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Monday, May 7, 2007

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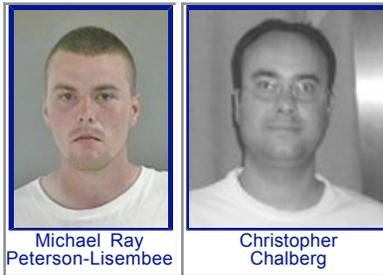
Child Pornographers Investigated by Cyber Crimes Unit Receive Tough Prison Sentences

Former soldier, high tech worker found guilty on child pornography charges

AUSTIN – Texas Attorney General Greg Abbott's Cyber Crimes Unit continued its aggressive crackdown on child pornographers Friday, when a former Fort Benning soldier was sentenced to 40 years in state prison and an Austin-area technology executive was sentenced to nine years in federal prison, both on child pornography charges.

A Montgomery County jury returned a guilty verdict against Michael Ray Peterson-Lisembee, 23, of Magnolia, who was charged with possessing and promoting child pornography. Peterson-Lisembee received 20-year sentences on each of two counts of promotion and five-year sentences on each of 12 counts of possession. The possession charges will run concurrently with the two stacked 20-year terms. Upon release, he will be required to register as a sex offender for life. Assistant Attorney General Sarah Wannarka prosecuted the case.

Media links



Michael Ray
Peterson-Lisembee

Christopher
Chalberg

Also on Friday, an Austin federal court formally sentenced Christopher Chalberg, 33, of Burnet, after a jury returned a guilty verdict on three counts of child pornography possession. Upon release, Chalberg will be required to register as a sex offender for life and submit to 10 years of supervision by authorities. Assistant Attorney General Grant Sparks prosecuted the case in conjunction with the U.S. Attorney's Office.

"Texans will not tolerate criminals who prey upon our children," Attorney General Abbott said. "The Cyber Crimes Unit will continue to protect young Texans by aggressively cracking down on child pornographers and sex predators. We are grateful to U.S. Attorney Johnny Sutton and Montgomery County District Attorney Michael A. McDougal for their assistance with these cases and their commitment to Texas children."

Cyber Crimes Unit investigators executed a search warrant at Peterson-Lisembee's Houston-area home in March 2006 after a tip from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children indicated he was sending e-mail containing sexually explicit images of children. A forensic examination of his computer revealed more than 600 child pornography images and numerous images of bestiality. During the course of the investigation, Peterson-Lisembee was living in Fort Benning, Ga., where he received basic training as an enlisted soldier in the U.S. Army.

After receiving a referral from a local high tech company where Chalberg worked as a human resources executive, the Cyber Crimes Unit launched an investigation and examined Chalberg's computer. Forensic analysis revealed sexually explicit images and more than 30 videos of children being sexually assaulted. Cyber Crimes Unit investigators also determined that Chalberg was the subject of a pending Williamson County child pornography investigation. In 2003, Chalberg was suspected of purchasing online access to child pornography with his credit card. Chalberg consented to a search of his home computer, which revealed videos of children being sexually assaulted.

The case against Chalberg is part of Project Safe Childhood (PSC), a national initiative announced by U.S. Attorney General Alberto Gonzales earlier this year. PSC encourages the use of multi-jurisdictional task forces to investigate and prosecute the sexual exploitation of children over the Internet. In addition to tough law enforcement, PSC encourages community-wide campaigns to assist victims and to educate parents, other adults, and children about Internet safety. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, visit www.projectsafefchildhood.gov.

In Texas, investigative assistance in these matters is provided by the Texas Attorney General's Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force (ICAC). In May 2006, Attorney

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General Abbott's Cyber Crimes Unit was awarded a \$300,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention to establish an ICAC Task Force. The Texas Attorney General's ICAC Task Force is one of almost 50 federally funded task forces across the country dedicated to this project.

Attorney General Abbott has earned a national reputation for aggressively arresting and prosecuting child predators. In 2003, he launched the Cyber Crimes Unit, which targets online predators by assuming the identities of young teenagers in Internet chat rooms, and the Fugitive Unit, which locates convicted child sex offenders who have violated the terms of their parole and could be stalking children. Attorney General Abbott's initiative has netted more than 500 arrests of such offenders. His office also has obtained convictions against more than 60 men on child pornography charges.

For more information, contact the Office of the Attorney General at (800) 252-8011 or visit the Attorney General's Web site at www.oag.state.tx.us.

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