

Written by Kathy

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By Kathy Wray Colman, Editor

RALEIGH, North Carolina-A North Carolina jury last week freed John Edwards (pictured) of charges that he used more than \$1 million in campaign funds from his unsuccessful run for the Democratic nomination for president in 2008 to hush his pregnant mistress Rielle Hunter while his wife Elizabeth Edwards was dying of breast cancer.

After deliberating for eight days, the jury, on Thurs., acquitted the former U.S. senator of one charge and deadlocked on the remaining five felony charges, forcing a judge to declare a mistrial.

Edwards, 58, a millionaire who rose to fame by winning record breaking North Carolina jury verdicts in libel and slander and personal injury lawsuits, and the 2004 Democratic vice-presidential nominee for president, did not take the stand at trial.

The prosecution relied heavily on testimony from Andrew Young, a former top campaign official who initially agreed to a cover up and publicly lied in 2008, saying that he was the father of Edwards and Hunter's baby, Frances Quinn Hunter, now four years old,

But Young came across to the jury as suspect, legal pundits said, partly because he used some of the campaign funds at issue toward his and his wife's 1.6 million mansion. She too testified against Edwards at trial.

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Defense attorneys argued that there was no concrete evidence that Edwards knowingly used campaign funds for personal use, and told the jury that their client had broken no laws.

Legal experts say that it is unlikely that prosecutors will retry Edwards, who faced up to 30 years in prison, because there is no evidence that he knowingly participated in any illegal misuse of campaign dollars, though earlier this year a federal campaign commission ordered the Edwards campaign to pay back more than \$2 million in campaign donations.

Elizabeth Edwards, also an attorney, consumed to the deadly cancer in 2010 after legally separating from Edwards, whom she married in 1977.

Together they had four children, including Wade Edwards, who died in a car accident in 1996 at the age of 17.

The trial laid bare Edwards' sexual escapades, and his serial cheating.

But jurors said after trial that the government did not prove its case.

Talking publicly to reporters after the verdict, Edwards said that he had sinned with his unprecedented affair with Hunter and scheme to hand blame of his love child to another man, but that he did not believe that he broke any campaign finance laws, and he said that he loves his four children with Elizabeth Edwards and his little girl with Hunter, 48, who has been low key since the trial.

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