

NEWS

United States Department of Justice
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Christopher J. Christie, U.S. Attorney

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Cub Scout Leader Charged with Child Pornography Possession

(More)

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NEWARK – A Cub Scout den leader has been charged in a federal criminal Complaint with possession of child pornography, U.S. Attorney Christopher J. Christie announced.

Mark Andrew Lutz, 46, of Pequannock Township, is charged in the one-count Complaint with knowingly possessing at least three images of child pornography. Lutz turned himself in on Thursday to appear in federal court.

Following an initial appearance Thursday before U.S. Magistrate Judge Patty Shwartz, Lutz was released on a \$100,000 bond. Judge Shwartz also ordered that, as a condition of bail, Lutz is prohibited from contact with minors unless the minor's parent or guardian is present and they have been apprised of the charges.

For approximately the past five years, Lutz has served as a den leader for Cub Scout Pack 144, in Pompton Plains. At his initial appearance, Lutz's attorney indicated that Lutz would be resigning from that position.

The Complaint is the result of an international investigation known as Operation Emissary, which was initiated by the New Jersey office of Immigration and Customs Enforcement in late 2005 in conjunction with the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of New Jersey.

The investigation focused on a commercial Internet website offering access to videos and images of hard-core child pornography. The website alerted would-be subscribers that subscribing to the website was illegal, and warned them to be discreet about their purchase. To date, more than 260 individuals in 44 states have been arrested nationwide as the result of Operation Emissary, including approximately one dozen of whom have been previously convicted of sex offenses against minors. In addition, more than two dozen defendants arrested through the investigation have been identified as being involved in the molestation of children.

The charge of knowingly possessing at least three images of child pornography carries a maximum statutory penalty of 10 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine.

Despite being charged in a criminal Complaint, all defendants are presumed innocent unless proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

Christie credited Special Agents of Immigration and Customs Enforcement, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Kyle Hutchins, in Newark, for the investigation of Lutz.

The government is represented by Assistant United States Attorney Harvey Bartle of the Public Protection Unit of the U.S. Attorney's Office Criminal Division in Newark.

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Defense Attorney: Patrick Mullin, Esq.

