

# Jury convicts Granite City woman of first-degree murder

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**EDWARDSVILLE** - A **Madison County jury** convicted a Granite City resident of first-degree murder this afternoon in Edwardsville.

The murder trial of **Breanna D. Maldonado** (d.o.b. 5/8/95) began Tuesday, March 1, 2016. She was facing one count of first-degree murder from an incident in October 2013. The jury heard closing arguments this morning before beginning their

deliberations around 10:45 a.m. They returned with a guilty verdict at approximately 2 p.m.

Officers from the Granite City Police Department responded to a local QuikTrip, located at 2159 Madison Ave., in response to a reported altercation at 1:33 a.m. on Oct. 6, 2013. Upon arriving, police found **Kaitlin N. Juenger** (d.o.b. 5/17/93) lying on the ground near a vehicle in the parking lot. Juenger, who was living in the Collinsville area at the time, was being attended to by several individuals who were nurses at Gateway Regional Hospital which was located nearby. She and another victim, 30-year-old Hugo Valenzuela, had both been stabbed.

The investigation revealed that Maldonado was driving a 26-year-old male passenger to the hospital for treatment from an injury he suffered earlier in the evening. She, Antonio M. Carlin (d.o.b. 1/2/95), the male and another passenger, a 20-year-old female, stopped at the QuikTrip prior to reaching the hospital.

It was at that time a verbal altercation began between the passengers and several other people at the business. Carlin stabbed Valenzuela in the abdomen while Maldonado stabbed Juenger through her car window before she drove away. Valenzuela, a resident of Collinsville, was treated and later released from a local hospital. Juenger, however, suffered a fatal stab wound to her chest and was pronounced dead at the scene shortly before 3 a.m. She was unarmed.

Granite City police stopped Maldonado a short distance from the scene. The four occupants of the vehicle were taken into custody without incident. She and Carlin were both charged by the State's Attorney's Office the next day for their role in the two stabbings. Further investigation into the case revealed that the parties involved in the confrontation that led to the stabbings had links to rival gangs in the area.

“I want to thank the jurors for their keen attention to the fact of this case and for their verdict,” said **State's Attorney Tom Gibbons**. “This defendant brought violence and destruction to our community, and now we can hold her accountable by punishing her severely.” Gibbons also commended the work of his prosecutors, **Assistant State's Attorney Crystal Uhe**, Chief of the Criminal Division and Assistant State's Attorney **Josh Jones** of the **Violent Crimes Unit, the Granite City Police Department, the Madison County Coroner's Office** and other medical personnel who assisted with the case.

Following the completion of a Pre-Sentencing Investigation in about six to eight weeks, **Circuit Judge Kyle Napp** will sentence Maldonado. She faces 20-60 years in prison,

and she will have to serve 100 percent of her sentence. She will remain in custody at the Madison County Jail in Edwardsville where she has been held without bond since being charged in 2013.



**Carlin**, a St. Louis resident, pleaded guilty to unlawful use of weapons, a Class 4 felony, in February 2014, for the stabbing of Valenzuela. He faces a sentence ranging from probation up to a maximum of 1-3 years in prison.

Earlier this week, another Madison County jury convicted a Pontoon Beach man in a separate trial on methamphetamine-related charges. **Jacob L. Bronaugh**, 19, was found guilty of Unlawful Possession of Methamphetamine Manufacturing Materials on March 3, 2016, following juror deliberations of approximately 50 minutes.

The trial, which began on Tuesday, March 1, 2016, was prosecuted by Assistant State's **Attorneys James Buckley and Katie Bucher**. Police responded to a 911 call to a property on West Chain of Rocks Road in Granite City on March 24, 2015. They found what they believed was a meth lab in a detached shed on the property. Following an investigation by the Madison County Sheriff's Department and the Metropolitan Enforcement Group of Southern Illinois (MEGSI), charges were filed the next day against Bronaugh and Buford R. Clark IV, 37, of Wood River. Clark has pleaded guilty

to Unlawful Participation in Methamphetamine Manufacturing, a Class 1 Felony, and was sentenced to 48 months' probation.

The sentencing of Bronaugh by Circuit Judge Richard Tognarelli will be held following the completion of a Pre-Sentencing Investigation in about six to eight weeks. He faces a maximum of 2-5 years for the Class 2 Felony conviction. The jury did acquit Bronaugh on one count of Unlawful Participation in Methamphetamine Manufacturing.

Bronaugh still faces additional charges of Unlawful Participation in Methamphetamine Manufacturing, a Class X Felony, Arson and Offenses Relating to Motor Vehicles, both Class 2 Felonies. While out on bond, Bronaugh stole a woman's 2005 Toyota Tacoma and started it on fire. Materials used in making methamphetamine were found at the scene of the burnt-out vehicle. If convicted, Bronaugh faces up to 30 years in prison. A trial date has not been set at this time. He will remain at the Madison County Jail in Edwardsville where he is being held without bond.

"My office works tirelessly to hold criminals accountable through tough enforcement of the law," Gibbons added. "Through that work, we restore peace and justice to the community while protecting the citizens of Madison County and the great quality of life we enjoy."

These charges, as well as the statements made herein, are based upon probable cause. The defendant is presumed innocent unless proven guilty.