



EPISODE 53: Alex Murdaugh Charged With Murder And Denied Bond, What's Next?

Mandy Matney 00:02

I think I know who killed Maggie and Paul Murdaugh. But now that Alex Murdaugh has been charged in the double homicide and his bond was denied, our work on this podcast is just beginning. We need to know who else helped the former public official get away with so much for so long and we need to know who killed Steven Smith. My name is Mandy Matney. I have been investigating the Murdaugh family for more than three years now. This is the Murdaugh Murders Podcast with David Moses and Liz Farrell. It has been another chaotic week at the Murdaugh Murders Podcast and FITS News. Before we get into the big news from the bond hearing today we have to go over the biggest highlights from the last seven days and there have been many. Aside from Alex Murdaugh being indicted on two counts of murder Bowen Turner officially had his probation revoked. Live 5 News reported that he will serve between 10 and 14 months in jail, and he will have to register as a sex offender. And that is a big deal. Both the murder charges and Turner's sentence speak to the life changing and historic work we are doing on this podcast. And it wouldn't be possible without the momentum behind us from you, our listeners. So thank you. But also this week was a reminder of just how much work needs to be done to truly change the South Carolina justice system. And that was apparent in the bond hearing. Also late on Wednesday. The first federal charges were filed in the Murdaugh case against Russell Laffitte. Laffitte faces five federal counts for allegedly using his role as director and an employee of Palmetto State Bank and his role as personal representative and conservator to defraud clients of Alex including Hakim Pinkney. We will talk about that indictment in a later episode. Let's start with the big stuff Alex's indictments on Thursday, July 14, as

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we expected, Alex Murdaugh was indicted by a Colleton County grand jury in the double homicide of his wife, Maggie and a son Paul, and I have to say it again. That is a big deal. Even though we knew this was coming, Thursday was a huge day for those of us desperately wanting systemic change in low country. Thursday's indictments sent a message This is no longer a state run by the good ol boys. This should have been a big sign indicating a new day in South Carolina. This was supposed to be the first big signal from the Attorney General's office that no one no matter how powerful is safe from the long arm of the law.

Liz Farrell 03:12

Any faith we had and there being meaningful change in South Carolina was basically last Wednesday. In short, the prosecution and defense both argued for a gag order in the case they say it is necessary to protect Alex Murdaugh's right to a fair trial, which is hilarious because that is not at all what Alex wants, he wants an unfair trial in which there is a big old fat thumb on his side of the scales of justice. It seems like this might be headed in that direction. And while we understand the arguments the prosecution made in favor of a gag order as it relates to protecting the integrity of the 81 state Grand Jury charges Alex faces. And as it relates to protecting ongoing investigations, and we'll get into all of that shortly. We still think this was a very big mistake on the part of the AG's office. So to start prior to the hearing, the media was pretty tickled by the fact that there was a painted portrait of the elder Buster Murdaugh in the back of the courtroom. They kept taking pictures of it. I was not one of those photographers, because to me that portrait was a sign that the courtroom was clearly haunted. It was like a Scooby Doo painting where the eyes followed you. Meanwhile, I'm sure the



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prevailing media take on it is going to be how that portrait was a stark reminder of how the nobel have fallen truly, that hearing was a full and ghostly regression into the past. Alex Murdaugh basically walked into that courtroom wearing a crown and a giant pin that said grandpa's boy on it. Just like Paul Murdaugh's boat trial, it was hard for us to tell whether there was even a prosecutor in the room prior to the start of the hearing and throughout it did carpooling and commandeered the room he routinely crossed the line into Creighton Waters half of the courtroom and spoke from that position, when both men teamed up to tell the judge that it would be super cool to keep the public in the dark about this case, it literally seems like Dick was having one of those proud Take your son to Work Day moments. Creighton has so far proven himself to be a true professional, very capable, serious, no nonsense. And like someone who wouldn't let Dick Harpootlian hang him from his locker so it was incredibly disappointing to see him play small. He isn't going to like hearing this, but I had to re-listen to the audio from the hearing just to make double sure that he was referring to Alex as the defendant and not my Lord. I say this because Mandy and I were both incredibly suspicious about why Alex was agreeing to a bond hearing in the first place. He's already being held on a \$7 million bond that he can't pay, he appears to have waived his subsequent volunteering. So why go through with this one? The murderer one, why was he going to put himself in a situation in which the prosecution would likely reveal some of his more evil behaviors? Now, you might be thinking, guys, this man has had no shame so far. Why would he care now? So yeah, he's been a total embarrassment to his family. Right. But this is different. This isn't just him being a lying doof. That hearing could have very well revealed details about what went on behind closed doors in the Murdaugh



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house. And that is a very clear line, the Murdaugh's don't cross so why agree to the hearing? Well, it's obvious now that hearing was not actually about whether Alex should be granted a bond on his murder charges. It was an opportunity for Dick to gather all the journalists covering this case into one room so he could symbolically throw his arm around the prosecution's shoulders, make his big chest move, and then wink at us or wink at me anyway. Oh, yeah, guys, he winked at me on his way out of the courtroom. I think it's been a while since he's winked at anyone, because he almost had to get Jim Griffin to help him get his eyelid back up. But enough about that. We've said it so many times, good ol boys cannot operate in the light. The Murdaugh family specifically cannot operate in the light, they have always needed the darkness, they need for there to be no public scrutiny. And it looks like they could be getting their wish.

Mandy Matney 07:19

We were told going into the hearing that there would be details revealed in this court proceeding that would fill the large information voids in this case that only work for the defense.

Liz Farrell 07:30

So the big question everyone seemed to have between nine and 10 am today was, is the family there? The answer is no. They were not. Which is even further proof that the prosecution got Dick and Jim's because in a case like this, if the family is supporting the defendant, then now would be the time to be public about it, to show the judge that they believe in their guy to show that there are united front against these unjust accusations, etc. Alex's family from what it seems is supporting him for



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now. John Marvin keeps saying he just wants the truth. According to Creighton, the victims were watching the hearing remotely. But who are the victims? I'm asking that seriously. To me, it would be Buster and it would be Maggie's side of the family. But who knows at this point, right? We don't know who's supporting Alex and who isn't. We don't know who believes he's innocent and who has their doubts. I get why they wouldn't want to be in the courtroom. But not knowing who the victims are is very odd. And that's why this was a surprisingly empty courtroom for such a high profile case. It was mostly the media there. And let us just say this, yes, we can be critical of the media, specifically the ones who aid the devil's and help perpetuate corruption. But this makes our point, no matter how we feel about particular stories or headlines. The media is a critical standard for the public. We are there to tell the public what's happening. We are there to help hold the system accountable to the people it purports to serve. Like you said the media showed up today by blocking the media from court matters moving forward. Creighton and the Bulldogs are burning down an important bridge. So now the hearing.

Creighton Waters 09:12

Your Honor, it's my understanding that they do want the formal arraignment but are waiving reading of the indictments as correct. All right. Richard Alexander Murdaugh. If that is your name, please raise your right hand. Do you waive reading of the indictments? Yes, sir. What say you Richard Alex Murdaugh. Are you guilty or not guilty of the felonies wherein you stand indicted?



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Alex Murdaugh 09:35

Not guilty.

Mandy Matney 09:37

You see, the bond hearing took a turn from a court proceeding about whether or not Alex Murdaugh would be getting bond on the murder charges which had zero chance of happening to a hearing about whether both sides agreed on keeping public information away from the public.

Creighton Waters 09:55

I also very quickly want to thank my SLED agents. We have a special agent Dave Owen present has been one of the lead case agents on this. And I want to commend them on the long and arduous investigation over 13 months in which every possibility was considered before the evidence. As we explored, every possibility all came back to one person and that is Alex Murdaugh. I'm happy to detail some of the facts for your honor. However, the defense has advised me that they are willing to consent to a no bond. So I'll leave that to your honors discretion.

Mandy Matney 10:31

Right off the bat Dick Harpootlian came out swinging and appeared to be in command of the courtroom.

Dick Harpootlian 10:39

Your honor we're consenting to no bond, as you know, already has a \$7 million bond he can't make. And the further discussion of the alleged facts in this case in an open courtroom, we think continues to run the



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risk of polluting the jury Hall which in a moment, I think we can talk about a speedy trial on this matter which will occur in this courtroom. So we don't believe there's any reason to go to any factual background He's agreeing to no bond.

Mandy Matney 11:06

And then prosecutor Creighton Waters made a surprising move. The Creighton Waters we have seen before and other proceedings was fierce and completely unfazed by Harpootlian and his games, but Waters today appeared to be caught off guard, even his body language was visibly weak. And then in a rare move, the prosecution brought up a gag order in the case, and they said that they agreed to it.

Creighton Waters 11:34

And your honor, very quickly, I'm gonna just add that we have, of course, consulted with the victims in this matter or victim advocate is present. And some of the victims of my understanding are joining through the remote procedure. I just wanted to make sure that was on the record. Like your honor, there's a few motions. I know that that Mr. Harpootlian and I have discussed one of the first motions that has been discussed as a gag order. The state has no objection to a gag order, or Mr. Harpootlian discussed it with me. And we do agree that that would be appropriate on this matter, given the amount of media attention. This case, as I've been saying all along and various ponderings along the way that needs to be tried in the courtroom. And so the state has no objection.



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Liz Farrell 12:14

Gag orders are drastic remedies, and you don't see them a whole lot when they're put in place. It's in the name of protecting the integrity of a fair and impartial trial. Well, like we've said 100 times that right there is the issue itself. History has shown us that the Murdaughs are a family who have been afforded great latitude when it comes to the law. So how can we the public be assured that everything is actually fair and impartial? If we can't see what's happening, the state should want to show the public that everything is above board here, they should want to make a good faith effort to show that there are no special favors happening here.

Creighton Waters 12:50

Well, yes, your honor. And another aspect well that would be appropriate is much of the information that's been gathered in the state Grand Jury law Grand Jury case, all the 81 allegations of white collar fraud and other crimes, drugs on the right and the like it's been gathered to give some Mr. Murdaugh over the course of that long investigation. A lot of that provides the background and the motive for what happened on June 7, 2021. So that that evidence blends together and it would be appropriate for there to be a global protective order protecting everything related to this case.

Mandy Matney 13:22

It is significant that Creighton Waters is saying that the motive for the double homicide is directly linked to the other financial crimes. That is something that we have never officially heard before. On the other hand, we understand that this is a criminal enterprise and the releasing



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of information can be dangerous in cases like this, but the motive is important. If Alex is going to be told what the state thinks his motive is then the public should be told of that as well. And it is also significant the Creighton Waters appear to be completely on the same side as Harpootlian as if they've been planning this little duet for months.

Dick Harpootlian 14:03

Secondly, we propose all motions in this matter either filed by the state or by us be sealed and subject to a motion by either party to unseal. But rather than again, I mean, we're putting a position to filing a motion on Discovery, to discuss what we've been given and what we haven't been given. And again, it's going to force us to disclose matters to the general public that we don't really want to discuss in public because we're trying to get a fair trial for our client, not try it in the media, but try it in this courtroom. And I believe Mr. Waters agrees with that.

Creighton Waters 14:41

Your Honor, as long as there's obviously the opportunity have been appropriate showing for emotions to be made public and for hearings to be public, then I think that that is appropriate. I think we're not talking about here.

Mandy Matney 14:53

We're about motion, correct. Judge Newman did not appear to be amused by this gag order charade.



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Judge Clifton Newman 15:00

Let's address the matters thus far. Regarding a gag order, What's your understanding as to the parameters of a gag order?

Mandy Matney 15:12

I want to stop and commend Judge Clifton Newman for a second. There's a reason why he was specifically picked for this job. And it's because he is one of the most highly respected officials in the South Carolina justice system. I said this on Twitter last night, but Liz and I have talked to several attorneys, prosecutors and law enforcement officers about Judge Newman, and we haven't heard anyone say anything bad about him. He is known for being fair and an advocate for transparency. It is not surprising that he hesitated about this gag order.

Dick Harpootlian 15:47

And here I really agree. We're talking about extra judicial statements. And I'm not here and I'm gonna make it clear if no indication whatsoever if Mr. Waters in any way made any extrajudicial statements, part of that. For anyone that reads this constant churning out there, it would appear somebody is it's not him, as far as I know, none of his agents, but we want if that's violated, we'd like him to come before the court had the court inquire how this material fat got out, to see if sanctions are necessary. So the gag orders any extra judicial statement.

Mandy Matney 16:21

Here Dick Harpootlian is saying that he is concerned about the amount of media leaks in the case tainting a jury pool. But there are a couple things that we need to talk about on this. First of all, there has been an



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information void in this case, from the beginning, just like it was so hard to get information in the boat crash case, sled was almost never forthcoming with official information on the double homicide. And it was our job as a local media to inform the public about what was going on. Remember, people like the boat crash victims were being targeted in the media and online as potential suspects in this case, that is dangerous and even more dangerous. For several months after the murders. Alex Murdaugh was free to do whatever he wanted, whenever he wanted. If the evidence was pointing toward him all along, wouldn't they have wanted to get him behind bars last summer? Think about this. He's accused of killing his wife and son. I don't care if that's a targeted murder, that is a sign of a very dangerous human being. So it was our obligation as members of the press to release the information that we had about Alex Murdaugh in this case. And we will never know where this case would be if it didn't get so much international attention or how long it would have taken them to arrest Alex if he didn't have a little shooting incident. Every piece of information that was leaked to us was approved by our sources who assured us it wouldn't compromise the case waters in Harpootlian kept saying they didn't want media leaks in the case to taint a jury pool. But you know what stops information leaks releasing information to the public. Again, the justice system is on trial here, a former public official is on trial here. We do not know how deep this corruption goes. In this case, this isn't a typical case and the Murdaugh camp is not your typical defense team. Creighton Waters should realize that. And finally, I just have to say this, the idea of ever getting a completely impartial jury in the age of the internet and social media is nearly impossible. Those days are over. And it's time that our



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criminal justice system starts recognizing that and figuring out other ways for a fair trial. And we'll be right back.

Creighton Waters 18:59

And again, the state wants very much this case to be tried fairly and appropriately in a court of law. I will say this just because information does make it into the media does not mean that it necessarily came from law enforcement or prosecutorial sources.

Mandy Matney 19:13

While Creighton Waters put Judge Newman in a very tough position by agreeing with the defense Newman still didn't seem to be going along to get along.

Judge Clifton Newman 19:25

I just want to clearly understand that it's a public matter with a public trial, and certainly, the matters that need to be sealed can be sealed to preserve the rights of all parties to a fair and impartial trial. The court understands that but at the same time want to clear that we will not have any private motion hearings. Public Matters will be public.

Liz Farrell 19:57

We really hope that Creighton rethinks his position on this. We absolutely respect the need to be careful with this case and we certainly don't want the other investigations to be jeopardized. But the AG's office and SLED have said absolutely nothing about the case as it is for 13 months they've allowed theories to circulate that the boat crash victims or the families of Gloria Satterfield and Stephen Smith might



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have had something to do with this. The AG's office did nothing to publicly clear their names and that is not okay to that end by withholding information. They are also creating a vacuum that can be filled but Alex Murdaugh's team which, by the way includes a public relations firm with the gag order apply to them and anyone hired by them to promote the Murdaugh's online or otherwise, the Murdaugh team has already painted sled and the AGs office as incompetent and their investigation as bumbling by battenning down the hatches, it feels like they're fine with that image.

Mandy Matney 20:54

Next Harpootlian moved on to his next request, asking for a speedy trial.

Liz Farrell 21:00

This will be interesting, no one seems to think Murdaugh is going to get a particularly speedy trial. There's a six and a half year backlog and in the 14th circuit there are other defendants ahead of Murdaugh who would like speedy trials as well. And this just seems like trickery on Harpootlian's part to force the AG's office into presenting a hastily put together case even though we think the AG's Office is probably ready to go given it's been over a year. It also seems like a ploy to convince Judge Newman a judge who is pro transparency to grant a gag order thinking it wouldn't be for the long term.

Dick Harpootlian 21:33

And that is we make the motion for speedy trial. We note that there are two terms here one in October and November. And we'd like to go ahead and get this matter before the pelvic county jury as quickly as



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possible. And Mr. Murdaugh does this for a number of reasons. One, as you've heard, he believes he's innocent versus innocent. And two, he believes that the killer or killers are still at large and it's going to last the way that this behind them and go through the real.

Mandy Matney 22:06

Notice how Dick Harpootlian is not saying his client is innocent. He is saying that his client believes that he is innocent.

Liz Farrell 22:15

Seems like Dick is biting off more than he can chew here. From what we understand. It's unusual for a defense attorney to say the word innocent when the threshold they're usually aiming for is not that their job is not to prove innocence. But to point out where they think the state has not made its case beyond a reasonable doubt. It'll be interesting to see how Dick's bluster comes back to haunt him. Now that he's proclaimed in open court that not only can state not prove Alex did this, like didn't do it. It's a bold thing for a man who hasn't seen all the evidence to say.

Mandy Matney 22:48

Then Waters said what many of us were thinking that this is premature considering the fact that the defense hasn't even seen the discovery in the case preparing for a murder trial in a few months is something that no defense attorney wants. Also her poot Leann has another murder trial in January, which is right around the time that they are suggesting to have Alex Murdaugh's trial



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Creighton Waters 23:11

Doesn't have to set a specific term already, because there is very sense of discovery and probably number matters that will be needed to address that could work out. I just think it's a little premature to say definitely, that's the term was unscheduled. However, the state is absolutely in favor. The evidence in this case is substantial. And it all points back to Alex Murdaugh. There's forensic evidence, as well as other evidence of his guilt of these murders. And so the state is ready and willing to move this matter forward as expeditiously as could be reasonably.

Mandy Matney 23:41

Then Harpootlian fired back at Waters and insulted both the Attorney General's office and SLED even though he hasn't seen the discovery in the case.

Dick Harpootlian 23:52

Our response to that is, he's wrong. And that's why a jury will sit in that jury box. Isn't that great? That's one of those. That's the grand jury. Well, old timey courthouse, I forget which side we go with that jury box right there, hopefully within 90 to 120 days to decide whether that is.

Liz Farrell 24:14

Dick's joke was not particularly funny, but his adoring fans in the media box seem to think it was. Harpootlian started to list off potential judges for this hypothetical trial. We're not sure if he was doing this to show Judge Newman that he would try this case sooner if it weren't for the booked docket this fall or if he was sending a message to everyone that



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Newman might not be the judge in the case moving forward, which we'll tackle on another day. But here's the odd thing, he mentioned Judge Mullen, which why bring up the name of someone who might be tied to Murdaugh's case? He said the trial couldn't happen in October because that's her month to preside over General Sessions and she had recused herself. Yeah, she recused herself. There are so many questions about what role her close relationship with Alex might have played in all of this and it's possible she's on under investigation for that alleged role, it's not a good look for Dick to remind us just how deep the public corruption goes in this case.

Dick Harpootlian 25:07

Right now there's October, Judge Mullen chief accused yourself and November term that Goldsmith Brooks goes hand from Lancaster County goes on. I don't know that we need to get into that today we are going to be pressing for a trial as quickly as possible. In that vein, last week, we served as governor motion on the state, they have 30 days under the rules of response. But this man had been under investigation for a year and a half. It may be extensive, but it ought to be easily accessible. And we ought to do it again in two and a half weeks and begin the process of combing through it ourselves.

Mandy Matney 25:42

Remember, Newman was elected by the South Carolina Supreme Court to see all matters related to the Murdaugh case. And here Dick Harpootlian is basically planting his flag and saying, Look, we don't need you Judge Newman, and we do need this gag order. And don't worry, it won't go on for years because the trial is going to happen in a



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few months. And before concluding the hearing. Newman basically said let's not get ahead of ourselves here.

Judge Clifton Newman 26:11

The Senate has a constitutional right to a speedy trial. That being said, however, I am totally unaware of the status of the docket here in Collin County. I do not know if the Solicitor's Office for this circuit already has de certain trials scheduled or what other matters that currently exist that might be scheduled already or anticipated by or whether a specialist term of court might become necessary to try this case.

Mandy Matney 26:53

The hearing wrapped up in about 20 minutes and following that hearing Harpootlian and Griffin walked past a pool of microphones where two dozen news reporters are waiting for a press conference when a reporter asked her apparently in for comment. He said I'm gagged but the thing is, he wasn't gagged, Dick gagged himself. Newman has not ruled on a gag order. This was her Pouliot in creating an allusion to the media who have proved to be vastly misinformed in this case, sending a Harpootlian was clear in the hearing he desperately wants that gag order. The question is why? What's the move here? This was bothering me and suddenly today after the hearing it dawned on me this all comes back to the money. Okay, so we have heard from several sources that Alex's family members have said that they are choosing to support Alex. Intel evidence in the double homicide case shows them otherwise. In the family support matters because someone is paying the bills for Dick and Jim's expensive representation which we would anticipate costing well over a million dollars at this point. This is



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serious money we are talking about and remember in the jailhouse phone calls, the ones that expose several lies from the Murdaugh team indicated the John Marvin was handling the family's finances and Dick and Jim were definitely getting paid. Remember this?

Alex Murdaugh 28:34

Supposed to come by me with him. I'm trying to get the finances straight with them. And then I got to talk to John and see whether we don't do a loan, and then I'll pay it back out of an account later. Or we don't have a letter from an opinion from a lawyer who does retirement accounts. They're rolling it over. Because I mean, if you pay interest on something for six years, you could end up being more than the penalty. But we got to make sure it doesn't open it up to creditors. That money.

Mandy Matney 29:13

We also know from the jailhouse phone calls that the only people besides Dick and Jim who are speaking to Alex right now are his family members. At least we think since it seems like he's trying to use three way calls. It's hard to know who he's actually talking to. And we'll get into that in another episode. We also know there is a significant amount of money likely in the millions in Randolph and big busters trust funds. And we know that Alex Murdaugh's money is locked up in the receivership to protect it for victims who have ongoing lawsuits against the Murdaugh's. So it isn't a far fetched conclusion to say that most likely Dick and Jim are somehow getting paid by the Murdaugh family. It also isn't far fetched to believe that if a family saw evidence convincing them that Alex killed their family members, Maggie and Paul that they could take a big step backward and stop all support,



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including financial if Creighton waters decided to present convincing evidence in court today, such as GPS data, high velocity impacts better and text messages, the gravy train providing Alex expensive defense team might get cut off and the Bulldogs do not want to risk that. But instead, Waters folded really for the first time. In this case, the state had an opportunity on Wednesday to make this a new day in South Carolina showing everyone that our system would be transparent and just they had the opportunity to explain what evidence they had against Alex Murdaugh in the double homicide and through their statement, which we will talk about in another episode. But instead of revealing details in the investigation that took 13 months and God knows how many taxpayer dollars, they chose to say almost nothing several people on Twitter are arguing that the prosecution did not fold that they are just protecting their case. Normally, I am very understanding when it comes to prosecutors protecting information for the sake of their case. But after investigating this case in this family and watching how they thrive in the darkness, and have lurked in the shadows for years, and so many people have been hurt. It is time for the attorney general's office to take a stand to fight for transparency to ensure the public that they have arrested the right guy in this horrific crime. Alex Murdaugh is likely going to jail for the rest of his life. The Financial Crimes alone with a clear paper trail of evidence are enough to do that. In this case. In this case, only the prosecution should be most concerned about the South Carolina taxpayers who have lost faith in the entire system. They should be fighting for them. They should be fighting for transparency in if they don't. We will. And we'll be right back. Now I want to share some positive news from this week. On Sunday, July 17 2022 friends family and supporters rallied around the Smith family to celebrate a new day in

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Hampton, South Carolina marked by a beautiful new headstone honoring Stephen Smith's legacy. What I love about the headstone is that it is so huge and so unique and so hard to miss and very much visible from Sandy Run Road. The same road where Steven Smith was found murdered in 2015. We know people in Hampton county know who killed Stephen Smith. Now there is a beautiful and unmistakable headstone on the edge of a Gooding cemetery that will serve as a reminder for those who have information and who have been too scared all these years to go too. I hope this headstone serves as a monument showing everyone that this is a new day in Hampton County. That now is Stephen's time for justice, and that there are so many of us who will continue to fight for him until we get answers. I was honored to speak at the ceremony and I will share a clip from my speech. I didn't know Stephen personally, but over the last three years, I have made a bond with his mother Sandy, and learn so much about who he was and what he wanted to be. As Sandy and I have laughed and cried over the last three years. I have been so fortunate to learn about her son. Stephen was kind, he was funny. He was generous. He wanted to help people. Stephen was proud of who he was. And those around him were proud of him too. Stephen inspired others to be themselves and continues to do that with his memory. After all these years, Sandy has taught me to always hold on to hope and love, even when that's all you have. But also Sandy has taught me to never give up on what's right. We will be making noise and demanding justice until we have answers about why Stephen is no longer with us. We know that someone has information and now that the tides of justice in Hampton are changing, that someone will come forward with evidence. But I am here today to celebrate Stephen's life and we celebrate that

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hope and love that has kept Sandy and her relentless pursuit of justice. We are here to stand with Sandy and we're here to stand with Stephen. Thank you. After the speech, I had Sandy Smith tight and I couldn't help but wait for her. It's Stephens time Sandy said softly in my ear, and it is Stephen's time. His family has waited seven years for justice. And as Smith family attorney Mike Hemlepp said Sunday we are all done being sad. Now is the time to get angry because people like the Smith shouldn't have to wait seven years to get justice.

Mike Hemlepp 35:41

I didn't know Stephen Smith, but I knew Stephen Smith. There are 168,000 LGBT people in South Carolina. roughly 10% of the millennials identify as LGBT. There are roughly 28,000 teenagers in South Carolina who identify as LGBT bright, young, talented, ambitious, charismatic, and love, but didn't know. But I noticed so many like those young, gay South Carolinians, 28,000 of them, the statistics about them are horrific, huge rates of suicide, homelessness, domestic violence, sexual assault. In 2018, HRC did the largest study about LGBT teens that has ever been done, and discovered that 95% of them on a regular basis cannot sleep because of fear and anxiety. 95% and 20%. One out of five in the past year, prior to the study was forced into a sector financial the statistics about LGBT teens are horrific. But that wasn't Stephen's story. That wasn't his story.

Mandy Matney 37:11

Mike's speech in the pouring rain in the middle of a low country cemetery was so powerful and necessary.



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Mike Hemlepp 37:20

Stephen, to me is a hero. He's a role model. He had the ability to be a mentor for other people, his passion for healthcare, his desire to be a nurse and then one day a doctor. Imagine what kind of doctor you would have to gain. But he's not because someone decided to bash his head.

Mandy Matney 37:46

Mike Hemlepp then said what many people have said to me whenever I mentioned the fact that Steven was gay that we don't know for sure that it had to do with his death.

Mike Hemlepp 37:57

I know what you're thinking. You're gonna Mike. Come on. You don't know what happened to Stephen, you don't know why she died. But here's what I'm here to tell you today. There are 28,000 Gay teenagers in South Carolina to know exactly why he died. And I will tell you, I know exactly why he died. Maybe I'm wrong. The men and women of sled are working tirelessly to get us answers. And we cannot thank them more. But I'm telling you this. Don't bet against me. I think I'm right.

Mandy Matney 38:34

I wouldn't bet against him either. I think he is right. Mike is angry, and I am angry to more people need to be angry about what happened to Stephen.



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Mike Hemlepp 38:46

And yet the stakeholders of Hampden County were absolutely satisfied with the fact that Stephen Smith was thrown into road like garbage. And all they did pick him up and throw him away. And that is all they did. Today when you talk to this family. And when you talk to Sandy, they are deserving of your empathy. They're deserving of your sympathy. They're deserving of you showing you love them. You're there deserving of them seeing your fatness. But when you leave and get in your car, I don't want you sad anymore. It's time to get angry. It's time to get answers. It's time to get solutions. I didn't know Stephen Smith. But I've known I was as you know, Steven says he was a hero. He was a fallen warrior. Again against horses that want him else other LGBT genes of South Carolina and America eat steak. I don't honor Stephen by being sad the advances of the gay community which started at Stonewall, there was nobody in Stonewall who was set. They took action, sadness, it doesn't lead to action. So I want to honor Stephen, and I want you to honor Steven. And the way we do that is we get back.

Mandy Matney 40:24

We are begging you. If you have any tips big or small that could help solve Stephen Smith's case, please call crimestoppers of the Lowcountry. You can do this anonymously at 843-554-1111 or their website at 843554111 one.com. I will be posting about Stephen Smith on my personal social media accounts every single day until justice is served. So be sure to follow me and share those posts as we continue to fight to get the word out and get Stephens' case solved. Stay tuned. The Murdaugh Murders Podcast is created by me, Mandy Matney and my



EPISODE 53: Alex Murdaugh Charged With Murder And Denied Bond, What's Next?

fiance David Moses. Our executive editor is Liz Farrell, produced by Luna Shark Productions.

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