

NEWS RELEASE

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Habitual Felon Team tries 1 defendant; 2 others plead guilty

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – During the week of February 16, 2015, the Mecklenburg County District Attorney's Habitual Felon Team called cases for trial in courtroom 5370. The proceedings were held before The Honorable Yvonne Mims Evans, Superior Court Judge. Due to winter weather conditions, court was closed February 17-18, 2015.

Sammy Lamont Johnson, 43, was tried for 1) attempting to break or enter a building and 2) conspiracy to break or enter a building. A jury found Johnson *not guilty*. The State was unable to proceed on the habitual felon charge due to the jury's verdict.

Lee Graylon Gale, 36, filed motions to suppress evidence seized or obtained by law enforcement, each alleging distinct violations of the defendant's legal rights. After testimony and arguments from both the Assistant District Attorney and the defense, Judge Evans denied Gale's motions. Gale then pled guilty to 1) felony possession of marijuana, 2) possession of drug paraphernalia, 3) possession of cocaine and 4) being a habitual felon. Judge Evans sentenced Gale to 34-54 months in prison; that sentence was suspended pending Gale's successful completion of 3 years of supervised probation. As a condition of his probation, he must serve 7 months in prison.

Prior to being called for trial, Matthew Curtis Buford, 25, pled guilty to 1) felony carrying a concealed gun, 2) possession of drug paraphernalia, 3) possession of a stolen firearm, 4) possession with the intent to sell or deliver cocaine, 5) delivering cocaine and 6) selling cocaine. Buford was sentenced to 13-25 months in prison; that sentence was suspended pending his successful completion of 30 months of supervised probation. As a condition of his probation, Buford must serve 15 days in the Mecklenburg County Jail. Buford was not eligible for prosecution as a habitual felon.

Note: For more information about the District Attorney's Office, visit www.charmeckda.com. For updates and other information, "like" the DA's Office on Facebook at www.facebook.com/charmeckda and follow us on Twitter: @CharMeckDA.

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