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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CHRISTOPHER HALVER-GENE HANSEN CONVICTED OF AGGRAVATED ASSAULT FAMILY VIOLENCE AND SENTENCED TO SERVE 20 YEARS IN PRISON

On May 25, 2023, Coweta Judicial Circuit Superior Court Judge Erica Tisinger sentenced Christopher Halver-Gene Hansen, 36, to 20 years in prison followed by 20 years on probation for multiple acts of domestic violence. This sentencing followed a Carroll County jury's conviction of Hansen on May 2, 2023 for charges of Terroristic Acts, Criminal Trespass, and two counts of Aggravated Assault under the Family Violence Act. Senior Assistant District Attorney Lara Todd prosecuted the case with the assistance of Victim Advocate Michelle Lopez.

The evidence admitted at trial revealed that in the summer of 2018, Hansen and the victim began a romantic relationship and ultimately began living together in Hansen's residence in Temple, Georgia. Beginning around November 2018, Hansen became increasingly physically and verbally abusive towards the victim. Through this abusive behavior, Hansen began isolating the victim from her friends and family as a form of manipulation and control over her. On different occasions, Hansen broke the victim's cellphone to prevent her from calling anyone for help. At other times, the victim found the air released from her vehicle's tires after arguments with Hansen.

To help the jury understand the nature of domestic violence relationships, the State called Michelle Beddingfield, an expert in domestic violence, to testify in the trial. Beddingfield explained to the jury the patterns of manipulation and control that abusers commonly use against romantic partners. She explained the cycle of domestic violence and how abusers use a combination of violence, threats, false apologies and promises to make it difficult for victims to leave the abusive relationship, which people unfamiliar with domestic violence might assume would be easy to leave. Similarly, Beddingfield also explained why many victims of domestic violence never report the abuse to law enforcement.

The evidence supporting Count 1, Terroristic Acts related to a December 3, 2018, incident. At that time, Hansen lost his temper during an argument with the victim and poured a can of gasoline on the victim's head, soaking her entire body and clothing. Despite being intensely afraid of being set on fire, and with her vision blurred from gasoline fumes, the victim managed to get to the shower to wash off the gasoline. Consistent with the behavior of a domestic abuser, Hansen blamed the victim for supposedly making him do this to her and even complained to the victim that she dripped gasoline in the house on her way to the shower.

The evidence supporting Count 2, Aggravated Assault, Family Violence related to a December 17, 2018, incident. In the midst of another argument, the victim tried to leave the house to get away, but Hansen grabbed her by the arm, pulled her back into the residence, and slammed the victim onto a coffee table, breaking it. Hansen then pulled out his pistol and pointed it at her face, threatening her if she ever left him.

The evidence supporting Count 3, Criminal Trespass, related to an April 6, 2019 incident where Hansen threw a trailer hitch into the victim's windshield, breaking it, after the victim began to drive away during an argument.

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The evidence supporting Count 4, Aggravated Assault, Family Violence and Count 5, Theft by Taking, related to an April 9, 2019 incident, in which, during another argument, Hansen strangled the victim. This incident resulted in bruising to the victim, which her family saw. While Hansen had managed to isolate the victim from her family and scare her from seeking help, the victim's family intervened after this strangulation and helped the victim escape Hansen. However, the night that the victim left Hansen, he transferred \$3,000 from her account to his account without her permission. The jury found Hansen guilty of all counts.

The District Attorney wishes to recognize the bravery displayed by the victim in this case, who is now a survivor and champion of supporting others in abusive relationships. As a survivor, she overcame tremendous physical and psychological abuse at the hands of Hansen, but she fearlessly faced him in court. She displayed her strength in the face of many hours of aggressive cross-examination at trial. The District Attorney hopes this case will give hope and encouragement to all those experiencing domestic abuse. If they seek the help provided by shelters, law enforcement, and prosecutors, they too can get the justice and safety they deserve.

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