

Department of Justice

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LANCASTER MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO CHILD PORNOGRAPHY CHARGES

BUFFALO, N.Y.-- U.S. Attorney William J. Hochul, Jr. announced today that Joseph Marranca, Jr., 67 of Lancaster, N.Y., pleaded guilty before U.S. District Judge Richard J. Arcara, to attempted receipt of child pornography. The charge carries a mandatory minimum penalty of five years in prison and a maximum of 20 years, a fine of 250,000 or both.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Marie P. Grisanti, who is handling the case, stated the defendant posted an ad on Craig's list that read in part "looking for a teenager." Marranca engaged in chat conversations online and began talking with a person who indicated that she was a 14 year old girl. During those chats, the defendant asked the 14 year old for pictures and made arrangements to meet her at a park. The individual that Marranca was actually chatting with was an undercover police officer. The defendant was arrested after he drove to the park to meet the officer. As part of the plea, Marranca agreed to the forfeiture of his 2005 Acura, his computer and his cell phone.

This case was brought as part of Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative to combat the growing epidemic of child sexual exploitation and abuse launched in May 2006 by the Department of Justice. Led by United States Attorneys' Offices and the Criminal Division's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section (CEOS), Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state and local resources to better locate, apprehend and prosecute individuals who exploit children via the Internet, as well as to identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit www.projectsafechildhood.gov.

The plea is the culmination of an investigation on the part of the Special Agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, under the direction of Christopher M. Piehota, Special Agent In Charge and the Cheektowaga Police Department under the direction of Chief David Zack.

Sentencing is scheduled for January 25, 2013, at 1:00 p.m. before Judge Arcara.

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