

Jury finds ex-state trooper not guilty

By DANNY GALLAGHER McKinney Courier-Gazette

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A former Texas state trooper accused of sexually assaulting a 13-year-old girl was found not guilty on all charges.

A jury of seven men and five women took less than two hours to find Granver Lee Tolliver Jr., 25, not guilty on one felony count of aggravated sexual assault of a child and two additional counts of indecency with a child in the 380th District Court on Thursday.

Tolliver was accused of sexually assaulting a 13-year-old girl who lived in his apartment complex where he also worked as a courtesy officer back in 2004. The mother of the victim first had suspicions about Tolliver after she found some pages in her daughter's diary that implied she had an emotional relationship with him, according to McKinney Courier-Gazette archives.

Tolliver's family, including his father who is Fairview Police Chief Granver Tolliver, cried and hugged each other after the verdict was read and Tolliver Jr. was released by Judge Charles Sandoval.

Collin County Assistant District Attorney Curtis Howard acknowledged the jury's decision and their hard work during the course of the week-long trial.

"Basically this is the way the legal system works," Howard said. "The jury did their job and we accept the verdict that they rendered."

Howard and Assistant District Attorney Michelle Voirin characterized Tolliver's case in their closing statements as one about the choices Tolliver made when the unidentified 13-year-old victim made advances towards him.

"This is a simple case," Howard said before the jury. "This little girl had a crush on an older man...and he takes advantage of her. That's all this is about."

"This is about the choices he made when (the victim) looked at him for the first time...and the next choices he made every time she came over there," Voirin said before the jury.

Tolliver's attorneys Chris and Doug Mulder questioned the veracity of the victim's families' testimony and their statements about the events that transpired in their closing statements to the jury.

"They seem like a normal family at first blush," Doug Mulder said before the jury. "But when you peel away the veneer, you see a whole different picture."

They also asked the jury to consider the fact that Granver Tolliver Jr. took the stand on his own behalf.

"Whenever someone is charged with a very serious offense, I think it's very, very important for the jury to hear the defendant say that you didn't do it," Chris Mulder said following the trial.

He also said his client's family is "obviously very, very relieved" and they were "real pleased" with the jury's decision.

Chris Mulder also said he does not know if Tolliver, who was terminated from the Texas Department of Public Safety, will try to get his old job back.

"That's the big question," Chris Mulder said. "I don't know if he's going to try. Right now, he just wants to take a deep breath and just be glad this is over with."

Tolliver and his family declined to comment. The victim's family could not be reached for comment.

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