



U.S. Department of Justice

***United States Attorney
Eastern District of Arkansas***

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 14, 2008

**CONTACT: Jane W. Duke
United States Attorney
501-340-2650**

**ARKANSAS STATE POLICE UNDERCOVER INVESTIGATION
RESULTS IN 151 MONTH FEDERAL PRISON TERM
FOR CHILD PORNOGRAPHER**

Little Rock - Jane W. Duke, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Arkansas, announced today the sentencing of Robert J. McDearmon, a 67- year old former aerospace engineer. On August 11, 2008, McDearmon pled guilty to one count of distribution of child pornography arising out of the Eastern District of Arkansas, one count of distribution of child pornography arising out of the Northern District of Georgia, and one count of possession of child pornography arising out of the Central District of California. McDearmon, a resident of Corona, California, agreed to consolidation of the three charges in the Central District of California. McDearmon subsequently pled guilty to all three counts.

On November 3, 2008, the Honorable Manuel L. Real sentenced McDearmon to 151 months incarceration on each count to run concurrently, no fine, and a \$100 special penalty assessment on each count. Upon release from the Bureau of Prisons, McDearmon will be placed on supervised release for the remainder of his life. Special conditions of the supervised release will include undergoing mental health counseling and treatment, sex offender registration, no internet access, 100 foot restriction to facilities primarily used by persons under the age of 18, and no contact with minor children without the express consent of the probation office. After being sentenced, McDearmon was remanded to the custody of the United States Marshal.

McDearmon's convictions stem from an undercover investigation by the Arkansas State Police (ASP). That investigation targeted individuals utilizing the internet to entice minors to engage in sexual activity and to distribute child pornography. From May to November, 2006, McDearmon established and maintained on-line communications with an ASP Undercover

Officer (“UCO”) posing as the mother of young children. McDearmon’s conversations with the UCO quickly became sexually explicit with McDearmon explaining that he wanted to have sex with the UCO’s children and with subsequent offspring resulting from that sexual activity. McDearmon also sent images of child pornography to the UCO and to what he believed to be the UCO’s children.

During the same time period McDearmon was communicating with the ASP UCO, he engaged in similar communications with a Georgia UCO. Joint investigative efforts lead to California authorities executing a search warrant on McDearmon’s residence the discovery of more than 600 images of child pornography on his computer. These images included depictions of sadistic and masochistic activity with children.

“This investigation was a true success in all aspects of the term,” stated Duke. “First, it involved seamless and unselfish cooperation between local, state, and federal authorities in three different jurisdictions. Secondly, we are not aware of any actual minors who were sexually violated by Mr. McDearmon. In assessing the value of undercover and sting operations, we are mindful that for every individual we take away from a computer terminal, an exponential number of children are saved. Mr. McDearmon’s prolific online activity demonstrates that he was clearly intent on gaining sexual access to children. Thankfully, McDearmon’s efforts were completely thwarted by the Arkansas and Georgia authorities. As a result, an untold number of children and their families have been spared from potential tragedy.”

This case arose out of Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative designed to protect children from online exploitation and abuse. 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 identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit <http://www.projectsafechildhood.gov>.

The case was investigated by the Arkansas State Police, the Little Rock Field Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, in conjunction with federal, state and local authorities in Georgia and California. The Arkansas charge was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Marsha W. Clevenger.

#