

Jury convicts former cop of child sex assault

Jason Pohl , jasonpohl@coloradoan.com

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2014 Cop Pedophile Jeremy Yachik

Lawyers for a former Northern Colorado cop accused of sexually assaulting his daughter called the alleged victim a "pathological liar" on Tuesday during opening statements in the man's jury trial.

The six-day trial involving Jeremy Yachik began with jury selection on Monday and transitioned to opening statements Tuesday morning. Yachik is the former Berthoud police officer who pleaded guilty in 2014 to physically assaulting his then-15-year-old daughter while she was in his care — the sexual assault allegations surfaced in 2014 while Yachik was serving a probation sentence.

Prosecutors on Tuesday told the jury about information gleaned from a Fort Collins detective's investigation last year. Yachik reportedly touched the girl inappropriately when she was 6 years old. At one point she woke from a nap and the man was lying naked with her in bed, attorneys told the jury.

It wasn't until nearly 12 years later — as her 18th birthday neared — that she reported the alleged repeated assaults.

"I was too afraid to say anything," the woman, now 20, said while on the witness stand. "... I thought it was completely normal."

The family moved at least six times within a few years while she was in elementary school, from New Mexico to Colorado to Oregon, before settling back in Larimer County, she said Tuesday.

A bitter custody dispute followed as family issues mounted, all of which spurred the woman's fabrication of stories to destroy her father, defense attorneys said.

"She has been lying, really, since she was a child," said Erik Fischer, Yachik's private defense lawyer. Describing the case, and what he called inconsistencies with her stories over the years, Fischer told jurors, "use your common sense" when considering the "smear campaign" against his client.

The trial is slated to conclude next week. Yachik is charged with two counts of sexual assault on a child as someone in a position of trust, a Class 3 felony.

Yachik pleaded guilty to the child abuse charges related to his daughter and a judge sentenced him in July 2014 to three years of probation, 80 hours of community service and 30 days in the county jail's work release program.

Turmoil surrounding Yachik led to the disbanding of the Berthoud Police Department.

Reporter Jason Pohl covers courts for the Coloradoan. Follow him on Twitter: @pohl_jason.