

# NEWS RELEASE

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**R. Andrew Murray**  
District Attorney

**March 31, 2011**

## **Habitual Felons go to prison after jury trials and pleas**

The DA's Habitual Felon Team tried three habitual felons the week of March 21, 2011.

Two of the trials were held in courtroom 5130 before The Honorable W. Robert Bell, Superior Court Judge.

Lawrence Johnson, 25, was tried for 1) selling cocaine, 2) possession with intent to sell or deliver cocaine, and 3) being a habitual felon. The jury returned verdicts of *guilty*. Johnson then admitted his status as a habitual felon. Johnson was sentenced to 110-141 months in prison.

Lamar Horton, 28, was tried for 1) felony possession of cocaine and 2) being a habitual felon. The jury could not reach a unanimous decision as to Horton's guilt on the cocaine charge; therefore, Judge Bell declared a mistrial.

The third trial was in courtroom 5150 before The Honorable Eric L. Levinson, Superior Court Judge. Keith Cureton, 27, was tried for, and found *guilty* by the jury of: 1) felony breaking or entering, 2) felony larceny after breaking or entering, 3) possession of a stolen firearm, 4) possession of a firearm by a convicted felon, and 5) being a habitual felon. Judge Levinson postponed Cureton's sentencing until a later date that has not yet been set. Cureton faces a substantial prison sentence and is currently in the custody of the Mecklenburg County Sheriff awaiting his sentencing hearing.

Four other defendants entered guilty pleas in lieu of having a jury trial:

Ronald BIRTHA, 61, pled guilty to 1) three counts of uttering a forged instrument, 2) one count of possession of cocaine, and 3) being a habitual felon. BIRTHA was sentenced by Judge Bell to 87-114 months in prison.

Jermaine Hodges, 31, pled guilty to 1) two counts of felony breaking or entering and 2) two counts of felony larceny after breaking or entering. Hodges was sentenced to 80-96 months in prison; the sentence was ordered to be begin until after Hodges completes a sentence of 20-24 months that he is currently serving for another offense.

Sallie Clemmons, 49, pled guilty to 1) obtaining property by false pretense, 2) identity theft, and 3) possession of stolen goods. Clemons was sentenced to 60-72 months in prison.

Gregory Horne, 35, pled guilty to 1) trafficking in cocaine and 2) possession of drug paraphernalia. Horne was sentenced to 39-46 months in prison and was fined \$50,000.

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