

August 18, 2021

ATTORNEY GENERAL RAOUL: PEORIA COUNTY MAN SENTENCED TO NEARLY 100 YEARS IN PRISON FOR MURDER, DISMEMBERMENT

Chicago — Attorney General Kwame Raoul today announced a Peoria County man was sentenced to nearly 100 years in prison for the murder and dismemberment of a Peoria woman in 2018.

In June, a Circuit Court judge in Marshall County found Gary Berchtold, 41, of Edelstein, Illinois, guilty of first-degree murder, dismembering a human body and concealment of a homicidal death in the murder of Tiffini Marie Murphy, 38. Circuit Court Judge James Mack sentenced Berchtold today to 90 years in prison.

“Although the sentence in this case in no way makes up for the loss Tiffini Murphy’s loved ones have experienced, I hope it brings a measure of healing to her family and friends,” Raoul said. “I appreciate the court’s decision that holds the defendant accountable for this horrific murder and am committed to seeking justice for the families of victims of violent crime throughout Illinois.”

Between Aug. 31 and Sept. 1, 2018, Berchtold shot Murphy several times during an altercation at his house before burning her body. After burning her body over several days, he disposed of the ashes at a dump site. During interviews later with police, Berchtold repeatedly changed his story about Murphy’s disappearance, claiming at times that he dropped her off at a gas station in Lacon, Illinois and that she fled to Florida. He eventually told investigators she was accidentally shot during a struggle and admitted to attempting to cover up the death out of fear he would be held responsible.

Assistant Attorneys General Steve Nate and Myra Yelle-Clark handled the case for Raoul’s Criminal Prosecutions and Trials Assistance Bureau.