



BCPO News

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Man Convicted of Murder for 2016 Strangulation of Lumberton Woman

MOUNT HOLLY, N.J. – Burlington County Prosecutor Scott Coffina announced that a Superior Court jury today found a Tabernacle man guilty of murder for strangling a Lumberton Township resident inside her home in the summer of 2016.

William M. Gennett, 54, was convicted of one count of Murder (First Degree) for the asphyxiation of Shannon O'Rourke, 45, inside of her Nassau Road residence on July 5, 2016. He was also convicted of one count of Stalking (Fourth Degree). The Hon. Terrence R. Cook, J.S.C., scheduled sentencing for August 16.

The investigation revealed that O'Rourke and Gennett were friends, and that Gennett was using a cell phone app that allowed him to track her whereabouts without her knowledge. BCPO Assistant Prosecutors Bob VanGilst and Courtney J. O'Brien argued during the trial that Gennett killed O'Rourke after she rejected his attempts to turn their friendship into a romantic relationship.

Gennett resided in Mount Holly at the time of O'Rourke's murder. He was arrested on February 8 at his residence in Tabernacle.

An autopsy performed by Burlington County Medical Examiner Dr. Ian Hood determined the cause of death to be manual strangulation.

The case was investigated by detectives from the Lumberton Township Police Department and the Burlington County Prosecutor's Office Crime Scene Unit, High-Tech Crimes Unit and Major Crimes Unit. BCPO Det. Andy Mikulski and Lumberton Det. Tom LaRosa, who is now employed by the Prosecutor's Office, were the lead investigators.

END

2018-60