

What we know about the ransom notes in the Nancy Guthrie case



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om messages have been sent to media outlets [Guthrie disappeared](#), with news organizations communications containing insider details about

The [most recent message](#) was sent Friday morning to Tucson television station KOLD News 13, which has now received two communications through its anonymous online news tip system. The station immediately forwarded both to the FBI and Pima County Sheriff's Department.

KOLD receives two messages regarding Nancy Guthrie

KOLD received the first ransom note at approximately 5 p.m. Monday, news director Jessica Bobula told NewsNation. The station sent it directly to investigators and did not report on it until authorities issued a joint statement with the FBI acknowledging they were aware of [ransom note reports](#).

FBI, sheriff investigating authenticity of new message in Guthrie case

The second message arrived at 11:45 a.m. Friday, also through the station's tip submission system. Unlike the first communication, this message made no new demands and provided no proof of life that the Guthrie family has desperately sought, Bobula said.

"We are not calling this a ransom note," Bobula told [NewsNation](#). "We are calling it a message because no further demands were made."

KOLD anchor Mary Coleman reported on social media that the second message came from a different IP address than the first, but both appear to have used similar cloaking software to hide the sender's identity.

“The new note contains something the senders seem to think will prove to investigators they’re the same people who sent the first note,” Coleman wrote, though the station declined to elaborate on specifics out of respect for the family and investigation.

Both messages were submitted through KOLD’s anonymous tip system, which requires users to enter a name, email address and birthdate but does not verify the information. Bobula said the information provided differed between the two notes.

Trump hints at ‘solution’ in Nancy Guthrie case

“It wasn’t just a first and last name. They just put words in the space,” Bobula said of how the name field was filled out in one message.

The station’s tip system has been on its website for years and is typically used by people who want to be contacted about news stories. However, the system allows for anonymous submissions, Bobula said.

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TMZ receives detailed first note about Nancy Guthrie

TMZ received what appears to be the same initial ransom note Tuesday morning, approximately 12 hours after KOLD got it and about an hour after a second Tucson television station received it, TMZ co-executive producer Charles Latibeaudiere told [NewsNation](#).

The note demanded millions of dollars in Bitcoin for Nancy Guthrie's safe return and set two deadlines: 5 p.m. local time Thursday, and a second deadline for Monday, Feb. 9, TMZ reported.

The message warned that if the first deadline was missed, the "demand" would change, and if the ransom isn't fulfilled by Feb. 9, there would be "a more serious consequence," according to TMZ.

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Despite threatening no further communication, the sender or senders have now sent at least one additional message.

“Law enforcement has to see that as a positive sign that the initial note said no further communication, and now there is more communication, assuming that the second note is from the same person,” Latibeaudiere said.

Nancy Guthrie’s disappearance isn’t ‘traditional kidnapping’: Former FBI agent

The first note included a real Bitcoin address where the ransom could be deposited but provided no means for the family to contact the sender, according to authorities and TMZ.

What are the details in the ransom notes?

The most striking element of the first ransom note was its inclusion of specific details about Nancy Guthrie’s Apple Watch and a floodlight at her home that authorities had not made public, law enforcement officials confirmed.

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TMZ founder Harvey Levin said the specificity of those details has made him increasingly believe the notes are connected to whoever took Nancy Guthrie.

“The grammar is perfect. It is structured and layered,” Levin said of the first note TMZ received.

“In the first note, they mention an Apple Watch,” Levin told NewsNation. “It says where the Apple Watch was located, and it was not in a place that you would necessarily immediately think, and that seemed to pique the FBI’s interest.”



KOLD anchor Mary Coleman, who saw the first note her station received, said it contained “a dollar amount, a deadline, and other specifics that only Guthrie’s abductor might know” in an interview with CNN.

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“A lot of it is information that only someone who was holding her for ransom would know,” Coleman said, adding she believed the message “might not be a hoax.”

Nancy Guthrie’s neighbors saw a white van before she disappeared

Bobula said determining authorship is complicated by modern technology. “With things coming through digitally, is it assisted by AI? Is it written by the same person? It’s very difficult to tell,” she said.

She noted that the sentence structure between the two messages KOLD received made it “hard to tell” definitively if they came from the same author, though investigators are examining that question.

Is there a local Tuscan connection?

Both TMZ and KOLD representatives said wording in the messages suggests the sender has familiarity with the Tucson area.

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that this started with someone who is in the Tucson area.”

The note specified that Nancy Guthrie would be returned to Tucson within a certain time frame, which Latibeaudiere said provides investigators with a radius to work with in determining where she might be held. He declined to reveal the specific time frame.



Bobula agreed when asked if wording indicated a Tucson-area connection but declined to elaborate.

FBI, sheriff investigating authenticity of new message in Guthrie case

“It feels to me like it’s somebody connected to that area where KOLD broadcasts,” Levin said. “This could be somebody who lives in that area and says, ‘Huh, Nancy Guthrie, I know her daughter is really famous. It’s Savannah, and she lives in the same area.’ And then they hatch a terrible plan.”

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The fact that TMZ received the note 12 hours after KOLD suggested to Levin that the sender wanted broader media coverage.

“It was almost as if they wanted to hear, they wanted people to, some media outlet to talk about more than KOLD was, and they sent it to us,” he said.

Police looking at authenticity of ransom notes

Pima County Sheriff Chris Nanos acknowledged that there’s an “absolute possibility” the ransom notes have nothing to do with Nancy Guthrie’s disappearance, though authorities are taking them seriously.

The FBI and sheriff’s department issued a joint statement Friday saying they are “actively inspecting the information provided in the message for its authenticity.”

The FBI showed the alleged ransom letter to Savannah Guthrie, [authorities confirmed](#).

California man arrested for fake ransom

The credible ransom communications have spawned imitators attempting to exploit the situation. California resident Derrick Callella, 42, was arrested after [allegedly sending text messages](#) to Nancy Guthrie’s daughter Annie on Wednesday.

“Did you get the bitcoin were [sic] waiting on our end for the transaction,” his texts allegedly read, according to court documents.

Minutes after sending the texts, data obtained by police showed Callella made a nine-second phone call to an unidentified family member of Nancy, according to court documents.

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Callella allegedly confessed to officers that he had been following the case on television and sent the texts after finding the Guthries’ contact information online “to see if the family would respond,” the complaint states.

He was charged with two counts of transmitting communications containing a demand for ransom and appeared in federal court Friday in Santa Ana, California.

Guthrie family wants proof of life

Nancy Guthrie's [children made emotional appeals](#) in videos posted to Instagram asking alleged kidnappers to prove their mother is alive before the family could respond to demands.

"We need to know without a doubt that she is alive and that you have her," Savannah Guthrie said in a video Wednesday. "We want to hear from you and we are ready to listen. Please reach out to us."

Her brother Camron Guthrie posted another video Thursday saying: "Whoever is out there holding our mother, we want to hear from you. We haven't heard anything directly. We need you to reach out and we need a way to communicate with you so we can move forward. But first we have to know that you have our mom."

Wave of police vehicles arrive at Nancy Guthrie's home

Neither the first ransom note nor the second message provided proof of life or a way for the family to communicate with the sender, according to the outlets that received them.

The FBI continues to offer a reward of up to \$50,000 for information leading to Nancy Guthrie's recovery or the arrest and conviction of anyone involved in her disappearance.

Nancy Guthrie, 84, was last seen around 9:45 p.m. Jan. 31 when family members dropped her off at her Tucson home after dinner. She has a pacemaker and requires daily medication for a heart condition.

Anyone with information is urged to contact the FBI at 1-800-CALL-FBI or the Pima County Sheriff's Department at 520-351-4900.

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ELIZABETH VARGAS REPORTS

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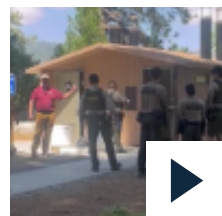
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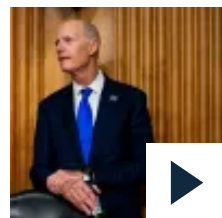
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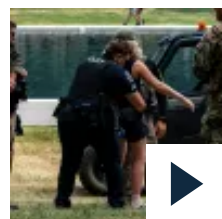
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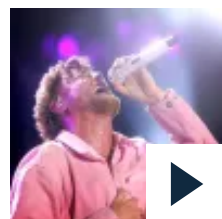
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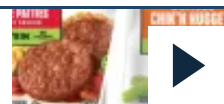
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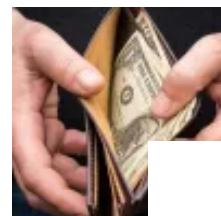
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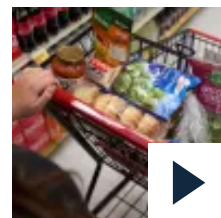
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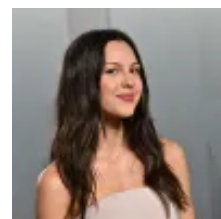
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