

## Walls pleads guilty to rape

### Former Scout leader accused of sexually abusing boys

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ARKANSAS DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE

LONOKE — Charles "Jack" Walls III, a former Lonoke Boy Scouts leader accused of sexually abusing boys in his Scout troop for nearly a decade, pleaded guilty Tuesday to five counts of rape during a hearing in Lonoke County Circuit Court.

A second hearing has been scheduled for Thursday to address five other charges still pending against Walls, including one count

of rape, two counts of violation of a minor and two counts of solicitation to commit murder.

Walls previously pleaded innocent to all 10 charges.

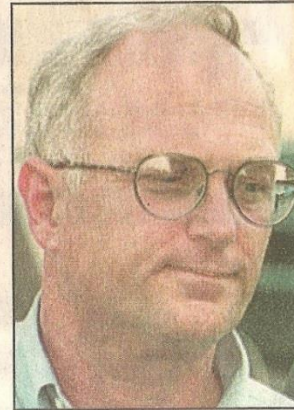
"You realize that this is not a guilty plea agreement," Lonoke County Circuit-Chancery Judge Lance Hanshaw told Walls after Walls entered the five guilty pleas. "You are pleading guilty to the court." Hanshaw — not a jury — will determine Walls' sentence.

Walls stoically stood next to his

attorney, Hubert Alexander of Jacksonville, as Prosecuting Attorney Betty Dickey of Pine Bluff read off each count of rape that Walls told the court he was guilty of committing.

Several spectators cried as the judge questioned Walls about his plea.

"Based upon your plea to the court, I find you guilty of five counts of rape" Hanshaw said. Walls now will enter the "penalty  
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Charles "Jack" Walls III

is released or until the judge decides further incarceration would be punishment rather than a way to compel her testimony.

A longtime Democrat and former governor, Pryor said Monday that he was not asked by McDougal's attorneys or anyone else — including President Clinton — to approach Wright, and his effort was part of a "humanitarian mission" that was strictly his own.

Pryor lived down the street from McDougal's family in Camden and said to Wright that he had once helped McDougal's father out of a "situation of injustice."

Pryor also said Tuesday that he was reluctant to discuss the matter in detail because he didn't want to jeopardize any chance McDougal might have for a hearing on her  
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### Hearing

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phase" for the five charges to which he pleaded guilty.

The judge set a hearing for Jan. 22 at 9 a.m. in which the defense and prosecution will present witnesses. Each side will attempt to persuade the judge on the severity of the sentence.

Walls faces 10 to 40 years or life in prison for each rape conviction, Dickey said. The sentences could be applied consecutively.

Hanshaw said he would sentence Walls on Feb. 4 at 9 a.m.

A gag order is in effect to shield the identity of the victims, all five of whom were under the age of 14 when they were assaulted. The sixth rape charge is still pending. Victims were identified as John Doe 1, 2, 4, 5, and 6.

While the father of one of the victims said he was relieved that his son would not have to endure a jury trial, he said that didn't mean the suffering would end.

"My son wasn't spared just because he didn't have to testify at a trial," said the father, who asked to remain anonymous to protect his son's identity. "I'm glad that he isn't going to have to go through a trial, but he, as well as the other victims, are still going to go through hell."

It was not clear why the remaining five charges were not addressed Tuesday. Thursday's hearing has been set for 9 a.m. "to determine what the prosecutor wants to do with these charges," Hanshaw said.

"These last five charges are still under advisement," Dickey said. "I really can't say any more than that at this time."

In the two violation-of-a-minor charges, Walls is accused of continuing to have sex with two of the victims after they reached age 14.

John Doe 3, the alleged victim in the rape charge to which Walls did not change his earlier plea, is Heath Stocks, officials close to the case confirmed. Stocks has also publicly stated that he is one of Walls' victims.

A tearful Dorothy Stocks, paternal grandmother to Heath Stocks, embraced Dickey shortly after the hearing.

"I want to thank you," she told Dickey. "Heath is going to have his day in court."

Stocks, 21, is serving a life prison sentence after he admitted he shot to death his father, Joe; mother, Barbara; and sister, Heather; on Jan. 17, 1997, at the family's Lonoke County home.

"When you are a victim, you are

hurt to the very core of your being," Dorothy Stocks said. "I pray that all of this works out and I pray that God is with all of the victims in the days ahead. Some of their lives are ruined, just ruined."

Dickey said she would put victims on the stand at the Jan. 22 penalty hearing.

"They will be making impact statements," she said. "They will be testifying to what this had done to their lives."

Dickey, appointed to the case after Lonoke County Prosecuting Attorney Larry Cook asked to be removed, also said there are more victims, but there probably won't be any more charges filed against Walls.

"I know there are a lot more victims," Dickey said. "Some of them are over the age of 24 and, therefore, no charges can be filed on their behalf. There are also younger victims who don't want to participate in the justice system so no charges were filed on their behalf."

Dickey said she was relieved that Walls entered the guilty pleas.

"I can't say I'm pleased, but I'm relieved," she said. "This will help the victims from being revictimized at a trial."

She also said she believes Hanshaw will sentence Walls fairly.

"We have someone very learned in the law," she said. "I trust the judge."

The dark secret some of the Scouts held for years began to unravel last summer when one told his family what Walls was doing with the boys during campouts and visits to Walls' family farm. The victim's family contacted the state Department of Human Services, which contacted police.

As the news leaked out, the children's secret rocked the town of 4,022.

During the investigation, police were told by the victims that Walls had allegedly asked some Scouts to kill Cledis and Doug Hogan of Carlisle.

Doug Hogan, now 21, accused

Walls of asking Hogan to perform a sexual act on Walls during a Dec. 29, 1992, Scouts campout.

Hogan said authorities refused at the time to press criminal charges against Walls. Ultimately, misdemeanor charges were filed in Carlisle in 1993, accusing Walls of third-degree assault and contributing to the delinquency of a minor. Walls was found innocent in April 1994.

The Hogans also contacted the Quapaw Area Council of the Boy Scouts in January 1993. The council expelled Walls.

Cledis Hogan said Tuesday that he was pleased Walls pleaded guilty to some of the rape charges.

"He's hurt so many people," Hogan said. "He needs to pay. He needs to spend the rest of his natural days in prison."