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Two Plead Guilty To Running Sex Ring An Ex-officer And His Wife Ran Escort Services As A Front For Prostitution. They Got Probation And A Scolding.

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February 15, 1994 | By Linda Loyd, INQUIRER STAFF WRITER

It was a cautionary Valentine's tale of love, heartbreak, lust and the wages of sin.

A former Philadelphia police lieutenant, Joseph Kelly, and his estranged wife, Jayne, pleaded guilty yesterday to running a prostitution ring that earned at least \$300,000 a year by masquerading as six Center City escort services, with such names as BiBi Babes, Vibrations and Shackles.

The Kellys, who said the strain of the charges had broken up their marriage, were sentenced to five years' probation by Judge Samuel M. Lehrer, who had harsh words for the estranged couple.

"I think you're a little bit stupid," Lehrer snapped to ex-Lt. Kelly, a 15-year veteran. Kelly, 38, told the judge he was "embarrassed, humiliated" and had "lost everything," including his police pension.

"My inclination is to send you to jail, but I suppose you have been punished enough already," Lehrer said. "I'd think you'd show more consideration for your father (a retired Philadelphia police officer), and the tradition of public service."

Jayne Kelly, 29, who appeared in court yesterday on the arm of a new boyfriend, said she is no longer in the prostitution business and plans to go back to school to "do something in stained glass."

"Joe and I are still good friends. The stress of this was just too much," she said in the corridor, before court.

Lehrer scolded the former madam and told her if she had not pleaded guilty, and thereby avoided a long, costly trial, he was "inclined" to send her to prison.

In imposing probation, Lehrer ordered the Kellys to steer clear of "any kind of activity, no matter how legitimate, that brings people together."

Four other people, including two managers of the escort services and a prostitute named Mistress Natasha, who said her specialty was "bondage and discipline," pleaded guilty yesterday to prostitution and conspiracy charges and received probation of one to three years.

Eleven other alleged prostitutes who worked for the Kellys were placed by the judge in a non-trial program for first-time offenders. If they stay out of trouble for 12 months, the record will be expunged, the judge said.

The Kellys, along with two managers of the escort services on the 900 block of Pine Street and the 400 block of Bainbridge Street, and nearly a dozen high-priced call girls, were to have gone on trial yesterday.

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