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Retired judge, ex-prosecutor, 2 others arraigned in perjury case

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The Detroit News

Detroit— A retired Wayne County judge, the county's former top drug prosecutor and two Inkster Police officers were arraigned today on charges stemming from alleged lies allowed during a 2005 drug trial.

Wayne County Circuit Judge Margie Braxton arraigned former Circuit Judge Mary Waterstone, who is charged with misconduct in office, a five-year felony; and retired Assistant Prosecutor Karen Plants, Inkster Police Sgt. Scott Rechtzigel and Officer Robert McArthur, who are charged with obstruction of justice and perjury, punishable by up to life.

A trial judge was assigned for the case when Assistant Michigan Attorney General William Rollstin told Braxton a no plea deal was being offered. Timothy Kenny, presiding judge of the circuit's criminal division, was blind drawn to handle the trial. The four defendants, who remain free on bond, were ordered to appear Nov. 5 before Kenny for a pretrial conference.

Allegations against the four arise from a case where a paid undercover informant led police to more than 100 pounds of high-quality cocaine delivered to a Riverview bar and nightclub, J Dubs. The bar's owner, Alexander Aceval, is serving 10 to 15 years in prison.

Plants, Rechtzigel and McArthur were charged in March 2009, four years after Aceval's first of two trials. They are alleged to have coached the informant to lie on the witness stand, and then told lies to hide the informant's participation in the police investigation. The charges against Waterstone allege that she failed to tell Aceval's lawyer or jurors about the lies, even after being told about it by Plants.

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