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Herald-Journal (Spartanburg, SC)

July 16, 1991

Charges against dentist dropped
Author: *Herald-Journal*

Article Text:

GAFFNEY - Marijuana and cocaine possession charges brought against a Gaffney dentist by Gaffney city police last year have been dropped.

Dr. Louis Westfield Turnage of 505 Union St. was arrested July 16, 1990, after city police searched his office at 909 North Limestone St.

and discovered about 2 to 3 grams of cocaine. Police also found a marijuana cigarette in his car.

Turnage was charged by city police with simple possession of marijuana and possession of cocaine.

City Judge Jack Allison dismissed the marijuana charge during a suppression hearing in Gaffney Municipal Court last June prior to the scheduled start of the trial, said Police Chief Jimmy Scates.

Turnage's lawyer, Columbia attorney Jack B. Swerling, contended at the hearing that the search warrant used by police in the search was improper.

Allison granted Swerling's request for a directed innocent verdict on behalf of Turnage after the prosecution refused to identify the informant whose statement was the basis for the search warrant.

Scates said his department as a matter of practice does not like to name people who supply officers with information about possible crimes. "If we did, we'd never get any information. We'd rather lose the case but not name the informant," he said.

The Seventh Circuit Solicitor's Office decided to drop the cocaine possession charge in General Sessions Court after the hearing.

Turnage had been out of jail on bond while his case was pending.

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