



Department of Justice

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TRAFALGAR, INDIANA MAN SENTENCED TO 5 YEARS FOR POSSESSING CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

PRESS RELEASE

Timothy M. Morrison, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Indiana, announced that THOMAS ELY, 67, Trafalgar, Indiana, was sentenced to 60 months imprisonment late Monday afternoon by U.S. District Judge Sarah E. Barker following his guilty plea to possessing child pornography. This case was the result of a investigation by the Brown County Sheriff's Department and the United States Postal Inspectors.

On March 23, 2008, two members of the Green Valley Conservation Club in Brown County, Indiana, noticed a box and plastic tote on top of garage rails of the garage structure on the property. When they retrieved them, they found disturbing printed photographs of children engaged in sex acts with adults and numerous computer disks. They called the Brown County Sheriff's Department who later analyzed the computer disks. In all, the computer disks contained approximately 40,000 images of child pornography and child erotica. ELY was identified as the collector because of an item addressed to him in the tote, some disks being labeled with words like "Tom's pics," and some of the pictures on the disks being of him. ELY did not produce any of the images of child pornography. ELY was also a member of the Green Valley Conservation Club and had keys to the property as well as the garage structure. A later search of a storage unit rented by ELY revealed other computer disks with deleted images of child pornography recovered by law enforcement.

This case emerged out of Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative designed to protect children from online exploitation and abuse. Led by the U.S. Attorneys' Offices, 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 identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit <http://www.projectsafechildhood.gov>.

According to Assistant U.S. Attorney Gayle L. Helart, who prosecuted the case for the government, Judge Barker also imposed lifetime supervised release following ELY's release from imprisonment. During the period of supervised release, ELY must register as a sex offender and not possess pornography of any kind. He was fined \$1000. ELY was taken into custody at the conclusion of the sentencing hearing.

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