



Department of Justice

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Central District of Illinois

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TRIAL DATES SET FOR TWO EAST CENTRAL ILLINOIS MEN CHARGED IN SEPARATE CHILD PORNOGRAPHY CASES

Urbana, Ill. – Two central Illinois men are scheduled for trial on December 21, 2009, on federal child pornography charges in separate, unrelated cases, as announced by Jeffrey B. Lang, Acting U.S. Attorney for the Central District of Illinois.

John C. Keith, 29, of Kankakee, Illinois, is charged with distribution, receipt (two counts) and possession of child pornography and one count of destruction of evidence. A grand jury returned the indictment on October 7, 2009; however, the indictment had remained sealed pending Keith's arrest and court appearance on October 13. Keith, of the 200 block of Orchard Avenue, was ordered detained in the custody of the U.S. Marshals Service pending trial. The indictment alleges that Keith received images of child pornography in September 2008 and September 2007; distributed images of child pornography by computer in September 2008; and that he possessed images and videos of child pornography on computer hard drives, compact discs, digital flash drives and other digital storage materials on October 3, 2008. The indictment further charges Keith with destruction of evidence on October 3, 2008. The indictment seeks criminal forfeiture of Keith's computer equipment and related materials.

The charges against Keith were investigated by a working group of agents from the Federal Bureau of Investigation; the Kankakee Police Department; East Peoria Police Department; and, the Bloomington Police Department.

In an unrelated case, David Eugene Stevens, 34, of Ashmore, Illinois, is charged with receiving child pornography from June 20, 2008 through October 31, 2008; with distribution of child pornography on June 23, 2008; and with possession of child pornography on or about November 3, 2008. The indictment also seeks criminal forfeiture of Stevens' computer and related equipment. The case was unsealed on October 13, 2009, when Stevens was arrested and made his initial appearance in federal court. Stevens was ordered detained in the custody of the U.S. Marshals Service pending trial.

The charges against Stevens were investigated by a working group of law enforcement officers from U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement; the Illinois Attorney General's Office; Decatur Police Department; the Coles County Sheriff's Department; and the Mattoon Police Department.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Elly M. Peirson is prosecuting the cases.

If convicted, each count of receiving child pornography and of distribution of child pornography carries a mandatory minimum statutory penalty of five years in prison and up to 20

years and up to lifetime supervised release following the term of imprisonment. For possession of child pornography the statutory penalty is up to 10 years in prison and up to lifetime supervised release following the term of imprisonment. Destruction of evidence carries a penalty of up to 20 years in prison.

Members of the public are reminded that an indictment is merely an accusation; each defendant is presumed innocent unless proven guilty.

This case was brought as part of Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative to combat the growing epidemic of child sexual exploitation and abuse launched in May 2006 by the Department of Justice. Led by United States Attorneys' Offices and the Criminal Division's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section (CEOS), Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state and local resources to better locate, apprehend and prosecute individuals who exploit children via the Internet, as well as to identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit www.projectsafchildhood.gov.

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