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News

Feds break up sex rendezvous

Aug. 23, 2006

By Danielle Braff and Christin Nance

Post-Tribune staff writers



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**Dear Steve,
Is it really cooler near the lake?**

Two dozen men from Indiana and surrounding states arrested in the past few days had one common interest: An alleged desire to have sex with children.

Some of them traveled from other parts of the state to do it. Others talked about doing it online. A few brought condoms.

Pat S.

All are accused of using the computer to meet young girls in an attempt to have sex.



The men were arrested in a massive undercover operation in Porter, St. Joseph and Tippecanoe counties. Their stories, detailed in court documents and by detectives, describe the extent the 24 men arrested went to in order to manipulate the children.



U.S. Attorney Joseph Van Bokkelen said the operation involved 29 federal, state and local law enforcement agencies and took place over 21 days ending Tuesday. More arrests are expected in the coming week.

The sting netted Matthew Hensley, a 24-year-old Valparaiso man who formerly worked with girls as the varsity assistant coach for the women's basketball team at Andean High School in Merrillville.



In a series of online conversations with someone named jen_indy_13, Hensley told her that even though she was 13, he'd still have sex with her.

He gave her his phone number and promised he wouldn't tell anyone about their conversations or decision to meet.



Later, he explained to the girl in detail how to have sex. When she didn't appear to understand, Hensley told her, "I'll show you when I come over."



The woman who answered the phone at Hensley's home declined to comment, as did athletes at Andean High School.



Another local man arrested offered a beer and a first sexual experience to a child.



"Would you let me play with you," jackdaniels_19962002 asked amanda_13.2006. "I think so," she answered in an online chat earlier this month.



JackDaniels turned out to be James Daniel, a 30-year-old from Valparaiso who is nearly 6 feet, 225 pounds with brown hair and blue eyes. Amanda was William McKenna, a special agent with the U.S. Secret Service, posing as a 13-year-old girl who was a virgin but curious about sex.

Daniel was also curious and eager to have sex with Amanda, according to their online conversation.

Daniel allegedly suggested Amanda have a beer before they have intercourse, and he asked that she perform sexual acts on him as well, according to court documents. The two agreed to meet, and Daniel was promptly taken into custody.

Officers posed as underage girls, and sometimes boys who were usually 13 years old.

"They knew that they were chatting with a 13-year-old child; There is no doubt about that," Van Bokkelen said.

Most of the predators made repeated efforts to meet with the underage female or male for sexual purposes, and 11 allegedly traveled to a location. Those who didn't travel made numerous sexually explicit remarks during chat room sessions and, in some cases, filmed themselves on Web cams.

The 24 men are charged with using the Internet in an attempt to coerce and entice children to engage in sexual activity. A conviction carries a

mandatory minimum of 10 years in prison, with a possible maximum of life in prison and a \$250,000 fine.

Van Bokkelen said Hensley was caught when he traveled from his apartment on the north side of Valparaiso to a house the police used on the south side of Valparaiso.

As Hensley was speaking to jen_indy_13, a Crown Point man was having a similar conversation with another agent posing as a 13-year-old. The two were talking in an online chatroom called Romance by Location, and David Rouhselang, 41, of Crown Point, was allegedly attempting to show the girl every aspect of romance.

Rouhselang told her that as an older man, he'd be able to help her learn about sex. "I could be the TV repair man and visit you when moms go to work," he told her in the chatroom in an Aug. 3 conversation.

Tim Viertel, of the U.S. Secret Service in Chicago, aired a warning to predators:

"I would say to the bad guys out there who may be watching this, to let you know, you have operated for several years thinking you're anonymous out there. Well, it's a double-edged sword; from now on you don't really know if your dealing with or conversing with a 13-year-old or an officer of Valparaiso Police Department. Keep that in mind.

"That is our duty as law enforcement, to get on the Internet and disrupt criminals out there who would do our children harm."

Contact Danielle Braff at 648-3079 or dbraff@post-trib.com. Contact Christin Nance at 477-6015 or dbraff@post-trib.com

The men arrested

n David Rouhselang, 41, Crown Point

n Clayton McNeely, 25, Monticello

n Justin Reichart, 22, Fort Wayne

n Matthew Hensley, 24, Valparaiso

n James Daniel, 30, Valparaiso

n J. Anthony Capozzoli, 26, Greentown

n Travis Springer, 21, Decatur

n Derek Scott Davey, Berrien Springs, Mich.

n James R. McManus, 35, of Fort Wayne

n Matthew K. Toosley, 25, Knox

n John A. Payne, 29, Plymouth

n Steven Berry, 46, of Rockville

n Brian Gladish, 35, Montgomery

n Charles D. Fuller, 45, Lafayette

n Jimmie L. Collins, 47, Whiteland

n David Lohman, 37, Indianapolis

n Rahun Mannara, 33, South Bend

n Michael Hackley, 35, Springfield, Ohio

n Donald Cochran, 47, Rushville

n Jeffrey P. Taylor, 37, Logansport

n Thomas Wallace, 35, Anderson

n Mark Ciesolka, 32, Columbus



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