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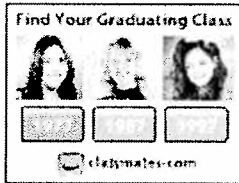
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# Death case takes shape

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Dentist says it was self-defense

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By Michael Hewlett

JOURNAL REPORTER

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MOCKSVILLE

The Clemmons dentist charged last month with murder in the death of his wife says in court papers filed last week that he was defending himself after his wife attacked him with a 16-inch spear.

Kirk Alan Turner, 50, was indicted on first-degree murder Dec. 13 in the death of Jennifer Jean Wittwer Turner, whose body was found Sept. 12 in a shop building on the 35-acre property at 627 Jack Booe Road that the couple once shared. Jennifer Turner was 54.

The couple had been separated for more than a year when, according to the Davie County Sheriff's Office, Kirk Turner went to the house the night of Sept. 12 to pick up items in the shop building.

At 9:45 p.m., deputies went to a call about a disturbance at the house and found Jennifer Turner's body. She had knife wounds in her throat, and Kirk Turner had multiple stab wounds in his thigh and groin.

Gwen Elizabeth Kennedy, Jennifer Turner's sister and the executor of her estate, filed a wrongful-death lawsuit in October against Kirk Turner, alleging that he "slit and/or cut (Jennifer Turner's) throat with a sharp object, thereby causing her death."

Kirk Turner's attorney, John F. Morrow Sr., filed an answer and a counterclaim to that lawsuit on Thursday in Forsyth Superior Court. The counterclaim says that Kirk Turner went to the house with another man, with his wife's knowledge, to pick up items from the shop building.

According to the counterclaim, Jennifer Turner "made a surprise attack upon the person of the defendant (Kirk Turner) with a Vikinglike spear consisting of a blade 16

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inches long and one and three-fourths inches wide and a shaft approximately 70 inches long."

Jennifer Turner stabbed her husband twice with the spear, causing serious injuries to Kirk Turner, especially in the groin area, the counterclaim says.

"Any conduct of the defendant on Sept. 12, 2007, that may have proximately caused the death or harm to the said Jennifer Turner was a result of the defendant's being put in the peril of death and/or serious bodily harm which could only be prevented by the defendant's immediate use of appropriate force," the counterclaim says.

Jennifer Turner also assaulted Kirk Turner and "caused other cuts and/or illegal contact to the body of the defendant," according to the counterclaim.

As a result, Kirk Turner has suffered damages in medical bills and expenses, permanent injuries to his body, scarring of his body, loss of earning capacity, severe emotional distress, incarceration, destruction of his dental business and actual loss of earnings, the counterclaim says.

The counterclaim says that Kirk Turner has had severe emotional distress, including neurosis, depression, phobia and post-traumatic stress disorder.

Dudley Witt, the attorney for Kennedy, said that Jennifer Turner in no way attacked Kirk Turner. "We'll see what evidence they have to support their claims," he said.

Chuck Alexander, Turner's criminal attorney, has said he will argue that Kirk Turner acted in self-defense. Investigators have been tight-lipped about what exactly happened the night of Sept. 12.

When they separated in 2006, Kirk Turner and Jennifer Turner had been married for more than 20 years. Kirk Turner filed for divorce on July 31, 2007.

The Turners accused each other of infidelity, and Jennifer Turner filed an alienation-of-affection lawsuit against a Davie County woman, Tondja Woods Colvin, accusing her of having an affair with her husband.

In his response, Kirk Turner denies that he was upset at his wife on Sept. 12 for filing a lawsuit against Colvin. He also refused to answer whether he had had sex with Colvin before Sept. 12 or whether he had bought night-vision glasses before his wife's death, according to the response, saying that the questions were not relevant to the wrongful-death lawsuit.

Kirk Turner's next court hearing in the criminal case against him is scheduled for Jan. 28. Turner is now in the Davie County Jail with no bond allowed. Prosecutors haven't yet decided whether they will pursue the death penalty.

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