

Former Capitol Police officer a forensic match for Jan. 6 pipe bomber, sources say

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A computer program that compared the bomb suspect's gait to that of Shauni Kerkhoff produced a 94% match.

A forensic analysis of a female former U.S. [Capitol Police](#) officer's gait is a 94%-98% match to the unique stride of the long-sought Jan. 6 pipe-bomb suspect, according to a Blaze News investigation confirmed by several intelligence sources.

A source close to a congressional investigation of Jan. 6 additionally told Blaze News evidence has emerged recently that pointed toward law enforcement possibly being involved in the planting of the pipe bombs.

'They were f**king in on it.'

A software algorithm that analyzes walking parameters including flexion (knee bend), hip extension, speed, step length, cadence, and variance rated Shauni Rae Kerkhoff, 31, of Alexandria, Va., as a 94% match to the bomb suspect shown on video from Jan. 5, 2021. The veteran analyst who ran the analysis for Blaze News said that based on visual observations the program can struggle with, he personally pegged the match at closer to 98%.

Kerkhoff, who was a Capitol Police officer for four and a half years, left the department in mid-2021 for a security detail at the Central Intelligence Agency, sources told Blaze News.

CIA spokeswoman Liz Lyons stated that the subject worked in campus security.

Kerkhoff's residence in Alexandria, Va., appeared to be under the watch of law enforcement officers on Friday night. Blaze News editor in chief Christopher Bedford was pulled over by local police after stopping to observe the home. He was then allowed to leave.

Close to bomb suspect

The FBI, which failed to solve the case in nearly five years of investigation but indicated that it was closing in after Blaze News brought its investigation to intelligence sources, was feet from the Falls Church address of the pipe bomb suspect days after Jan. 6, according to the Blaze News investigation.

Former FBI Special Agent Kyle Seraphin realized Friday that he was doing surveillance next door to the woman now suspected of being the Jan. 6 pipe bomber.

“The FBI put us one door away from the pipe bomber within days of [January 6](#), and we were deliberately pulled away for no logical or logically investigative reason,” Seraphin told Blaze News Friday. “And everything about that tells me that they were involved in a cover-up and have been since day one.

Former Capitol Police Officer Shauni Kerkhoff (above) playing soccer in Columbus, Ohio. The pipe bomb suspect approaches the Democratic National Committee building on Jan. 5, 2025. Columbus Eagles FC, U.S. Capitol Police

“They were f**king in on it,” Seraphin said.

Seraphin proposed doing a “knock and talk” at the door of an Air Force civilian employee whose address was tied to a vehicle that picked up the bomb suspect in Falls Church, Va., on Jan. 5, 2021.

Seraphin’s team spent two days watching the man, but Seraphin’s request to go face-to-face with the person of interest was denied. The team was pulled off the case the same night, he said.

Seraphin said he has given the same details publicly since 2021.

“There’s a personal reaction to it, which is the complete vindication that the things I’ve been saying and my recollection of being briefed on this stuff has been accurate for years and I’ve never changed my tune,” he said.

The FBI tied a DC Metrorail SmarTrip card allegedly used by the pipe-bomb suspect to an Air Force civilian employee but determined that while the man purchased the card, he did not use it. The suspect allegedly used the card to travel from D.C. to a stop in Falls Church after planting the pipe bombs. The Air Force civilian employee had purchased the SmarTrip card a year earlier.

Gait analysis

The forensic study, arranged by Blaze News, revealed that Kerkhoff is up to a 98% match to the gait of the pipe-bomb suspect. The findings were confirmed by several current intelligence sources who viewed the study results.

The source who did the comparison said the software rated the match at 94%. He put the figure at closer to a 96%-98% match, including a combination of human intelligence and the software analysis.

Samples of Kerkhoff's gait were taken from Jan. 6 Capitol Police CCTV security video and compared to unedited video of the hoodie-wearing suspect walking through an alley near C Street to place an alleged pipe bomb behind the Capitol Hill Club about 8:16 p.m. on Jan. 5.

Two other sources familiar with gait analysis who viewed the video comparison and the software analysis told Blaze News they concurred that the video samples matched the gait of the gray-hoodie-wearing suspect.

An expert in gait analysis used a computer algorithm to compare the gait of the pipe-bomb suspect (left) to that of Officer Shauni Rae Kerkhoff and obtained a 94% match.FBI/U.S. Capitol Police

The mystery of the pipe bombs has hung over Jan. 6 for nearly five years. The FBI said an unknown subject placed pipe bombs under a park bench at the DNC and the Capitol Hill Club near the Republican National Committee building between 7:54 and 8:16 p.m. the night before the riot.

Discovery of the devices between 12:40 and 1:05 p.m. respectively on Jan. 6 drew already depleted police resources away from the Capitol just as a huge crowd breached the grounds at 12:53 p.m. A joint session of Congress convened at 1 p.m. to take up challenges to the certification of the Electoral College vote from the 2020 presidential election.

Kerkhoff was a Capitol Police officer from 2018 until mid-2021. She was a member of the department's Civil Disturbance Unit and a training officer on the use of "less-lethal" crowd-control weapons that were extensively used on the Jan. 6 crowds.

Using lethal force Jan. 6

Blaze News [reported Wednesday](#) on Capitol Police surveillance video showing Kerkhoff and other CDU officers repeatedly using lethal force on the Jan. 6 crowd using "less-lethal" weapons. At least 16 members of the early crowd on the Capitol's West Plaza were shot above the waistline with kinetic-impact projectiles fired from above on the Lower West Terrace.

Blaze News approached numerous intelligence officials two weeks ago with questions about findings from its investigation, which suggested that Kerkhoff matched the description and behavior of the suspected bomber, based on her distinctive walk, slight limp, 5'7" frame, and other factors.

'We have conducted all logical investigative steps.'

Footage of the pipe-bomb suspect walking with a backpack on the night of Jan. 5 was compared to Jan. 6 security video of Officer Kerkhoff in various places on Capitol grounds and footage of her playing professional soccer in Columbus, Ohio, in 2017.

The pipe-bomb video that Blaze News used in its analysis was not the footage released by the FBI. A [video sleuth](#) who embarked on a more than yearlong investigation told Blaze News the footage made public by the FBI was manipulated to downsample the frame rate. Although it shows the same scene as the FBI video, the clip used by Blaze News came from another source and is demonstrably clearer with much smoother motion.

Former Capitol Police Chief Steven Sund told Blaze News he is eager to learn the results of the pipe-bomb investigation. But he said he had no awareness of any Capitol Police officer involvement in the pipe-bomb planting.

The pipe bombs were placed near the Democratic National Committee building (left) and the Capitol Hill Club (right). The bombs were discovered on Jan. 6, 2021. FBI photos

“I had no knowledge that it was being carried out, nor were they carrying it out with any authorization from the chief’s office,” Sund said. “I’m unaware of any legitimate reason that any Capitol Police or other law enforcement officer would be involved in the planting of those pipe bombs.”

The possible solution to the pipe-bomb mystery could have far-reaching reverberations.

Several officials familiar with the government’s investigative efforts said a new work is urgently needed to determine whether there were co-conspirators who aided and abetted the crimes, and to learn if federal agencies or employees knew who was involved in the bomb hoax and participated in a nearly five-year cover-up.

The FBI has faced questions over its failure to make meaningful investigative progress despite offering a \$490,000 reward with the ATF, along with a \$10,000 reward from the Metropolitan Police Department. Former FBI Director Christopher Wray claimed the bureau conducted an exhaustive investigation.

In congressional testimony, Wray said Jan. 6 was an indictment of right-wing domestic violent extremists. He said white-supremacy-fueled domestic violent extremism is one of the major threats to the nation.

The prospect of a Capitol Police officer being the perpetrator, if confirmed, could recast the entire story of Jan. 6. It could start to unravel the carefully crafted, zealously defended Democrat narrative that massive crowds of Trump supporters stormed the Capitol as part of an insurrection to keep Trump in office and deny Joseph R. Biden Jr. the presidency.

At the same time the FBI was not solving the pipe-bomb mystery, it was carrying out the largest investigation in its history to hunt down the thousands of Americans who went to the Capitol after Trump's Jan. 6 speech at the Ellipse. The FBI under Wray worked in concert with the Biden Department of Justice to put hundreds of Trump supporters in prison.

Secret Service reaction to bomb

The U.S. Secret Service response to discovery of the pipe bomb under a park bench at the Democratic National Committee building drew fire from congressional investigators and the Department of Homeland Security Inspector General.

Speculation that the Secret Service knew the DNC pipe bomb was a dud began when U.S. Rep. Thomas Massie (R-Ky.) released Capitol Police security footage showing agents acting nonchalantly after a Capitol Police counter-surveillance officer informed them that he found a pipe bomb in the bushes behind the DNC building.

Agents stayed in their SUV eating lunch for two minutes before getting out to investigate. They stood feet from the suspected bomb and allowed pedestrians to walk past and vehicles to continue driving within feet of the device. Commuter trains that pass directly next to the DNC building continued to run.

'The FBI put us one door away from the pipe bomber within days of January 6.'

Two weeks ago, Blaze News reported on the yearlong investigation of a [video sleuth](#) who found evidence he said showed the FBI was misleading the American public about the pipe bombs.

A user known as Armitas on social media said the videos released by the FBI had been manipulated to reduce the frame rate. He also provided evidence that the pipe bomber first tried to plant the devices outside the Congressional Black Caucus Institute and a congressional rooming house on C Street the evening of Jan. 5.

Shortly after Blaze News' report on his findings, the FBI released higher-quality footage of the pipe-bomb suspect.

Armitas said he believes the device planted next to a bench in some bushes at the DNC building at 7:54 p.m. Jan. 5 was retrieved at 4:40 a.m. on Jan. 6 and replaced shortly before or nearly simultaneously to discovery of the bomb at 1:05 p.m. The device appears to have been broken by the bomb suspect outside the Congressional Black Caucus Institute on Jan. 5.

Much public discussion in the case dealt with the rare Nike Air Max Speed Turf sneakers the suspect wore — and whether the person was familiar with the areas around the DNC building and Capitol Hill Club.



A commuter train runs past the Democratic National Committee building on Jan. 6, 2021, while a pipe bomb rests under a park bench behind the DNC.U.S. Capitol Police

Armitas said he believes the suspect knew to take a mini-shortcut at the corner of 1st and C streets and escaped through a well-hidden church garden gate after planting the second device behind the Capitol Hill Club.

Gait analysis software can get accurate results even if the subject is walking at a faster-than-normal speed. It can also recognize gait on video shot from a long distance. It does not require the kind of video resolution needed for facial recognition, the analyst said. The bombing suspect's head was covered by a hoodie and a COVID-19 face mask on Jan. 5.

The jerky motion seen on video released by the FBI would normally make gait analysis more difficult, the analyst said.

Long-stalled investigation

The FBI's lack of progress in solving the pipe-bombs case drew increasing criticism from Republican members of Congress. In a July 2023 hearing, [Massie grilled Wray](#) about video Massie unearthed showing the man who apparently discovered the bomb at the DNC building.

Blaze News later learned that person was a plainclothes Capitol Police counter-surveillance officer.

"Have you interviewed that person?" Massie asked.

“We have conducted all logical investigative steps and interviewed all logical individuals at this point,” Wray replied.

Wray repeatedly stated that he would not discuss details of an active investigation, which prompted a rebuke from Massie.

“We can handle classified information and we fund your department, and so you need to provide that,” Massie said.

“Nine hundred days ago is when this happened, and you said you had total confidence we’d apprehend a subject,” Massie said. “We’ve found video that looks like somebody, a passerby, miraculously found this pipe bomb at the DNC and then notified the police. Miraculously, I say, because it was specifically the same, the precise time, to cause the maximum distraction from the events going on at the Capitol.”

Wray replied, “Well, again, I don't want to speculate about specific individuals. I will tell you that we have done thousands of interviews, reviewed something like 40,000 video files, of which this is one. Assessed 500-something tips.”

FBI Director Christopher Wray was heavily criticized by members of Congress for not being more forthcoming with Jan. 6 pipe-bomb information. Tom Williams/CQ-Roll Call Inc. via Getty Images

In May 2024, [Massie grilled Steven Dettelbach](#), then-director of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, for not providing information about the pipe bombs or what ATF agents did on Jan. 6.

“Are you willing to confirm that the pipe bombs planted at the Capitol Hill Club and the DNC on January 6 couldn’t have gone off with the 60-minute kitchen timer if they were placed the day before?” Massie asked.

“Respectfully, Congressman, I do believe that this does go into the area of the investigation, which is ATF is supporting, the FBI is leading that investigation, and I cannot comment,” Dettelbach said.

Dettelbach would not answer which ATF official was the incident commander for the pipe bombs or whether the devices were planted as part of some training exercise.

In an interview with the House Committee on the Judiciary on June 7, 2023, the head of the FBI Washington Field Office said it would be “Investigation 101” to interview whoever found the pipe bomb at the DNC.

‘That’s just Investigation 101.’

“In any investigation, whoever discovers the device is somebody you need to talk to, right, because they could be the one that planted the device in the first place,” said Steven D’Antuono, assistant FBI director. “You know, so that’s just Investigation 101. So, but I am not aware of that video. I’m not aware of that person.”

Thirteen months before taking office as FBI director, Kash Patel seemed to raise the possibility that the pipe bombs were fakes.

“If the allegations [about the bomber] aren’t true,” Patel said on “The Benny Show,” “or there was some government ruse, or some FBI rogue source or whatever, I don’t know because I don’t have the case files, then there’s another corruption scandal on and around an election-time narrative.”

Ohio soccer star

Kerkhoff was born in November 1993 in Hamilton, Ohio, the youngest of three daughters of Brandt James Kerkhoff and the former Patricia Marie Hennin. Patricia Kerkhoff died in August 2024 after a long battle with pancreatic cancer.

Among her skills, Shauni Kerkhoff said she can solve a Rubik’s Cube in less than a minute. She completed the 2018 Boston Marathon in 3 hours, 34 minutes, 9 seconds.

Kerkhoff attended Olentangy Orange High School in Lewis Center, Ohio, about 20 miles north of the capital city of Columbus. She was a soccer standout and top academic achiever who earned National Honor Society membership. She was the starting varsity goalie all four years.

She earned second-team All-State honors in 2011 and first-team All-Conference her junior and senior years. She allowed only 12 goals in her senior season. Kerkhoff was also goalie for the Blast FC Girls Academy in Delaware, Ohio, for six years.

She went on to play goalie for the Division 1 Temple Owls in Philadelphia. She started nine games as a freshman and recorded the highest save percentage in the Atlantic 10 Conference. She started in the next 45 games across three seasons. She also won academic honors, including the Philadelphia Inquirer Academic All-Area Women's Soccer Team.

Two U.S. Capitol Police counter-surveillance officers walk toward the Democratic National Committee building on Jan. 6, 2021. One of the officers would discover a pipe bomb under a park bench behind the DNC.U.S. Capitol Police

In the sixth game of her senior season in 2015, she collided hard with University of Pennsylvania midfielder Allie Trzaska and went down face-first in the grass.

"To hear someone scream like that, I knew instantly it had to be something serious," teammate Shannon Senour told the Temple News.

Kerkhoff underwent five hours of surgery at the University of Pennsylvania for a broken tibia, one of the two bones running from the knee to the ankle. Her mother, Patti, later said that when she saw her daughter's face turn "beet red" on the field, it could not be good. Once she saw Shauni

on the sidelines, “I knew it was probably over.”

The American Athletic Conference Preseason Goalkeeper of the Year suddenly faced the end of her college soccer days. The injury and surgical repair left Kerkhoff with a slight limp in her right leg. That would become a fateful thing a decade later, when investigators studied her movements on Jan. 5 and 6, 2021.

The season-ending injury ended up being a blessing in disguise, Kerkhoff said. She had long been interested in Temple’s ProRanger program, a partnership with the National Park Service to produce park ranger law enforcement officers. Weeks after her broken leg, she was offered an accelerated track in the program.

Kerkhoff played a season in the Women’s Premier Soccer League with the Columbus Eagles Football Club.

“This is going to sound so demented when I say this, but I’m grateful that I broke my leg,” Kerkhoff told the Temple News. “Because had I not, I wouldn’t have pursued my dream job.”

Kerkhoff was hired by the Capitol Police in 2018. She testified in a Jan. 6 criminal trial that she applied for her [current job](#) before Jan. 6 and left the United States Capitol Police in good standing.

The Capitol Police did not respond to Blaze News’ request for comment on the pipe-bombs case. Blaze News also reached out to the FBI and DOJ, but did not get a reply by time of publication.

Editor's note: CIA spokeswoman Liz Lyons reached out to Blaze News after publication, clarifying that while the subject worked in campus security, she was never assigned to Director John Ratcliffe's personal security detail. Blaze News has edited this article after publication to include this information.

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