



# Department of Justice

United States Attorney Sally Quillian Yates  
Northern District of Georgia

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

CONTACT: Patrick Crosby

(404)581-6016

FAX (404)581-6160

## **TWICE CONVICTED SEX OFFENDER PLEADS GUILTY TO RECEIPT OF CHILD PORNOGRAPHY JUST BEFORE TRIAL**

### ***Albert Vernon Norton Pleads Guilty To Searching for, Downloading and Saving Hundreds of Child Pornographic Videos Using The Internet***

ROME, GA – ALBERT VERNON NORTON, 48, of Chatsworth, Georgia, pleaded guilty today before United States District Court Judge Robert L. Vining to one count of receiving child pornography. NORTON's jury trial on the charges was scheduled to begin today in Rome.

United States Attorney Sally Quillian Yates said, "This defendant had been convicted twice for molesting children in North Carolina and Georgia. He was identified in an investigation into those who share some of the worst of the worst images through the internet. Our office and our law enforcement partners will continue to pursue the criminals who prey on children."

According to United States Attorney Yates and the information presented in court: In the late fall of 2009, the Georgia Bureau of Investigation conducted an investigation code-named "Operation Restore Hope," in which it identified numerous individuals throughout the State of Georgia using peer-to-peer file sharing programs to exchange images and videos of child pornography. NORTON was identified during the investigation as an individual who might be in possession of child pornography. When the GBI, with the assistance of local law enforcement and the United States Secret Service, executed a search warrant at NORTON's home, they found numerous discs containing hundreds of videos of child pornography, in particular, images of minor boys engaged in sexually explicit conduct. Further investigation revealed that NORTON had been twice convicted in Cumberland County, North Carolina, and Gwinnett County, Georgia, of sexual offenses against minor boys.

NORTON could receive a maximum sentence of incarceration of 40 years, a total fine of \$250,000, and supervised release for life. In determining his actual sentence, the Court will consider the United States Sentencing Guidelines, which are not binding but provide appropriate sentencing ranges for most offenders.

NORTON is scheduled to be sentenced before United States District Court Judge Vining on March 31, 2011 at 11 a.m.

This case was investigated by Special Agents of the Georgia Bureau of Investigation and the United States Secret Service.

Assistant United States Attorney Jill E. Steinberg is prosecuting the case.

For further information please contact Sally Quillian 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.usdoj.gov/usao/gan](http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/gan).