

For Immediate Release

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Trion Man Convicted For Affixing Razor Blades to Shopping Carts at Trion Walmart

November 6, 2023 – Summerville, GA – On Wednesday August 23, 2023, Chattooga County jurors convicted Jessie James Stinnett, 47, of two counts of criminal damage to property in the first degree after less than fifteen minutes of deliberation.

The trial began on Monday August 21, 2023 and after jury selection paused the proceedings for administrative reasons. The trial resumed Tuesday August 22, 2023, and the jury reviewed almost two hours of security footage from Walmart and heard testimony from Walmart loss prevention officer Jessica Guerra and Chattooga County Sheriff's Office Investigator Wendell Flood.

The evidence presented at trial showed that on December 31, 2022, and February 16, 2023, Jessie James Stinnett entered the Walmart located off of Highway 27 at Trion, Georgia. Stinnett then selected a shopping cart and wandered around the store for an extended period of time without selecting more than a few items. On each occasion, Stinnett made his way to the hardware section and selected a package of razor blades from the shelf. While out of view of security cameras he then affixed one of the razor blades under the plastic cover of the shopping cart handle so that the blade would face downward. After Stinnett wandered throughout the store he then checked out and left the shopping carts, with blades attached, at the entrance of the store for unwitting customers to use. On each occasion the blades were located by customers without injury.

Once the blade was located on February 16, 2023, Walmart loss prevention officer Jessica Guerra scrutinized hours of security footage going backward in time from the moment the blades were located and following the cart through the store to the moment that Stinnett first grabbed the cart. Through her testimony at trial, Ms. Guerra was able to illustrate for the jury the layout of the store and provide critical context for Stinnett's movements within the hardware section where he selected the razor blades. Upon his review of the video, Investigator Flood identified Stinnett as the man shown on each occasion and took warrants for his arrest.

The State of Georgia was represented by Senior Assistant District Attorney Alan Smith who was assisted by administrative staff Elena Floyd and Jordan Floyd and victim advocate Cara Parris. "I want to commend the diligent work of Ms. Guerra, Investigator Flood, and the prosecution team lead by Mr. Smith who ensured that this criminal would never hurt someone in our community," said District Attorney Clayton M. Fuller. "Our Main Streets and businesses are safer today because of their hard work."

On October 2, 2023, Judge Graham sentenced Stinnett to 20 years with the first 10 years to be served in prison without parole.

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