

NEWS RELEASE

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Habitual felons get jury trials; others plead guilty

CHARLOTTE, NC – The District Attorney's Habitual Felon Team tried three cases the week of June 13, 2011. The trials were held in courtrooms 5150 and 5130 of the Mecklenburg County Courthouse. The Honorable W. Robert Bell and The Honorable Jesse B. Caldwell, III, Superior Court Judges, presided.

Tommy Johnson, 39, was tried for 1) possession of cocaine, 2) possession of drug paraphernalia, and 3) resisting a public officer. Judge Bell declared a mistrial due to juror misconduct during deliberations. Johnson later pled guilty to possession of cocaine with intent to sell or deliver and was sentenced to 11-14 months in prison.

Courtney Copeland, 22, was tried for 1) felony breaking or entering and 2) felony larceny after breaking or entering. The jury found Copeland *not guilty*.

Jerome Patton, 35, was tried for 1) two counts of selling cocaine, 2) two counts of possessing cocaine, and 3) delivering cocaine. After three-and-one-half-hours of deliberations, the jury informed Judge Bell they could not reach a unanimous decision and a mistrial was declared.

The following defendants withdrew previous pleas of *not guilty* and entered *guilty* pleas:

George Chestnut, 46, pled guilty, as charged, to 1) two counts of felony breaking or entering, 2) two counts of larceny after breaking or entering, 3) two counts of financial transaction card theft, 4) false pretense, and 5) being a habitual felon. Chestnut was sentenced to 67-90 months in prison.

Robert Jones, 29, pled guilty to 1) two counts of felony breaking or entering, 2) felony larceny after breaking or entering, and 3) being a habitual felon. Jones was sentenced to 101-131 months in prison.

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