

Girls testify in molestation, sodomy trial of former Cave Spring police officer

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The girl's words stuck mid-sentence Monday when testifying against former Cave Spring officer Patrick Earwood in his molestation and sodomy trial.

She had little parental supervision, and was by the Rolater Park bridge in summer 2012 when Earwood, 31, drove up in his patrol car. He stopped, and asked the girl what she was doing, she said. She was not yet 16 at the time.

"I said I was getting water," the girl testified before her words began to slow. "He asked me if I ... if I would give him oral sex. He told me that if I didn't he would take my mom to jail.

"I did what he asked me to," she added moments later.

The girl is one of four women prosecutors said would testify this week. Two teen girls who are friends and two adult women who don't know the other victims accuse Earwood of touching them or coercing sex acts from them, Assistant District Attorney Kay Ann Wetherington said.

The girl who claims Earwood forced oral sex kept silent for a year. In June 2013 she was with a friend when Earwood gave them a ride in his patrol car. He let them climb the fence and swim in the Cave Spring Pool late that night, she said.

The friend, who's a year older, returned to her boyfriend's home after the pair argued. The younger girl said she then walked home.

On the way Earwood drove by and stopped her. The girl said she asked him to get her friend, and she "flashed" Earwood when he asked. Earwood then went to get the older girl, who testified next.

The second girl told jurors that Earwood cleaned the front seat, allowing her to sit by him.

"And then he asked me to pull up my shirt, and I said I wouldn't," the girl testified.

Earwood drove her along Cemetery and Kings Bridge roads, slowing his car down on the latter and asking for sex. He also touched her thigh and breasts, the girl said.

She shrugged off his advances, saying she needed to return to her friend. He asked if she'd talk about what happened that night.

“I said, no, there’s no reason to,” the girl testified.

She told someone some two weeks later about that night. Earwood was placed on administrative leave, fired July 1, 2013, and arrested that day.

“Wow,” said defense attorney Peter Odom during his opening statements. “Don’t you want to just go back there and vote guilty and go straight to sentencing?”

“Patrick Earwood did none of the things he’s accused of doing,” Odom emphatically added.

Odom argued that no physical evidence will support the allegations, adding that the victims contradict themselves.

The girls, Odom said, had time to prepare their stories. Both of them at some point denied his client touched them.

One of the adult women is a known drug user, and the other was stopped for DUI, Odom said.

“The motivation’s clear,” Odom added. “Ladies and gentlemen, those are ugly accusations. Now the state has to support them with evidence.”

Earwood faces two counts each of aggravated sodomy, second-degree child cruelty, sexual battery and sexual assault against a person in custody. He also faces charges of aggravated child molestation, child molestation, giving false statements and violation of his oath by a public officer.

The trial resumes at 9 a.m. today.

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