

# NEWS RELEASE

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**February 28, 2011**

## **Four batterers convicted during domestic violence jury trial week**

The DA's Domestic Violence Appeals Unit convicted 4 batterers during the trial week of February 14, 2011. The trials and pleas took place in courtroom 5170 before The Honorable W. Robert Bell, Superior Court Judge.

Three defendants pled guilty to domestic violence related offenses before their trials began. The State called two additional defendants for trial wherein one defendant was convicted and the other defendant's charges were dismissed by the court at the end of the State's evidence based on the victim's failure to appear in court. The defendants were:

Timothy Johnson, 36, pled guilty to 1) two counts of felony habitual misdemeanor assault and 2) resisting a public officer. Johnson was sentenced to 9-11 months in prison and another 16-20 months in prison for violating probation.

William Chandler, 40, pled guilty to 1) assault on a female and 2) communicating threats. Chandler was sentenced to 60 days in prison, that sentence was suspended pending his successful completion of 24 months of supervised probation.

Christopher Rorie, 27, was tried for 1) assault by pointing a gun, 2) communicating threats, and 3) assault on a female. The jury returned a verdict of *not guilty* to the assault by pointing a gun and communicating threats charges. The jury returned a verdict of *guilty* to the assault on female charge. Rorie was sentenced to 75 days in the county jail.

Terrence Jones, 27, was tried for 1) felony assault by strangulation, 2) interference with emergency communication, 3) assault on a female, 4) injury to personal property, and 5) misdemeanor larceny. The case was dismissed by Judge Bell at the close of the State's evidence because the victim in the case failed to appear in court; the victim was under subpoena issued by the DA's Office.

Gregory Haley, 49, pled guilty to assault on a female. Haley was sentenced to 120 days in prison, that sentence was suspended pending his successful completion of 12 months of supervised probation.

*Note: Misdemeanors and infractions are originally prosecuted in district court in North Carolina. In criminal district court, a judge determines guilt, not a jury; this is commonly referred to as a "bench trial." However, defendants have a right to appeal a conviction from the district court to the superior court for a trial de novo. The new trial in superior court must be a jury trial, not a bench trial. In a de novo trial, the jury cannot be informed that a district court judge previously found the defendant guilty;*

*further, a record of any evidence, including testimony, from district court may not be introduced. While the DA's Office prosecutes nearly 225,000 misdemeanors and infractions each year in district court in Mecklenburg County, each defendant is entitled to exercise his/her right to appeal to the superior court. When a misdemeanor or infraction occupies the limited time available in our superior courtrooms, it the intent of the DA's Office to keep the public informed of the results through news releases like this one. Due to the volume of misdemeanors and infractions prosecuted in district court each day, reports like this are not possible for all of those cases.*

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