



JOHN H. CRANFORD, JR.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY COWETA JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

JEP BENDINGER
CHIEF ADA

ROBERT MOORADIAN
CHIEF DEPUTY ADA

October 27, 2023

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CARROLL COUNTY JURY CONVICTS PATRICK O'NEIL GENTRY OF CRIMINAL ATTEMPT TO COMMIT MALICE MURDER, AGGRAVATED BATTERY, AND OBSTRUCTION OF AN OFFICER

On October 25, 2023, a Carroll County jury returned a verdict of guilty against Patrick O'Neil Gentry, 37, for Criminal Attempt to Commit Malice Murder, Aggravated Battery, and Obstruction of an Officer. Superior Court Judge Dustin Hightower presided over the trial and sentenced the defendant to 55 years in prison. Because Gentry has seven prior felony convictions, his 55 year prison sentence must be served without the possibility of parole.

Senior Assistant District Attorney Lara Todd and DA Investigator Becky Byrd prosecuted the case. Cpl. Jennifer Garmon of the Carroll County Sheriff's Office led the investigation.

The evidence presented at trial showed that on January 12, 2020, jailer Harlee Rood searched the jail cell of Patrick Gentry and his cellmate, looking for blankets and laundry bags being hoarded by inmates. Gentry's cell was located on the 2nd floor of the jail pod, which consists of a two story room, two floors of cells, and staircase and balcony with railing providing access to the 2nd floor of cells. Gentry was being held in Carroll County Jail for offenses included Terroristic Threats, Obstruction of an Officer, and Giving False Information to an Officer.

When Jailer Rood confiscated a laundry bag in Gentry's cell, Gentry snatched the laundry bag from her, grabbed her by the hair and clothes, dragged her out of the cell, and threw her under the railing off the 2nd floor balcony. Gentry then ran for the stairs, seemingly to get to the ground floor to continue his assault on Jailer Rood. However, Gentry's cellmate chased him down and grappled with him at the top of the stairs until other officers arrived to take Gentry into custody and provide aid to Jailer Rood. At Grady Hospital Jailer Rood was diagnosed with a compression fracture of one of her vertebrae.

Cpl. Garmon began the investigation immediately, and retrieved surveillance video which captured the incident, except for what occurred inside Gentry's cell. The video shows Gentry drag Jailer Rood out of the cell and throw her under the rail off the balcony. Jailer Rood is seen falling into the concrete shower which sits directly below the 2nd floor balcony. The video also shows Gentry's cellmate chase him down and stop him at the top of the stairs until officers arrive.

Every member of law enforcement in our community goes to work every day knowing that they are putting themselves in harm's way to protect and serve our community. It is a debt we cannot repay. However, when a criminal seeks to harm a law enforcement officer, the District Attorney's Office will do its part to see that criminals like Patrick Gentry receive substantial prison sentences, like 55 years without parole.

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