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NEWS



Poplar Tree Elementary School Teacher Indicted On Child Pornography Charges

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 6, 2012

ALEXANDRIA, Va. – Robert Fenn, 27, of Herndon, Va., was indicted by a federal grand jury today accused of receiving and possessing child pornography. Fenn taught at Poplar Tree Elementary School in Chantilly, Va., prior to his arrest on related state charges in June 2012.

Neil H. MacBride, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia; John P. Torres, Special Agent in Charge for U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) in Washington, D.C.; and Lt. Colonel James A. Morris, Acting Fairfax County Chief of Police, made the announcement after the indictment was returned.

Fenn was indicted on one count of receipt of child pornography, which carries a mandatory minimum penalty of five years and a maximum penalty of 20 years in prison; and one count of possession of child pornography, which carries a maximum penalty of 10 years in prison, if convicted.

According to the indictment and other court records, Fenn was allegedly identified through an international initiative named Operation Gondola, which originated with Italian law enforcement investigating a website offering access to child pornographic images and/or video files identified by the domain name "liberalmorality.com." The website was hosted in the United States and HSI obtained Internet records showing each Internet account that accessed the website and the specific images each account accessed.

Court records allege that Fenn was among those who accessed this website and a subsequent search of his computer found numerous videos and images of children enduring various forms of sexual abuse. The indictment specifically alleges that Fenn received child pornography from March 3, 2012 through May 6, 2012, and was found to have possessed child pornography on June 12, 2012.

This case was investigated by HSI's Child Exploitation Section in the Washington Field Office and the Fairfax County Police Department. Special Assistant United States Attorney Alicia J. Yass is prosecuting the case on behalf of the United States.

This case was brought as part of Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative launched in May 2006 by the Department of Justice to combat the growing epidemic of child sexual exploitation and abuse. Led by the United States Attorneys' Offices and the Criminal Division's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section, Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state, and local resources to locate, apprehend, and prosecute individuals who sexually exploit children and to identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit www.usdoj.gov/psc For more information about internet safety education, please visit www.usdoj.gov/psc and click on the tab "resources."

Criminal indictments are only charges and not evidence of guilt. A defendant is presumed to be innocent until and unless proven guilty.

A copy of this press release may be found on the website of the United States Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Virginia at <http://www.justice.gov/usao/vae>. Related court documents and information may be found on the website of the District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia at <http://www.vaed.uscourts.gov> or on <https://pcl.uscourts.gov>.

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