

Investigative Journalist Reports Breakthrough in Stephen Smith Case; New Book Heartbreak on Sandy Run Road

Journalist James Seidel reports new witness account identifying alleged suspects in the 2015 death of Stephen Smith as investigation continues.

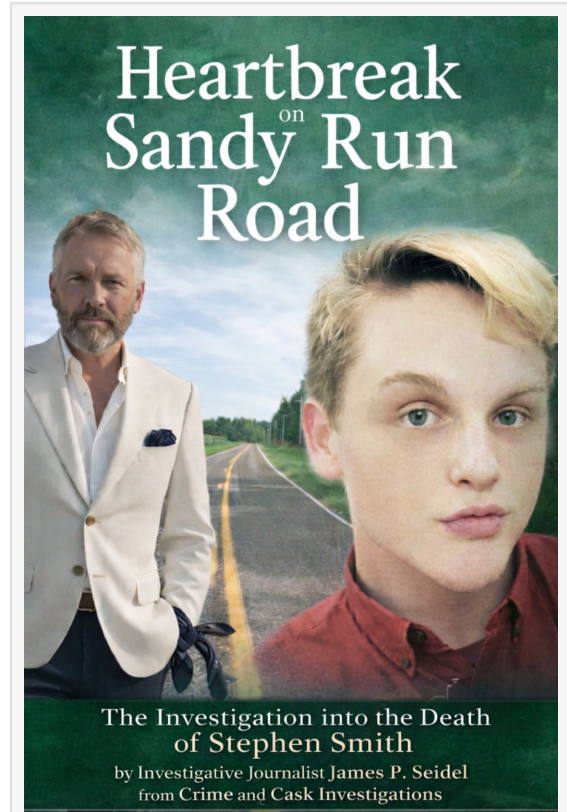
CHARLESTON, SC, SC, UNITED STATES, March 11, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Investigative journalist [James Seidel](#), founder of CC News Network and Crime and Cask Investigations, says his investigation into the 2015 death of [Stephen Smith](#) has uncovered new witness information identifying individuals allegedly responsible for Smith's death on Sandy Run Road in Hampton County, South Carolina.

Seidel recently published a report detailing an exclusive recorded interview with a witness who claims to have firsthand knowledge of statements made after Smith's death, including an alleged admission of involvement by one of the individuals identified.

Smith, 19, was found dead in the roadway on July 8, 2015. The death was initially investigated by the South Carolina Highway Patrol and classified as a possible hit-and-run. However, questions about the cause of death persisted for years due to the unusual nature of Smith's injuries and the lack of typical vehicle debris at the scene.

The case regained national attention during the investigation into crimes involving [Alex Murdaugh](#), when the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division announced in 2021 that it had reopened the Smith investigation.

According to Seidel, his reporting includes interviews with witnesses, community members, and individuals connected to the case. The newly reported witness account describes statements allegedly made shortly after Smith's death in which one of the individuals purportedly admitted involvement.



Stephen Smith Investigation | Heartbreak on Sandy Run Rd

Seidel states that he has been sharing investigative findings with SLED since July 2025, providing information gathered during his independent investigation as authorities continue examining the case.

The findings are detailed in Seidel's upcoming investigative book, Heartbreak on Sandy Run Road, which explores the circumstances surrounding Stephen Smith's death and the unanswered questions that have persisted for nearly a decade.

Seidel said Sandy Smith, Stephen Smith's mother, personally thanked him for his investigative work.

"She told me I had given her more information about Stephen's death than any SLED agent had in nearly ten years," Seidel said.

Seidel also stated that Eric Bland, the attorney representing Sandy Smith, thanked him for his efforts and reporting related to the case.

Seidel said his goal has been to help uncover facts and assist the pursuit of justice for Stephen Smith.

"This has always been about helping bring answers to Stephen's family," Seidel said.

The full investigative article can be read at:

<https://crimeandcask.com/stephen-smith-case-breakthrough-witness-names-alleged-suspects/>

About James Seidel

James Seidel is an investigative journalist and author and the founder of CC News Network / Crime and Cask Investigations, where he reports on major criminal investigations in South Carolina.

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