



Body of Missing Person Recovered During Search

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Multiple agencies joined together to assist the Alton Police Department in conducting a search regarding the whereabouts of missing person, Courtney Coats. During the search, Ms. Coats' body was recovered near the Joe Page Bridge in East Hardin, Green County, IL.

Finding Ms. Coats was a result of the Alton Police Officers and Detectives working tirelessly from the moment she was reported missing on November 25. There were numerous search warrants, subpoenas and interviews conducted as part of this investigation. The detectives explored dozens of leads, including any and all electronic communications associated with Ms. Coats. The investigation eventually led to the arrest of Patrick Chase and Brandon Chittum.

Alton Police Chief, Jason Simmons, commended the work of the officers by saying, "The citizens of Alton can sleep well at night knowing that they have such a devoted, professional and dedicated police department."



Brandon L. Chittum (d.o.b. 5/9/83) left, of Collinsville, and Patrick A. Chase (d.o.b. 1/9/85) below of Alton are facing two counts of First Degree Murder (Class M Felony), one count of Dismembering a Human Body (Class X Felony) and one count of Concealment of a Homicidal Death (Class 3 Felony).

State's Attorney Tom Gibbons offered his sympathy to the family of the victim. "It's never easy to lose a loved one during the holidays, especially when it was the result of a violent and heinous act. Our thoughts and prayers are with them." Gibbons said that his office would do all they could to convict and seek lengthy prison sentences for the defendants.



Maximum penalty for murder is 20-60 years in prison; 6-30 years in prison on the Class X Felony and 2-5 years in prison on the Class 3 Felony. If convicted, the defendants will have to serve 100% of their sentences. They will be taken to the Madison County Jail in Edwardsville where their bonds have been set at \$1,000,000 by Circuit Judge Kyle Napp.

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

- **Agencies That Participated in the Search**

- ? Alton Police Detectives

- ? Alton Fire Department

- ? Madison County Emergency Management Command Post

- ? Calhoun County Sheriff's Office

- ? Green County Sheriff's Office

? Illinois Department of Transportation

? Illinois Department of Natural Resources

? DOI US Fish and Wildlife Service

? Alton Volunteer Emergency Corps

? United States Coast Guard