



Department of Justice

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RINGGOLD MAN GETS 15-YEAR SENTENCE FOR RECEIVING CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

Defendant Had Prior Child Pornography Conviction, Admitted to Meeting with Young Girls for Sexual Activity

ROME, GA - ROBERT WAYNE McDONALD, 42, of Ringgold, Georgia, was sentenced late today by United States District Judge Harold L. Murphy, to serve 15 years in federal prison on charges of receiving child pornography by computer.

“This defendant has not only shown an abnormal sexual interest in young girls by collecting child pornography, he has also acted on his perverse desires,” said United States Attorney Sally Quillian Yates. “He went to prison after being convicted in 1999 for receiving child pornography, and he failed to change his behavior. Now he is going to prison for a much longer time. This lengthy prison sentence followed by lifetime supervision will protect society from his deviant interests and behavior.”

Martin D. Phanco, Postal Inspector in Charge of the Atlanta Division, said, “These types of investigations are daunting but fulfilling every time offenders are brought to justice.”

McDONALD was sentenced to 15 years in prison to be followed by 10 years of supervised release. There is no parole in the federal system. McDONALD pleaded guilty to the charges on July 1, 2010.

According to United States Attorney Yates, the charges and other information presented in court: Starting in October 2008, McDONALD began communicating online with an officer of the Cook County Sheriff’s Office, in Chicago, Illinois, who was posing as a 14-year-old girl. Over a period lasting almost three months, McDONALD initiated sexual discussions with the undercover officer, in which he transmitted images of his genitals and graphically described sexual acts that he wanted to perform. Believing that he was communicating with a 14-year-old girl, McDONALD also offered to pay her for nude photographs taken of her teenage girlfriends spending the night with her.

In February 2009, United States Postal Inspectors executed a search warrant on McDONALD's home in Ringgold, Georgia. The Inspectors found more than 200 images of child pornography on his computer, a thumb drive, and on a portable video game device. McDONALD admitted to chatting with the undercover agent online. He admitted further that he had communicated with a minor female and had driven to North Carolina to meet her in January 2009, where they engaged in sexual activity in his minivan. The Inspectors were unable to locate the victim. McDONALD was convicted in federal court in 1999 for receiving child pornography. Following the conviction, he failed to register as a sex offender as required by law.

This case is being brought as part of 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.projectsafchildhood.gov.

This case was investigated by the Inspectors of the United States Postal Inspection Service.

Assistant United States Attorney Paul R. Jones prosecuted the case.

For further information please contact Sally Q. Yates, 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.justice.gov/usao/gan.