



Department of Justice

United States Attorney David E. Nahmias
Northern District of Georgia

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

07/23/09

<http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/gan/>

CONTACT: Patrick Crosby

(404)581-6016

FAX (404)581-6160

FORMER FORSYTH DEPUTY SHERIFF FOUND GUILTY BY FEDERAL JURY ON CHILD PORNOGRAPHY CHARGES

Gainesville, GA - MILTON SCOTT PRUITT, 41, of Forsyth County, Georgia, was found guilty late yesterday by a federal jury on two counts of receiving child pornography. He was found not guilty on a count of possession of child pornography. PRUITT was indicted on August 20, 2008.

United States Attorney David E. Nahmias said of the verdict, "Any person who is entrusted with protecting the public's safety is the last person we would expect to exploit children. Instead of upholding the law as he was sworn to do, this defendant trampled the law and victimized innocent children when he used a police computer and his personal computer to view child pornography."

GBI Director Vernon Keenan said of the verdict, "It is truly sad when a law enforcement officer uses county property to access such materials, and in this case, child pornography was also found on his home computer. The GBI will continue to work with federal law enforcement to make sure that Georgia police officers and other employees know they are not above the law."

According to United States Attorney Nahmias, and evidence presented in court: While working the overnight shift on March 15, 2007, PRUITT, a sergeant supervising other patrol deputies, used his in-car laptop computer to access child pornography stored as evidence in a Forsyth County detective's computer file. According to the computer records and trial testimony, PRUITT accessed and viewed ten images of young children engaged in sexually explicit conduct. PRUITT's illicit computer activity was discovered several weeks later by an employee of Forsyth County's information technology department, who reported PRUITT's conduct to the Sheriff's Office. The Sheriff's Office referred the case to the Georgia Bureau of Investigation (GBI). During a subsequent interview with a GBI agent, PRUITT admitted that he accessed and viewed the pornographic images because he was "just curious."

Following his admission, GBI seized his home computer and conducted a forensic examination of its hard drive. The examination revealed hundreds of images of child

pornography and numerous Internet searches for such images.

The jury began its deliberations just before 5 p.m. yesterday and rendered their verdict after approximately two hours.

The United States District Judge William C. O'Kelley will sentence PRUITT on October 8, 2009. PRUITT faces a maximum of 20 years in prison on each of the two counts, and faces a mandatory five years in prison on each count. In determining the actual sentence, the Court will consider the United States Sentencing Guidelines, which are not binding but provide appropriate sentencing ranges for most offenders.

This case is being prosecuted as priority of the Justice Department's Project Safe Childhood. In February 2006, the Attorney General launched Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative designed to protect children from online exploitation and abuse. Led by the United States Attorney's Offices around the country, Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state and local resources to apprehend and prosecute individuals who exploit children via the Internet. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit www.projectsafechildhood.gov.

This case was investigated by Special Agents of the Georgia Bureau of Investigation and investigators of the Forsyth County Sheriff's Office.

Assistant United States Attorneys Brent Alan Gray and Jill E. Steinberg are prosecuting the case.

For further information please contact David E. Nahmias (pronounced NAH-me-us), United States Attorney, or Charysse L. Alexander, Executive Assistant United States Attorney, through Patrick Crosby, Public Affairs Officer, U.S. Attorney's Office, at (404) 581-6016. The Internet address for the HomePage for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Georgia is www.usdoj.gov/usao/gan.