

Three indicted in sex-abuse cases

By Danielle Rivard Sentinel Staff | Posted: Tuesday, November 6, 2012 12:15 pm

Three area men — including a former police officer — accused of sexually assaulting minors within the past year were among those recently indicted by a Cheshire County grand jury.

Travis S. Barnes, 35, of Winchester is charged with eight counts of aggravated felonious sexual assault; manufacturing child pornography; tampering with a witness and falsifying physical evidence. He is accused of sexually assaulting a 15-year-old girl he knew several times in the past year and trying to hide it from police, according to indictments.

Barnes allegedly took pictures of the girl with his cellphone and demanded the girl have sex with him to prove she wasn't seeing anyone else, according to court documents.

Barnes, who knew there was an official investigation, tried to talk the girl out of telling police about the incidents, saying, "Take one for the team, bud, because I want to be a cop," according to court documents.

Barnes is also accused of tampering with his cellphone to hinder with the investigation.

An indictment is not an indication of guilt; it is a determination by grand jurors that prosecutors have gathered enough evidence to move forward with a trial.

Other recent indictments include:

u John Vargas-Cifrino, 35, of Harrisville is charged with two counts of sexual assault and one count of attempted aggravated felonious sexual assault, accused of having sexual contact with a girl he knew who was under the age of 16 at the time, according to indictments.

The incident occurred in May, when Vargas-Cifrino allegedly abused the girl while he believed she was sleeping; when the girl moved, Vargas-Cifrino stopped, according to the indictments.

After the allegations surfaced, Vargas-Cifrino resigned from the Rindge Police Department, where he had been a part-time officer for 11 years. He was also placed on unpaid administrative leave at the Conval Regional School District, where he worked as a program aide for students with behavior problems.

u Shane Gladding, 25, whose address is listed as the Cheshire County jail in Keene, is charged with four counts of felonious sexual assault, accused of sexually assaulting two girls under age 16 last year.

In November 2011, Gladding, who was living in Troy at the time, engaged in sexual penetration with two girls he knew, court documents show.

Gladding is also charged with two counts of solicitation to commit arson, for an unrelated incident in which he allegedly hired another man to burn down a Swanzey home in July, according to indictments.

Gladding is accused of paying \$400 to a Winchester man to torch a home in Swanzey.

In the same case, Cory Lounder, 27, whose address is also listed as the Cheshire County jail, was indicted on one count of arson.

On July 27, Lounder called Gladding to inform him that he had burned down the home just like Gladding had requested, according to court documents.

Gladding then wired \$400 to Lounder, which he received in Keene on the same day, according to court documents.

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