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To: Members of the Media

From: District Attorney Ben David

Re: Man Pleads Guilty to Rape and Kidnapping in Carolina Beach

On October 8, 2015, John Thomas Barnette, age 49 of Duplin County, entered pleas of guilty in New Hanover Criminal Superior Court in the second degree rape and kidnapping of a 24 year old female. The case was scheduled for jury trial on Monday, October 12, 2015.

On March 21, 2015, Barnette held the victim against her will at the Drifters Reef Motel on N. Lake Park Boulevard in Carolina Beach, NC. As the defendant forcibly raped the victim, other hotel guests heard her screaming for help, begging the defendant to let her go, and they heard what sounded like the defendant hitting her. The guests could also hear the defendant telling the victim what he was going to do to her. When the guests banged on the door in an effort to stop the attack, the defendant placed a pillow over the face of the victim quieting her for a moment. The men outside the door could then hear her muffled cries for help and called 911. Officers with the Carolina Beach Police Department were dispatched and when they arrived heard the victim crying out for help. Officer Naughton kicked in the door shattering the door frame and breaking the chain lock. As officers entered the room, they observed the victim crawling on her hands and knees across the bed toward them partially dressed, red faced and crying hysterically. The victim had visible injuries to her face and neck consistent with what the guests heard. She was transported to New Hanover Regional Medical Center by ambulance. Evidence from the sexual assault evidence collection kit revealed DNA of the defendant.

Assistant District Attorney Connie Jordan told the Court that the victim was traumatized by this attack and very pleased with today's sentence. "She fought against the defendant during the entire attack, but was unable to get away. The effects from this type of crime often stay with victims for the remainder of their lives," said Jordan.

Chief Christopher Spivey of the Carolina Beach Police Department said, "The act of sexual assault is unquestionably one the highest violations of another human. The Carolina Beach Police Department is keenly aware of this fact and committed to assisting the victims and prosecution."

Barnette will have to serve a minimum active sentence of 22 years and a maximum active sentence of 32.5 years in the Department of Adult Correction as a result of today's conviction. He will be required to register as a sexual offender and will be subject to the satellite-based monitoring program for the remainder of his natural life.



John Barnette