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MEDIA RELEASE

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CONVICTED MURDERER JEFFREY SPOONIRE DENIED PAROLE

On April 19, 2023, the Oregon Board of Parole and Post-Prison Supervision denied the parole application of Jeffrey Spoonire who is serving a life sentence for the 1982 murder of Mary Ann Thomas. The Parole Board found that Spoonire continues to have a present, severe emotional disturbance that would pose a danger to the safety of the community if he were to be released.

Mary Ann Thomas was a 29 year-old Registered Nurse at St. Charles Hospital in Bend. On July 13, 1982, she went for a jog with her two dogs on the Brooks Scanlon Logging Road west of Century Drive. As she ran along the road, she was shot in the head by Jeffrey Spoonire, a 22 year-old Bend resident and a stranger to Ms. Thomas, who was perched on a nearby hill. Spoonire would later explain that he was curious to see what a .22 caliber rifle round would do to a person and whether it would be enough to kill someone. After he shot Mary Ann Thomas, Spoonire then dragged her into some nearby brush, intending to rape her.

Later that day, Ms. Thomas was located by her husband and transported to the hospital. She later died from her injuries.

Jeffrey Spoonire was charged with and pleaded guilty to the Murder of Mary Ann Thomas. He was sentenced to life imprisonment with the possibility of parole.

On September 7, 2022, the Oregon Parole Board held a parole hearing in which Jeffrey Spoonire asked to be considered for release into the community. The Board reviewed a psychological evaluation of Spoonire conducted in 2022. The Board also heard from Laura and Catherine Thomas, sisters of Mary Ann Thomas, from Marla Rae, representative of the family and victim, and Deschutes County Chief Deputy District Attorney Steve Gunnels, who all argued against parole or release. Laura and Catherine Thomas told the Board that even after 40 years have passed, not a day goes by that Mary Ann's family does not think about her and grieve her loss.

Ultimately, the Board agreed with those opposing release and issued its final order denying parole on April 19, 2023.

Jeffrey Spoonire will again be eligible to apply for parole in 2027.

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