

# AARONÉ: Grand jury not likely to decide on indictment till Jan. at earliest

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"This is what troubles me," said the Rev. Acen Phillips of the New Birth Temple of Praise in Denver. "The child is still missing, and no one's out looking."

## "... Shelley Lowe knew ..."

Lowe died in May of heart disease, taking with her valuable information in the case, authorities said. After her death, Aurora Police Chief Dan Oates said: "There's no doubt in my mind Shelley Lowe knew exactly what happened to Aaroné Thompson."

Arapahoe County District Attorney Carol Chambers said that if the grand jury decides against an indictment, she would not file charges without more investigation.

"The case won't be closed, but the grand jury would make the decision as to whether we would file charges at that time," Chambers said.

The other children in the Thompson home told authorities they hadn't seen Aaroné since before Halloween of 2004.

Beyond that, about the only information made public as to what could have happened to

Aaroné came from Lowe's former common-law husband, Eric Williams, who was serving time on escape and drug charges but has since been paroled.

A day after Aaroné's father reported the girl missing, Williams told police the girl was killed in the family home and buried in a field by Thompson and Lowe, according to social-services court documents obtained by The Denver Post.

But Thompson's attorney, David Lane, disputes those claims, saying the grand jury has had months to investigate, yet nothing has been announced.

"If there was any solid evidence against Aaron Thompson, they would've indicted him. I have no doubt," Lane said. "All you need to arrest someone for murder is probable cause, and that's not a very high standard."

Oates would not discuss specifics of the case, except to say there is more evidence than just Williams' claims. Police have contacted more than 470 witnesses in the past year.

"Most of our work on this case has occurred sort of under the radar screen and outside the press and public," Oates said. "We've done a massive amount of work



Denver Post file photo

The search for Aaroné Thompson last November was called off after three days. Her dad was named a "person of interest."

on this case, and that work is being reviewed by the grand jury."

## Life has been a struggle

In the year since he reported his daughter missing, Aaron Thompson's life has been a struggle, Phillips said.

He still sees Thompson every

Sunday at church, and Thompson is studying to become a deacon, Phillips said.

Last week, Thompson found a job, although Phillips could not recall exactly what he was doing. Thompson was laid off as a security guard shortly after he became a person of interest in

the case, and was fired about three months later.

Since then, Phillips said, no one would hire him because of the notoriety he has received since the disappearance of his daughter.

Phillips said Thompson is trying to get back the eight children taken from his and Lowe's custody when Aaroné was reported missing. The children were placed in foster care.

"He (Thompson) was emotionally disturbed after the child disappeared," Phillips said. "The accusations kept coming and coming. It took a lot out of him when Shelley died. It's been a tough time for him."

## A girl few people knew

Aaroné's neighborhood shows no signs of the hoopla that enveloped it a year ago.

At that time, helicopters flew overhead. Television satellite trucks took over the streets, and residents searched for the girl they knew little about.

On a recent afternoon, some neighbors didn't want to talk about the case, or they had formed their own opinions as to who was responsible for Aaroné's disappearance but did

not want to reveal them.

Adam Luna, who lives across the street from the former Thompson home, didn't know Aaroné or the other children at the home.

"We never saw them. It was a total and supreme shock that she or the other kids lived there or that the girl was missing," Luna said.

Things have returned to normal in that cul-de-sac. Few neighbors even mention the case anymore, Luna said.

Black, however, wants some news, any news, about what happened to Aaroné.

"We need some follow-up, something," Black said. "It's a real tragedy."

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## KEY FIGURES IN THE AARONÉ CASE



**Aaroné Thompson:** The 6-year-old girl was reported missing from her southeast Aurora home by her father, Aaron, on Nov. 14, 2005. Her fate and whereabouts remain unknown.



**Aaron Thompson:** Aaroné's 39-year-old father shared a household with his live-in girlfriend, Shelley Lowe, and eight children, including Aaroné. He was labeled a "person of interest" by Aurora police.



**Shelley Lowe:** Lowe, 33, maintained her innocence in the disappearance of Aaroné. She died in May from heart disease.



**Lynette Thompson:** Mother of Aaroné and Aaron Jr., 11, who lived with Aaroné in Aurora. Aaron Thompson's estranged wife had not seen her daughter since 2001 and was living in a Detroit homeless shelter at the time of her daughter's disappearance.



**Eric Williams:** Shelley Lowe's ex-boyfriend was serving time on escape and drug charges when he implicated Lowe and Thompson in Aaroné's disappearance and said the girl was dead.



**Terry Jones:** The interim Aurora police chief oversaw the Aaroné search and investigation from its onset. Jones suspended the search Nov. 17 and declared that Thompson and Lowe were "people of interest that we would like to interview."



**Carol Chambers:** The Arapahoe County district attorney on May 4 called for a grand jury to hear evidence in the Aaroné case.

— Compiled by Barry Osborne of the Denver Post Research Library

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## Long Term Care Insurance

A Prescription to Avoid Financial Disaster

By Leonard Finkel

If you're over 45, you probably know someone whose family has been emotionally and financially devastated by Long Term Care (LTC). If that someone was a close family member or good friend, you know that traditional health plans including Medicare, provide little or no coverage for LTC services. According to Tom Eaton, President of ACSIA Long Term Care, "Many people who find themselves in a care situation are shocked to learn that their current insurance plan doesn't cover Long Term Care." The lack of LTC coverage can pose a real threat to a family's financial security as most expenses are paid out of pocket. As a result, many people are including LTC insurance in their financial planning to protect their families should there be unexpected health events.

Is LTC insurance right for you? An accepted financial formula maintains that people who have a net worth of at least \$100,000 excluding the value of their home should consider LTC insurance. When considering LTC coverage, it is vital to work with an agent who specializes in Long Term Care and represents the top insurance companies because benefits and the cost of coverage can vary significantly from company to company depending on your age, marital status and health. An experienced LTC insurance agent can save you many thousands of dollars in premiums over the life of a policy by finding the best company for your specific situation.

Tom Skiff, CEO of LTC Global Solutions and past President of the LTC division of GE Capital (now Genworth) notes that ACSIA Long Term Care is precisely this type of company, "What ACSIA has always brought to the consumer is a group of agents who specialize in this complex product line. Most insurance professionals don't deal with LTC insurance on a day-to-day basis. It takes a specialist to pick the right LTC product for the individual consumer and you'll really want someone that works with these products on a day-to-day basis. ACSIA specialists are some of the best in the country!" Terry L Truesdell, President of the National LTC Network, a national industry coalition, agrees, "ACSIA has a tremendous passion for helping their clients. I can't think of anything more important for someone considering an LTC insurance policy."

LTC Insurance has grown into a mature and important financial industry since being pioneered by ACSIA and Fireman's Fund (later

acquired by GE Capital) Mr. Skiff who worked at Fireman's Fund back in those days recalls, "By the mid-70s, ACSIA founder Bob DeLue had been active in the senior insurance market for a number of years. He realized that health insurance supplements did not provide adequate coverage for a major risk like Long Term Care. He came to us at Fireman's Fund and proposed a product which we developed with him. From that beginning, and over the next 20 years or so, that product burgeoned into what we know today as LTC insurance. ACSIA actually came up with the concept of LTC insurance and was instrumental in its development."

The importance of this type of coverage becomes clear when policyholders relate their personal stories, one of which is presented in a letter from Lisa Ross (La Mesa, CA) to her ACSIA agent. "My mother passed away from complications from Alzheimer's. It may seem odd to some that among the first people we thought of that day was you for your caring assistance in helping us obtain Long Term Care insurance for her. It was your patience and kindness that convinced my very reluctant mother that Long Term Care insurance was very important. You helped us every step of the way through the process - in my mind - far beyond the call of duty. Without your help, we would not have had the resources to see her through this devastating illness on a level that ensured her security and comfort."

Cynthia Lazarus (Chicago) wrote, "As you know, we used the policy that you sold my Mom for almost five years. She was first covered at home for a few years and then we used the policy at a nursing home. The cost of these LTC policies is next to nothing compared to the benefits that you can receive from having a good policy. Besides saving a huge amount of my Mom's estate, having the policy kept her from being a burden on the family in her time of need."

Long Term Care is not something we like to think about, but protecting our families from the threat it presents must be done while we are in good enough health to qualify for coverage. To receive additional information from an LTC specialist in your community, ACSIA Long Term Care can be contacted at 1-800-362-8837 or visit [www.acsia.com](http://www.acsia.com).

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