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Jonathan Minard: 5 Fast Facts You Need to Know

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Jonathan Minard

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The search for missing Ohio teen Jonathan Minard has ended tragically. After vanishing from a neighbor's dairy farm on April 13, Carroll County law enforcement confirmed that Minard's body was discovered Friday morning, buried in a shallow grave. Authorities say there is a person of interest but charges have yet to be filed.

Here's what you need to know about Jonathan Minard's disappearance.

1. Minard Went Missing After Helping a Friend's Father

On April 12, Minard left his home in Dellroy to help a 29-year-old dairy farmer in the neighboring community of New Harrisburg milk cows. Minard returned the following day to once again help the farmer.

The dairy farmer told investigators that Minard complained of a toothache, said he was going to call his mother, and the two of them went into the man's home to place the call. His mother stated she never received a phone call from the teen and he had not been seen or heard from since. No information has been provided regarding where Minard went after he left the farmer's residence.

2. Mindard's Body was Discovered in a Shallow Grave

A press conference held late Friday afternoon provided little information, with authorities declining to comment on the case until their investigation is complete. Sheriff Dale Williams revealed that Minard's body was discovered around 10:15 a.m., buried in a shallow grave on a farm in Washington Township, approximately 90 miles southeast of Cleveland. He did not reveal the name of the farm owner.

When asked if he could confirm that his department was now conducting a homicide investigation, Williams said he would not comment. Williams was also asked if the dairy farmer was the “person of interest.” The sheriff remained tight-lipped and would not disclose any other information. “I’m not going to go there,” he replied.

Carroll County Coroner Mandel Haas told reporters that he had been on scene when Minard’s body was discovered. Haas stated that the boy’s remains had been sent to the Cuyahoga County Medical Examiner for autopsy and toxicology testing. Details from the autopsy may not be available for several weeks.

Carroll County Prosecuting Attorney Steve Barnett also spoke at the press conference. “Jonathan’s discovery is just the first step in gathering evidence to answer many unanswered questions that have led us to this moment,” he said. Barnett has been in contact with the county’s Victim’s Assistance Coordinator and has asked that the advocate provide assistance to the Minard family “as they wish to avail themselves either now or later.”

3. The Sheriff Said the Circumstances “Were Suspicious”

Soon after Minard’s disappearance, the Sheriff shared his concern for Minard’s well-being, and acknowledged that the boy’s disappearance was troubling. “You know what? I haven’t slept for three nights. We’re talking about a young man that has no cell phone, that doesn’t have any money, and he’s been gone for three or four days? It’s pretty suspicious to me,“ he said, adding, “Obviously, I know some things about this case that I’m not going to reveal and we want to be able to get this solved, get this taken care of, and make sure it’s right.”

Minard’s aunt Jo Hepner sounded equally alarmed when she was interviewed, saying nephew was not the type of kid to run off. “If you seriously know where he’s at and what has happened to him, please tell us. We’re begging you, I mean, this is our last hope,” Hepner said. “Just help us please find him. That’s all I’m asking, tell us where he is.”

4. The Sheriff Asked Community Members to Search Their Properties

According to WKYC3, hundreds of residents had been assisting law enforcement with the search for Minard. On the night of April 15, the Carroll County Sheriff’s office issued an alert asking residents to pay special attention to the area around Baxter’s Ridge church in Harrison Township. Residents were also advised to check their garages and any other structures on their property. ‘There’s a lot of abandoned cabins and sheds and stuff back there too, so we’re hoping maybe he held up somewhere and is waiting it out,’ Huffman explained.

Locals were asked to meet at the Dellroy Firehouse for instructions before combing through six miles of woods and farms as they hunted for the teen. ‘It’s just a lot of ground to cover now,’ Dellroy Fire Chief Emerson Huffman told the Daily Mail. According to Emerson, specialized search teams were using K-9s as well as drones with infrared cameras.

5. Law Enforcement Called Off the Search Two Days Earlier

In an unusual move, authorities abruptly called off the search for Minard on April 17, declaring that a criminal investigation had been started. “We searched all day yesterday and the night before and came up with absolutely nothing,” Williams said, adding, “We’re not doing any more physical searches today. We’re working on (the case) from a different angle,” Sheriff Williams told the Canton Repository.