

NEWS RELEASE

R. Andrew Murray
District Attorney

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Domestic Violence Team tries 3 defendants, 12 plead guilty

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – The DA's Domestic Violence Team for the Mecklenburg County District Attorney's Office called three defendants for trial in courtroom 6170 the week of December 5, 2011 before The Honorable Yvonne Mims Evans, Superior Court Judge.

Adam Dozier, 41, was charged with violation of a domestic violence protective order. The defendant pled not guilty and was tried in front of a jury. The jury returned a verdict of *not guilty* on the violation of the domestic violence protective order.

Charles George, 32, was charged with misdemeanor injury to personal property and misdemeanor larceny. The defendant pled not guilty and was tried in front of a jury. The jury returned a verdict of *not guilty* on the misdemeanor injury to personal property and misdemeanor larceny.

Jamar Johnson, 22, was charged with violation of a domestic violence protective order. The defendant pled not guilty and was tried in front of a jury. After 1 ½ hours of deliberation the jury found the defendant *guilty* of violation of a domestic violence protective order. The defendant was sentenced to 75 days in prison. The first 18 days of that sentence are to be served in jail and the remaining are suspended for 18 months of supervised probation. The defendant was ordered to complete a certified batterer's intervention program.

12 defendants pled guilty before their cases were called for trial:

Eric Agurs, 43, pled guilty to assault on a female. Agurs was sentenced by Judge Evans to 150 days in prison; that sentence was suspended pending his successful completion of 18 months of supervised probation.

Nicholas Sochko, 23, pled guilty to assault on a female. Sochko was sentenced by Judge Evans to 75 days in prison.

Claudiel Aubry, 32, entered the Deferred Prosecution program for his charge of assault on a female.

Christopher Durante, 39, pled guilty to assault by strangulation. Durante was sentenced by Judge Evans to 6-8 months in prison; that sentence was suspended pending successful completion of 24 months of supervised probation.

Bakari Gaither, 33, pled guilty to habitual misdemeanor assault, safecracking, felony breaking and entering and felony larceny after breaking and entering. Gaither was sentenced by Judge Evans to 10-12

months in prison on the habitual misdemeanor assault the first 90 days of which are to be served in prison. The remaining period is suspended for 30 months of supervised probation. Gaither was sentenced to 8-10 months on the remaining charges; that sentence was suspended pending successful completion of 30 months of supervised probation.

Michael Harris, 21, entered the Deferred Prosecution program for his charge of assault on a female.

Jonathan O'Brien, 42, pled guilty to assault on a female. O'Brien was sentenced by Judge Evans to 20 days in prison; that sentence was suspended pending successful completion of 12 months of supervised probation.

Jonathan Gibson, 19, entered the Deferred Prosecution program for his charge of assault on a female.

Antonio Hamilton, 31, pled guilty to habitual misdemeanor assault. Hamilton was sentenced by Judge Evans to 7-9 months in prison; that sentence was suspended pending successful completion of 30 months of supervised probation.

Larry Nichols, 23, pled guilty to resisting a public officer and possession of drug paraphernalia. Nichols was sentenced by Judge Evans to 45 days in prison; that sentence was suspended pending successful completion of 18 months supervised probation and a substance abuse assessment.

Antonio Springs, 28, pled guilty to habitual misdemeanor assault and assault by pointing a gun. Springs was sentenced by Judge Evans to 6-8 months in prison; that sentence was suspended pending successful completion of 18 months supervised probation.

Stephen Ammons, 28, pled guilty to felony violation of a domestic violence protective order. Ammons was sentenced by Judge Evans to 8-10 months in prison; that sentence was suspended pending successful completion of 30 months 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 is 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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