



Department of Justice

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DELAWARE MAN FOUND GUILTY OF SEX TOURISM

WASHINGTON - Thomas S. Pendleton, whose last known address was in Wilmington, Delaware, was found guilty today of traveling in foreign commerce to engage in illicit sexual conduct with a minor under the age of 16, announced Assistant Attorney General of the Criminal Division Lanny A. Breuer and U.S. Attorney for the District of Delaware David C. Weiss.

Pendleton, 66, was convicted by a federal jury in Wilmington, Delaware after a three-day trial. Pendleton was convicted in April of this year by a separate jury sitting in the District of Delaware for failing to register as a sex offender.

The Honorable Chief Judge Gregory M. Sleet presided over both trials and is scheduled to sentence Pendleton on Dec. 17, 2009. Pendleton faces up to 30 years in prison on the sex tourism charge and up to 10 years in prison for failing to register as a sex offender.

Evidence introduced at trial established that Pendleton traveled from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania to Germany in November 2005, where he befriended the 14-year-old victim, who at the time was living in an orphanage. During the next several months, the defendant cultivated a friendship with the victim and made arrangements to go biking with him in May 2006, just after the victim turned 15. Testimony at trial established that, while on the bike trip, the victim woke up to find Pendleton fondling him. The victim and a witness from the German camp site where the crime occurred traveled to the United States to testify.

The jury was also allowed to hear testimony from a former victim of Pendleton who was similarly abused on two biking trips that took place in Virginia and New Jersey in 1989, when that victim was 12. In addition to hearing testimony from the now 32-year-old victim, the jury also learned that the defendant was convicted of those prior offenses.

This case was investigated by special agents of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Office of Immigration and Customs and Enforcement and the Deputy United States Marshals Service. A computer forensic specialist from the High Tech Investigative Unit of the Criminal Division's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section (CEOS) performed an analysis of a computer and other digital media seized from the defendant.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Ilana Eisenstein of the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Delaware and CEOS Trial Attorney Jennifer Toritto Leonardo.

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