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Police: Albany mom used knife to kill her 3-year-old

Maddie Pfeifer

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Rebekah Gasperino appears in court from the Linn County Jail on Monday, April 25, 2022. Gasperino is accused of murdering her 3-year-old daughter. Photo by Kylie Graham, Mid-Valley Media

Maddie Pfeifer

The Albany mom **accused of murdering her 3-year-old daughter** allegedly admitted to using a knife to kill her child, according to a probable cause affidavit in the case.

Rebekah Gasperino, 32, is accused of one count of aggravated murder for allegedly killing her daughter Sophia Gasperino.

The affidavit in the case says Rebekah Gasperino told an officer that she “cut her daughter’s throat with a knife, and her daughter is no longer alive.”

Police make contact

At around 2:24 a.m. Saturday, April 23, an Albany police officer stopped the driver of a 1998 Toyota Avalon 4D for failing to obey a stop sign near the intersection of Santiam Highway Southeast and Fulton Street Southeast. The sole occupant of the vehicle was Rebekah Gasperino, according to the affidavit.

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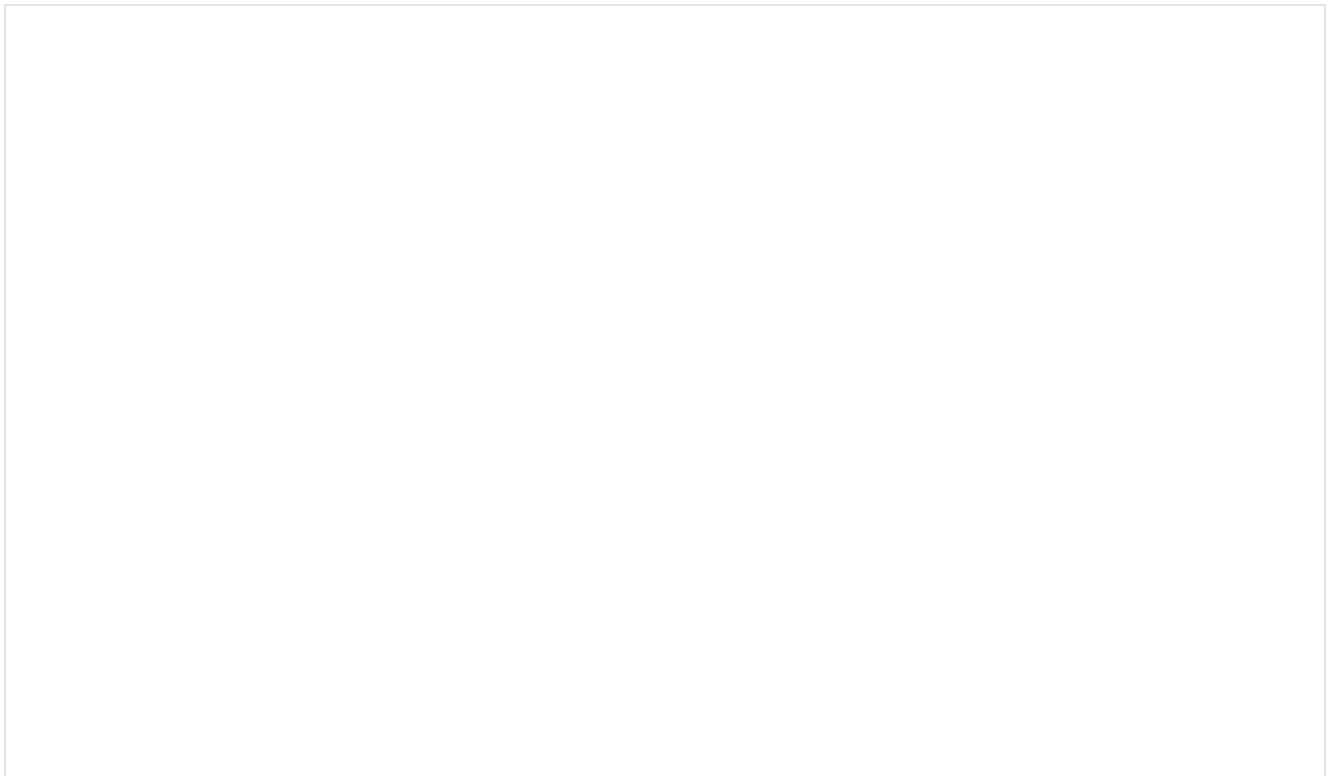
Benton County Sheriff Jef Van Arsdall and Corvallis Police Capt. Joel Goodwin hold a ribbon for Benton County Commissioner Nancy Wyse. The county held a ceremony to unveil its latest renewable energy project, a solar array on the roof of the Law Enforcement Center.

During the encounter, the officer noted various indicators that led him to believe Rebekah Gasperino may have been experiencing a medical issue or was driving under the influence of intoxicants, according to the affidavit.

These indicators included — besides disregarding the stop sign — weaving in the lane of traffic, delayed speech and movement and more. She also reportedly could not identify from where she was traveling and kept making references to the “Holy Spirit,” according to the affidavit.

The officer called for the Albany Fire Department to assist at the scene. The affidavit notes the emergency personnel determined Rebekah Gasperino was not in need of emergency medical treatment.

Rebekah Gasperino consented to performing sobriety tests, according to the officer. She reportedly did not seem to be driving under the influence of intoxicants, but the officer was concerned about Rebekah Gasperino’s ability to safely operate a motor vehicle.



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An alleged confession

The Albany officer asked Rebekah Gasperino to identify the source of her behavior, according to the affidavit. At this time, she allegedly told the officer she had cut her daughter's throat with a knife and her daughter was dead.

A police vehicle transported Rebekah Gasperino to her home in the 2000 block of Sun Place Southeast.

Investigating officers responded to the home where they contacted Sophia's father and Rebekah Gasperino's husband, Scott Gasperino. According to the affidavit, it appeared Scott Gasperino had just awoken.

Scott Gasperino consented to officers coming inside the house to check on Sophia's welfare. They found Sophia dead in her crib with a kitchen knife next to her, according to the affidavit.

An interview with the suspect

Officers took Rebekah Gasperino to the Albany Police Department where detectives interviewed her. During this interview, according to the affidavit, Rebekah Gasperino said she got a kitchen knife from the kitchen with intent to kill Sophia. She allegedly told detectives she used this kitchen knife to cut Sophia's throat.

Rebekah Gasperino told police she left the knife in the crib, left the home, got in her car and was stopped by police.

Officers arrested Rebekah Gasperino, and she was held in the Linn County Jail.

Court appearances

Rebekah Gasperino was **arraigned in Linn County Circuit Court** on Monday afternoon, April 25 on one count of aggravated murder, the conviction of which could result in a sentence of 30 years to life.

Multiple family and friends of Scott Gasperino attended the arraignment and were visibly emotional seeing Rebekah Gasperino appear on screen from the Linn County Jail.

Judge Keith Stein ordered that the defendant be held without bail. Stein ordered that an attorney from the Oregon Office of Public Defense Services be appointed as Rebekah Gasperino's defense attorney.

Her next court appearance in the matter is scheduled for May 9.

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