



Arkansas Democrat-Gazette/STEVE KEESSE

**Heath Stocks**, serving a life sentence for killing his parents and sister in January 1997 near Furlow, is escorted into Lonoke County Circuit Court to testify Thursday during former Boy Scout leader Jack Walls III's sentencing hearing on six rape counts.

# Six testify about lives since Scout leader attack

## Walls trained 'me to be assassin,' one says

BY SANDY DAVIS  
ARKANSAS DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE

LONOKE — One by one, six young men walked to the witness box in the Lonoke circuit courtroom and testified Thursday about how their lives turned into nightmares after they were sexually assaulted by Jack Walls III, a former Boy Scout leader to all but one of them.

"I remember the first night he raped me," the first young man said quietly but with determination. "It was during the crossover ceremony from Webelos to Boy Scouts and we went on a camp-out on Jack's farm. It was that night. I was 12 years old.

"He raped me about 30 to 35 times over the next year or so. We had different kinds of sex, including group sex with some of the oth-

ers," said the young man, who is now 16 years old. "Jack raped me at my house ... at Jack's shop and at his farm."

Walls pleaded guilty to five counts of rape and no contest to one count of rape Jan. 6 during a hearing before Lonoke County Circuit-Chancery Judge Lance Hanshaw. Since there was no plea agreement, it is up to Hanshaw to determine Walls' sentence. He faces 10-40 years or life in prison for each count. The judge will also determine whether the sentences will be served consecutively.

Thursday's hearing was held to allow the victims and their families to describe to Hanshaw how the sexual assaults affected their lives. Hanshaw said he will sentence Walls at 9 a.m. Feb. 4.

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## Walls

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Each young man testified that Walls gave alcoholic beverages and showed pornographic tapes or literature as a prelude to sex. There were other common threads woven through each of the young men's testimonies: Each expressed guilt and anger, especially at their families during the time the sexual assaults were occurring; and each has been in trouble ranging from being committed to a rehabilitation center to alcoholism to driving while intoxicated, with two serving prison sentences — one for murder and the other for theft.

No one told anyone about the dark secret within the Lonoke Scout troop for nearly a decade, the young men said.

But the testimony that most riveted the standing-room-only crowd was from Heath Stocks, 21, dressed in orange jail jumpsuit.

Stocks is serving a life sentence for murdering his father, Joe; mother, Barbara; and sister, Heather, in January 1997.

Holding a handful of tissues, Stocks was escorted to the stand by an Arkansas State Police trooper.

"He started raping me when I was about 11 or 12," Stocks said as tears rolled down his face. "He first raped me at a camp-out where we got our merit badges. He introduced me to alcohol, showed me pornographic movies or books and then we had sex. It ended nearly 10 years later, the day I was arrested."

When Special Prosecuting Attorney Betty Dickey of Pine Bluff asked Stocks how he felt about Walls, Stocks paused and said, "I loved him. I called him Dad. He was a friend, a mentor. I looked up to him. Jack always told me I was worth something. Yes, I loved him with all of my heart." But Stocks said that during those years he was filled with "anger and rage."

All witness described the arsenal of guns Walls owned and said they enjoyed the time they spent learning about the guns. But for Stocks and one other witness, Walls took the lessons one step further.

"He wanted me to be mentally prepared to be a killer. I was filled with so much hate. I couldn't love. The only way I knew to love was to have sex. Well, you can't have sex with your mother, your father or your sister. I loved my sister, but I just couldn't feel anything toward anyone. Jack said that made you weak."

Stocks stunned the crowd when he said that not only was he Walls' sexual victim, but Walls told him to kill his family.

Shortly before Walls testified, Stocks' maternal grandmother, Annie Mae Harris, testified that her daughter, Barbara, had caught Stocks and Walls in bed together asleep at the Stockses' home in late 1996.

"It upset her," Harris said. "She got in her van and waited down the road until Walls left. She told me about it and told me not to tell anyone and I never did and no one ever asked me about it. I figured there would be a hearing [when Heath Stocks was arrested for the murders] and I could tell it, but there never was a hearing."

The Rev. Robert Marble, pastor of Concord First United Methodist Church in Furlow, was a hostile witness whom Dickey said she had to subpoena to the hearing.

"I consider my discussions with my church members as privileged, and I can't repeat what they say," Marble said, adding that he agreed to testify after Heath signed a waiver.

"Barbara told me about Heath's relationship [with Walls] around Christmas in 1996. She was upset and terrified of what was going to happen," Marble said. "On Jan 8, 1997, she told me at church she needed to talk. We never had the chance. She was dead nine days later."

Marble also said he visited Stocks in jail shortly after he was arrested for the murders in January 1997 and at the State Hospital, where Stocks had a mental evaluation.

"Both times he told me that Jack told him to do it — kill his family," Marble said.

Hubert Alexander, Walls' attorney, asked why Marble never came forward.

"I couldn't do anything. It was a privileged discussion," Marble said.

Stocks said his mother confronted him about his relationship with Walls.

"I told my mother and my sister about my relationship with Jack," Stocks said. "Then I told Jack that I told them. He said, 'Take care of the problem.' That meant kill them."

When asked how he felt about Walls now, Stocks said, "Words can't describe it."

After a long pause, he said, "For the past 18 years, my family tried to love me. No matter how much I tried to love, it made me empty."

"Part of me still loves Jack and part of me hates him," he said.

As Stocks testified, Walls wiped tears from his eyes. It was the second time he showed emotion during the nearly eight hours of testimony.

Another witness, who described how hurt he was after Walls sexually assaulted him, brought Walls to tears.

"He was not trying to make us into good people like the Boy Scouts should," the witness said. "He wasn't making us strong and responsible. He used Scouting as a way to get at us. I hurt my family. I was rebellious. I've had two DWIs. You don't know what it's like to have a secret like this. You can't tell anyone."

Mothers and fathers also took the stand telling the judge how suddenly their sons changed at the age of 12 or 13 when they joined Walls' Boy Scout Troop.

"It ruined our family," one mother said. "This was my baby and I knew something was wrong, but I could not find out what it was so I couldn't fix it."

The first witness said that after his encounters with Walls, he felt "grown up" at the age of 12.

"Jack introduced me to drinking at 12. I felt since I was getting alcohol and doing the sexual activities, I felt older," he said. "I thought I should be doing what I wanted to do, but my parents were giving me a hard time. They were unreasonable. I hated my mother. She wouldn't let me do what I wanted. I felt there was something wrong with me around my friends. I started not caring about anything. My grades dropped, I quit sports."

It was a pair of camouflage pants that brought the young boys' dark secret out.

"Jack gave my little brother a pair of camouflage pants," the first victim said. "I knew Jack was going after him next, and I wasn't going to let that happen. So I told my parents."