



NAPA COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

1127 First Street, Suite C
Napa, CA 94559

Main: (707) 253-4211
Fax: (707) 253-4041
www.countyofnapa.org/da

ALLISON HALEY
District Attorney

For Immediate Release
November 15, 2019

PRESS RELEASE

NAPA MAN CONVICTED OF ANIMAL CRUELTY TO BELOVED CAT AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Napa County District Attorney Allison Haley announced today:

On November 14, Wrenn Rittenhouse, age 57, was convicted of felony Animal Cruelty, Attempted Robbery, Dissuading a Witness, and misdemeanor Spousal Battery by a Napa County jury. The Honorable Francisca P. Tisher presided over the seven day jury trial in Napa Superior Court.

The convictions stem from an incident that occurred on July 24, 2018. Mr. Rittenhouse physically assaulted his wife's 15 year-old cat "Boo" with enough force to severely break numerous bones in the cat's body, puncture a lung, and cause internal bleeding. Boo was taken to a local veterinary hospital, and due to the severity of the injuries, extent of Boo's apparent pain, and Boo's age, he was euthanized.

When Mr. Rittenhouse's wife threatened to leave him for hurting her beloved pet, he assaulted her and tried to rip the wedding ring off her finger. An adult family member observed the assault and called 911. Mr. Rittenhouse thwarted the call for help, tearing the phone from the family member's hand and intentionally breaking the phone.

The investigation in this case was spearheaded by the Napa Police Department and Napa County District Attorney's Office. Deputy District Attorney Nicole Noonan-Miller, who prosecuted the case, commented that "People who hurt animals don't stop with animals. There is a well-established link between animal abuse and violence against people. We see this in cases of domestic violence, mass violence and child abuse. Abuse of pets correlates to abuse of people and is often a tool of domestic violence, a method of control and a form of emotional abuse. This verdict demonstrates that this community will not tolerate the mistreatment or abuse of any of its citizens, including beloved pets."

Sentencing is scheduled for December 12, 2019 at 8:30 am in Department E.

Any questions in case may be directed to Assistant District Attorney Paul Gero.