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Clan leader pleads guilty to incest

November 07, 2003 | By Tribune news services.



SALT LAKE CITY — Jeremy Ortell Kingston, a member of a Utah polygamous clan that has its own church, pleaded guilty to incest with LuAnn Kingston, who is both his aunt and cousin and was 15 when he took her as his fourth wife.

Under a proposed plea bargain, Kingston would get no more than a year in jail and the felony would be reduced to a misdemeanor if he successfully completes probation. But the judge is not bound by that recommendation and could impose a stiffer penalty at sentencing.

LuAnn Kingston left her marriage in 2000, taking the couple's two daughters. She went to police, hoping to set an example for other polygamous wives.

Jeremy Kingston told the judge, "I had a relationship, a sexual relationship, with LuAnn for about four years. That relationship ended about four years ago."

After the hearing, LuAnn Kingston said it was "kind of a shock to hear him actually admit to it. He's never admitted to anything like that before."

The Kingston clan, with an estimated 1,200 members, is known as the Latter-Day Church of Christ, not to be confused with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormon), which once practiced polygamy but abandoned it in 1890.

Family members say Kingston has at least 17 children.

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