

Ex-Scout leader faces 2 new rape charges

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ARKANSAS DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE

LONOKE — Former Boy Scouts leader Jack Walls III of Lonoke now is accused of sexually assaulting six boys over a nine-year span, after two more "John Does" were added to the list of victims Friday by Special Prosecuting Attorney Betty Dickey.

Two new rape charges were filed against Walls, accusing him of assaulting "John Doe 5" an unspecified number of times from Aug. 1, 1987, until June 8, 1988, and "John Doe 6" from June 6, 1987, until June 10, 1988.

Both of the boys were under 14

during the period they were sexually assaulted, said Dickey of Pine Bluff, who was appointed to the case after the Lonoke County prosecutor stepped aside.

Dickey filed four counts of rape, two counts of violation of minor in the first degree, and two counts of solicitation to commit first-degree murder against Walls on Nov. 5. She has accused Walls, now 51, of continually raping his victims, beginning as early as 1986.

The two counts of violation of a minor in the first-degree were filed because Walls is accused of continuing to have sex with two of the victims after they reached the

age of 14, with the most recent act allegedly occurring in July 1997.

"There are six rape victims now, all of whom were under the age of 14 when the incidents began," Dickey said Friday. "I expect more charges to be filed."

Walls, who is being held in lieu of \$1 million bond in the Lonoke County jail, is scheduled for plea and arraignment at 9 a.m. Tuesday in Lonoke County Circuit Court, Dickey said.

One family in the town about 20 miles east of Little Rock claims there was an opportunity to unravel the alleged dark secret of Walls and some of his troop members as

early as 1993, but authorities argue it was impossible to find out at that time what was going on.

Doug Hogan, then 16, accused Walls, former assistant scoutmaster of Troop 103 in Lonoke, of asking Hogan to perform a sexual act on Walls during a Dec. 29, 1992, campout on Walls' Lonoke farm.

Hogan has said authorities refused at the time to press felony charges against Walls. Ultimately, misdemeanor charges were filed against Walls in 1993, accusing him of assault in the third-degree and contributing to the delinquency of a minor. Walls was found innocent of those charges in Carlisle Munic-

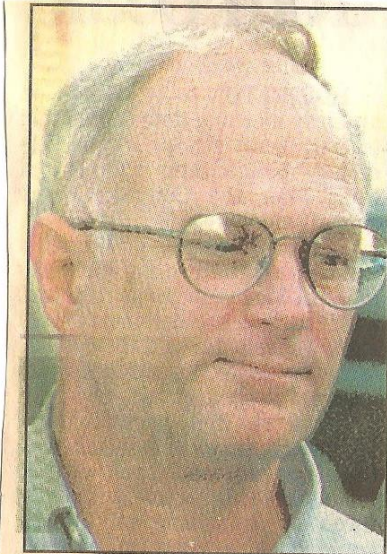
ipal Court on April, 8, 1994.

However, statements made by the judge raised questions about the suitability of the charges that had been filed.

During the court proceedings, special Municipal Judge Gary Rogers said: "Whether there were sexual advances or not, the court today is not here to decide that, because that was not the charge before the court."

Rogers added, "I personally believe that there may be other charges that may [have] been filed, but weren't. ... I'm not making any determination of whether there

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Jack Walls III

Walls

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were sexual advances or not. That, again, was not before the court."

The Hogans were frustrated by the results of the legal proceedings.

"We went to the Department of Human Services, the Arkansas State Police and Lonoke Prosecuting Attorney Larry Cook," Cledis Hogan of Carlisle, the father of Doug Hogan, said during a recent interview. "And no one would do anything to help us. It's just common sense that it's illegal for a scoutmaster to ask a kid to perform a sexual act. We ended up with charges in a municipal court that had nothing to do with what really happened."

More than four years later, Cook filed the first two rape charges against Walls last month. Walls pleaded innocent, and Cook asked to be removed from the case to avoid the appearance of a conflict. Cook said he practiced law before former Lonoke County Circuit-Chancery Judge Jack Walls Jr., the father of Walls III.

Affidavits filed with the two counts of solicitation to commit first-degree murder against Walls III state that his intended victims were Doug and Cledis Hogan.

But in 1993, no one in authority believed Walls III's actions amounted to a sexual crime against the younger Hogan.

Arkansas State Police investigator Jim Rainbolt was asked by Cook on June 1, 1993, to investigate

Doug Hogan's claims.

Doug Hogan said the incident occurred late at night after other Scouts at the campout went to bed.

In a 1993 statement to Rainbolt, Doug Hogan said that, "Jack Walls lay beside me with his feet toward my head and my feet toward his head. Jack Walls started unbuckling my belt. I told him to stop."

Hogan told Rainbolt that Walls asked Hogan if Hogan was going to perform a sexual act on himself."

"I said, 'No, that wasn't my thing,'" Hogan said. "Jack Walls said, 'Well, how about me.' I said, 'No.'"

Besides Hogan and Walls, Rainbolt interviewed two other boys who attended the campout. Both boys told Rainbolt that Walls admitted to them he had solicited a sexual act from Hogan. One of the boys said Walls said he was only "playing around."

Also in the file is an interview with Walls, who denied any wrongdoing.

Rainbolt closed the file Oct. 8, 1993, because Cook, the prosecutor, "had determined that the actions of the suspects in this case do not constitute a crime."

Rainbolt said Thursday he was asked to investigate only the Hogan incident and nothing else when the investigation was opened June 1, 1993, by Cook.

"The bottom line here is I was told to investigate one incident and that's what I did," Rainbolt said. "None of the witnesses indicated there were any other victims."

"My gut instinct was that everything wasn't kosher here," Rain-

bolt said. "But my personal feelings were not things I could prove in court."

Rainbolt said there was no way he could have known that there were allegedly crimes being committed at the time against other boys.

"Those kids weren't ready to talk," Rainbolt said. "I don't think any more could have been done at that time."

Joe Quinn, spokesman for the state Department of Human Services, said his agency's hands were tied when the case was dropped by the state police.

"If the police are the assigned lead agency on an abuse investigation and they say no sexual abuse has taken place, our caseworkers can't second guess the outcome of the police investigation," Quinn said Wednesday. "By state law, we have to follow the lead agency once the case has been referred to that agency."

Cook said that in 1993 he found nothing in the Arkansas Criminal Code that fit Doug Hogan's statement and allegation against Walls.

"When I got the police file, I started at the top, with rape, and worked my way down the criminal code and there simply wasn't any crime," Cook said.

