Our mission is to enhance public safety, reduce the fear and impact of crime, and improve quality of life.

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