



Siskiyou County SHERIFF'S OFFICE

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Jeremiah LaRue
SHERIFF - CORONER

Wednesday, July 2nd, 2025

Man Convicted in 20 Year Old Cold Case

Phillip Gregory Frase, 77, pleaded guilty to the 2005 killing of Patricia Joseph at the Siskiyou County Superior Court on July 1st, bringing to close a two decades-long investigation by the Siskiyou County Sheriff's Office.

On July 17th, 2005, rafters discovered the body of a woman in the Klamath River near the Ash Creek Bridge along State Route 96. The woman was identified as 56-year-old Patricia "Patty" Joseph, who had been reported missing 3 days prior from her Fort Jones residence. A subsequent forensic autopsy revealed Patricia died from multiple blunt force traumas and asphyxia, and determined the manner of her death to be homicide.

In early 2021, Sheriff Jeremiah LaRue created a cold case and forensic evidence team to assist Major Crimes Detectives in their investigations. The focus of this team was to prioritize the numerous cold cases and review physical evidence using modern advancements. Since 2005, science and technology has advanced significantly to bring new capabilities to forensic evidence analysis. The cold case team completed a comprehensive review of the investigation and re-submitted evidence to the Department of Justice for fresh analysis, which produced compelling results connecting Frase to the killing of Ms. Joseph.

On February 8, 2023, Frase was formally arraigned in the Siskiyou County Superior Court and charged with the unlawful killing of Ms. Joseph. On July 1st, 2025, Frase pled guilty to voluntary manslaughter and admitted in open court, that he was responsible for Ms. Joseph's death. His sentencing date is set for July 29th.

The Siskiyou County Sheriff's Office is committed to never forgetting the victims of crime, especially cold cases such as Patty Joseph's. Crimes of this magnitude should never go unpunished, and the Sheriff's investigative team will remain relentless in pursuing leads and advancing other unsolved murder cases in Siskiyou County. The Sheriff's Office sends its deepest condolences to Ms. Joseph's family and loved ones, and extends gratitude to the investigative team for their tireless dedication to solving this case.

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