

NEWS RELEASE

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6 defendants plead guilty in homicide cases

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – The Mecklenburg County District Attorney's Homicide Team convicted six defendants today in homicide cases in Mecklenburg County Superior Court. The defendants entered their pleas in courtroom 5350 before The Honorable W. Robert Bell, Superior Court Judge.

Mark Anthony Cox, 23, pled guilty to 1) first-degree murder, 2) murder of an unborn child, 3) robbery with a dangerous weapon, and 4) felony larceny, for the murder and robbery of Danielle Watson, 25. Judge Bell sentenced Cox to two consecutive sentences of *life in prison without the possibility of parole*. Cox and Ms. Watson worked together at The Flying Biscuit restaurant in January 2012, when they got into a heated argument after the other employees had left the restaurant. Cox stabbed Ms. Watson to death and then left her body behind a trash receptacle. At the time of her death, Ms. Watson was 7 to 8 weeks pregnant. The baby did not survive the assault.

Edward Timothy McClain, 43, pled guilty to voluntary manslaughter for the death of Yolanda Copper, 39. He was sentenced to 85-114 months in prison. In July 2012, McClain was a long-haul trucker who stopped in Charlotte. Ms. Copper came to his motel room. Believing that she'd taken his money, McClain confronted her, and Ms. Copper then assaulted him. McClain used excessive force to defend himself when he choked Ms. Copper. McClain then called the front desk and told an employee to call police. Ms. Copper later died as a result of her injuries.



**Edward Timothy
McClain**

Maria Turcios, 42, pled guilty to voluntary manslaughter in the death of Ricardo Torres, 32. Judge Bell sentenced her to 64-89 months in prison. In March 2012, police found Turcios and Mr. Torres in a vehicle in the parking lot of a Charlotte apartment complex. Mr. Torres had been fatally stabbed. Turcios, who claimed to police that she was acting in self defense, also had stab wounds and spent several days in the hospital for treatment of her injuries.

Two defendants pled guilty to charges related to the June 2011 killing of Singbay Mulbah, 32. Therome Willie Poe, 30, pled guilty to conspiracy to sell cocaine. Poe was sentenced to 17-21 months in prison; that sentence was suspended pending the successful completion of 36 months of probation. As conditions of his probation, Poe must serve 6 months in prison and pay restitution. Kevin King, 22, pled guilty to accessory after the fact to attempted robbery with a dangerous weapon. He will be sentenced at a later date. Charges against two other co-defendants in the case are still pending.



Kevin King

James Farris Hodges, 29, pled guilty to two counts of accessory after the fact to first-degree murder. The charges stem from two separate incidents: the murder of Jared Bolli in Pineville in January 2010 and the murder of Brooks Crist in Charlotte in August 2010. Hodges will be sentenced at a later date.

Note: Almost all guilty pleas entered in criminal administrative court are the result of an agreed upon plea arrangement between the State and the defendant, which is then approved by the sentencing judge. For more information about why most cases must be resolved by plea negotiation instead of jury trial, please visit the "Understanding Criminal Court" section of the DA's website at www.charmeckda.com.

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