



JOHN H. CRANFORD, JR.
DISTRICT ATTORNEY
COWETA JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

JEP BENDINGER
CHIEF ADA

ROBERT MOORADIAN
CHIEF DEPUTY ADA

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 13, 2023

**CARROLL COUNTY JURY CONVICTS NATHANIEL ALLEN BERNHARDT OF DOMESTIC ABUSE,
INCLUDING KIDNAPPING WITH BODILY INJURY**

On November 9, 2023, after a 4 day trial, a Carroll County jury convicted Nathaniel Allen Bernhardt, 28, of Carrollton, of felony acts of domestic violence against his girlfriend with whom he resided at the time of the attack. He was convicted of Kidnapping with Bodily Injury, Aggravated Assault by Strangulation, False Imprisonment, Possession of More than an Ounce of Marijuana, and Possession of a Firearm During the Commission of a Felony. Superior Court Judge John Simpson presided over the trial and will be scheduling sentencing. The mandatory minimum sentence for Kidnapping with Bodily Injury is Life in prison with the possibility of parole.

This case was investigated by Inv. Seth Denney of the Carrollton Police Department with the assistance of the Carroll County Sheriff's Office. The case was prosecuted by Senior Assistant District Attorney Nathan Stewart with the assistance of District Attorney Investigator Shannon Bramblett and Victim Advocate Abigail Benefield. The evidence introduced at trial showed the following:

Between the night of March 29, 2023 and the morning of March 30, 2023, the Defendant spent approximately 6 hours hitting, slapping, punching, and strangling his girlfriend. When she originally reported the incident, the victim told law enforcement that she had blacked out between 3 and 7 times from strangulation, and several times she woke up to find Bernhardt still on top of her, where he proceeded to strangle her to unconsciousness again. She also told the police that at one point she had run out of the front door of their apartment to try and get away, but that Bernhardt had chased her down and made her go back inside and "do it all over again." She said that once inside the residence, Bernhardt would grab her by her hair and sling her around the apartment, moving her from room to room and throwing her back and forth between the bed and the floor. Law enforcement documented visible injuries across her body including a bruised and swollen eye, red marks around her neck resembling a hand print, and bruising to her arms. Wellstar Hospital documented "a large bruise with swelling" to the left eye and "multiple abrasions and bruising . . . around the neck." Hospital records also note that the victim reiterated that her boyfriend assaulted her and strangled her, and that he had abused her before "but never to this extent."

The Defendant was arrested on March 30, 2023 and indicted on May 9, 2023. While the victim was initially cooperative with the law enforcement investigation and prosecution of the Defendant, by the time the case went to trial, she did not want the Defendant prosecuted. To prove the truth of what happened to this victim, the State introduced into evidence pictures of the victim's injuries, audio recordings of her statements to law enforcement, and hospital records documenting her injuries and statements to medical personnel.

Carroll County Courthouse
PO Box 338
Carrollton, GA 30112
Phone: (770) 830-2171
Fax: (770) 830-2170

Coweta Co. Justice Center
PO Box 1918
Newnan, GA 30264
Phone: (770) 254-7300
Fax: (770) 254-7305

Heard County Courthouse
PO Box 730
Franklin, GA 30217
Phone: (706) 675-0955
Fax: (706) 675-0958

Meriwether County Courthouse
PO Box 520
Greenville, GA 30222
Phone: (706) 672-1302
Fax: (706) 672-6205

Troup Co. Government Center
100 Ridley Ave. – Suite 3500
LaGrange, GA 30240
Phone: (706) 298-3708
Fax: (706) 298-3709

The Carroll County jury should be commended for its determination to find the truth in this case and to hold the Defendant accountable. In doing so, they have not only protected this victim from further abuse, but they have protected other women whom this Defendant might target over the next 30 years, while he instead will be serving a life sentence. This case demonstrates the dedication of our law enforcement agencies and the District Attorney's Office to bring domestic abusers to justice and to protect their victims and our community from future abuse.

John H. Cranford Jr.
District Attorney

Carroll County Courthouse
PO Box 338
Carrollton, GA 30112
Phone: (770) 830-2171
Fax: (770) 830-2170

Coweta Co. Justice Center
PO Box 1918
Newnan, GA 30264
Phone: (770) 254-7300
Fax: (770) 254-7305

Heard County Courthouse
PO Box 730
Franklin, GA 30217
Phone: (706) 675-0955
Fax: (706) 675-0958

Meriwether County Courthouse
PO Box 520
Greenville, GA 30222
Phone: (706) 672-1302
Fax: (706) 672-6205

Troup Co. Government Center
100 Ridley Ave. – Suite 3500
LaGrange, GA 30240
Phone: (706) 298-3708
Fax: (706) 298-3709