

## ***SPARTANBURG MAN RECEIVES 30 –YEAR PRISON SENTENCE FOR KIDNAPPING & ASSAULT CONVICTIONS***

A Spartanburg man received a 30-year prison sentence today for abducting a local woman and sexually assaulting her while armed with a weapon.

Phillip Rhinehart, 42, pleaded guilty to first-degree criminal sexual conduct. Rhinehart will serve 85 percent of Circuit Judge Roger Couch's sentence before he is eligible for release.

The crime occurred Dec. 13, 2004. The 29-year-old victim told Spartanburg County sheriff's deputies she was at a friend's house on Old Converse Road when Rhinehart asked her for a ride to his Miller Line Extension home. When Rhinehart climbed out of the car, he ordered her to get out of the vehicle and walk to a nearby shed. Once they were inside the shed, Rhinehart forced the victim to take her clothes off. He beat her, strangled her and sexually assaulted her. The victim escaped hours later. At various points during the ordeal, he threatened her with a gun and a knife.

The victim reported the crime at Mary Black Memorial Hospital where she was treated for a broken jaw on both sides of her face. She has undergone several rounds of facial surgery during her recovery.

In the days following the crime, she described the crime in a detailed written statement for deputies. She identified Rhinehart in a photo line-up. Deputies also collected DNA and other crime scene evidence that bolstered their case, Assistant Solicitor Cindy Smith said.