
2014

Former police officer facing child molestation charges by E. LANE GRESHAM



BURTON

A Mt. Airy man already scheduled for trial in a high profile child cruelty case is now facing additional child molestation charges.

Richard Scott Burton, 49, was charged June 19 with aggravated child molestation, child molestation, two counts sodomy/aggravated sodomy and cruelty to children, first degree.

Burton, and his wife Cheryle Lynn Burton, 52, were indicted April 2, 2013, on 28 counts child cruelty in the first degree after allegedly neglecting and abusing their four adopted children, ages 17, 14, 12 and 11. The couple was first arrested Oct.

12, 2012. The couple pleaded not guilty in May 2013 and are facing an October trial date.

Specifics of the April 2013 indictment included allegations of excessive corporal punishment, withholding food and restricted living quarters. The indictment also accused the couple of favoring their three biological children over the adopted four.

The new charges stemmed from recent disclosures by two of the four adopted children who have been in protective custody since their parents were arrested in October 2012.

"[The new charges] are pending a new disclosure from areas in the investigation that were already being looked at," said Sgt. Richard Stein with the Habersham County Sheriff's Office Special Victims Unit.

According to Stein, Cheryle Lynn Burton, is not facing charges related to her husband's most recent arrest.

Burton is a former chief of police in Mt. Airy and worked for the city of Cornelia in its code enforcement division before his April 2012 arrest.

See the midweek edition for complete story.