

Couple raises funds for child abuse appeal

by UPI

NORWALK, Ohio -- A Huron County, Ohio, couple convicted of endangering and abusing their adopted children announced they are raising funds for appeals. Sharon and Michael Gravelle said during their first meeting with the media since early 2006 that they are trying to raise \$50,000 to appeal the criminal charges and to take the Juvenile Court case that put the children in the custody of the county to the U.S. Supreme Court, the Cleveland Plain Dealer reported Thursday. The couple claimed the case against them was the result of the child-welfare bureaucracy striking back at them for complaining about not receiving benefits for a child they were attempting to adopt. The Gravelles were convicted on four counts of felony child endangering, two misdemeanor counts of child endangering and five misdemeanor child-abuse charges. They claim their 11 adopted children were not caged, as the prosecution said, but rather enclosed at night time for their own protection. County Prosecutor Russ Leffler is attempting to get the 6th Ohio District Court of Appeals in Toledo to reinstate six charges dropped by the judge before the case. The charges accuse the couple of perjury and falsification.

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