

New Details: Del Norte murder suspect apprehended

October 24, 2023



The story ran from New York City to Hollywood. Social media burned with condolences from the television and acting community expressing sadness and support for Marty York, who played “Yeah-Yeah” in the movie “Sandlot.”

To that world, Deanna Esmaeel was the mother of a friend and fellow actor. To the Northern California law enforcement community and citizens of Crescent City, the Del Norte County Sheriff’s Deputy was a friend, a colleague, a valued member of a community suffering a great loss.

Esmaeel was found dead in her home on North Bank Road Thursday (Oct.12) morning. Her estranged boyfriend Daniel James Walter was suspected in the murder.

“We’re all pretty devastated. We lost a member of the family,” Del Norte County Sheriff’s Deputy and media relations officer Bill Steven said. “I don’t know the exact date, but it’s been a long, long time since we lost one of our officers.”

Walter, the prime suspect in the murder, was eventually captured in Curry County, Oregon, on Friday night, the Del Norte County Sheriff’s Office confirmed.

“We work pretty close with Brookings (Ore.) PD and the Curry County Sheriff’s office because they are so close as our neighbors to the North,” Steven said. “We help them out and they help us out.”

The manhunt for Walter – who legally changed his name to Edward Patrick Davies in July – began in Crescent City on Thursday morning. The arrest came on Friday after the department shared a wanted poster and images of the 54-year-old suspect, also known as Edward Patrick Davies, to social media.

Steven confirmed Walter is currently being held in Del Norte County jail and is expected to be arraigned on Tuesday (Oct. 17).

Esmaeel was a familiar face in local law enforcement circles as a courthouse bailiff. Prior, she worked as an animal trainer on film sets for decades before making the change to law enforcement in 2021, SF Gate reported.

York posted a message on his Instagram account on Oct. 13, informing his followers of his mother's death.

"This is the hardest post I'll ever have to write, but I found out from the Sheriff's Department (Oct. 12) that my mother was murdered by a man she was seeing," the 43-year-old actor wrote alongside a photo of himself with Esmaeel and the wanted flyer released by the Del Norte County Sheriff's department.

"The emotions I have are horrible right now between rage, vengeance (sic), crying. There is a nationwide manhunt underway. Please, if you've seen this man contact the authorities immediately."

Del Norte County Sheriff Garrett Scott said his office is heartbroken by the loss of one of its deputies.

"Our hearts and prayers go out to her family, friends, and co-workers," Scott said in a statement.

Esmaeel took the oath of office as a Del Norte County Sheriff's Deputy on March 19, 2021. She moved to the area from Los Angeles County and had a strong desire to serve as a peace officer.