

# **Nathan Carroll Takes the Stand in the Murder Trial of Bonnie Woodward**

by Chris Rhodes, Reporter  
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JERSEYVILLE - Tuesday before the lunch break, Nathan Carroll, the defendant's son, took the stand for the prosecution in the Bonnie Woodward murder case.

Roger W. Carroll, of 20758 Creek Road in Jerseyville, was charged with three felonies in two counties. He is accused of luring Woodward to Jersey County, where authorities say he killed Woodward with a Stoeger Cougar 9mm Luger by shooting her several times before burning her corpse and concealing it.

Special Prosecutor Jennifer Mudge called Nathan Carroll to the stand. Nathan was 16 when the murder happened. Mudge asked Nathan Carroll about his childhood growing up. Nathan said to the jury that he knew Bonnie Woodward stepdaughter Heather Woodward from his church.

He also said it was Roger Carroll's idea for Heather to run away and move with them. During his testimony, Nathan said his dad said several times: "Bonnie must go away."

Also, Nathan said the week before Bonnie went missing, Roger Carroll, his mom Monica, Heather Woodward, and himself went to Goreville, Illinois, to visit his mother's parents. While in Goreville his dad told him that they were going to leave early and go back to Jersey County and get Bonnie.

When they arrived in Alton at Bonnie's work, Nathan said his dad said, "good she's working."

Nathan said that when they got back to their house, Roger shaved and changed clothes and grabbed a Stoeger Cougar 9mm handgun and left in a silver Malibu around 1:30. Before they left from Goreville, Roger asked Heather about her mother's work schedule. Later that day Nathan told the jurors he heard 8-9 gunshots.

Nathan said he walked out of the garage and saw feet.

"Dad told me not to go back there because it was ugly," Nathan said.

Nathan said Roger then took his tractor and loaded Bonnie in the bucket and dumped her in a brush pile. Nathan said his dad told him to light the brush pile on fire using gas and motor oil. Roger threw Bonnie's cellphone and wallet in the fire along with his clothes.

Nathan said his dad's plan to get Bonnie to his house was to tell Bonnie he knew where her daughter was and take Bonnie to her. After a few days, the fire was out. Roger took the ashes and bone fragments and dumped them in the creek on the property.

Nathan was granted immunity for his testimony.

During cross-examination, the defense attorney talked about Nathan's immunity to testify against his dad. During the cross-examination, the defense tried to paint a picture saying Nathan was behind the murder and not his father. The defense had no other questions.

Jennifer Mudge then called Bonnie's son, Joseph Pool, to the stand. Mudge asked Pool about his mom and if she would ever just up and leave he said no she would never run away. Mudge also asked if she would ever miss a family get together and he stated no. Mudge had no other questions. The defense had no questions.

Jennifer Mudge then called Gary Wilmouth to the stand. Mudge asked Gary if Bonnie would not call or come home after work he said even if she was 10 minutes late she would call him. The next morning after Bonnie's work called and said she didn't come to work Gary went to the police station to report her missing.

"Bonnie never missed work in the 27 years she worked at Eunice Smith Nursing Home," Gary said. Mudge had no other questions.

The State Attorney's Office then called April to the stand. April worked with Bonnie the day she went missing. April said as she was leaving the nursing home she saw a silver car parked in the parking lot. She then stated she saw Bonnie in her truck and a mid-40s white male leaning into her truck talking to her. April could only see a side view of the male. Defense Attorney Snider asked April if the police showed her a lineup which she said yes but she couldn't pick Carroll out of the lineup due to not seeing him that well. The defense had no other questions.

Both sides decided to take a break and will continue at 8 a.m. Wednesday with more testimony.