Somerset couple sentenced for production of child pornography

STAFF REPORT

LONDON — A Somerset husband and wife have been sentenced on a federal pornography charge.

Christopher Sean Ethridge, 39, and Amy Sativia Ethridge, 30, were each sentenced to 30 years on Oct. 21 by U.S. District Judge Chad Meredith for the production of child pornography. Both defendants were previously sentenced to 70 years in prison in Pulaski County Circuit Court for first-degree Rape (Christopher) and Complicity to Commit first-degree Rape (Amy) of the same victim in the federal case. The federal and state sentences will run consecutively for a total of 100 years for each defendant.

On August 23, 2024, Christopher Ethridge — aided and abetted by his wife and co-defendant — produced child pornography of a 2-year-old. Further evidence uncovered that the Ethridges discussed sexually abusing a child and had a handwritten contract that



CHRISTOPHER S. ETHRIDGE



AMY S. ETHRIDGE

detailed what sexual acts that they were allowed to perform on the child.

"The conduct in this case represents a profound betrayal of one of society's most basic duties — to protect its children," said Jason Parman, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Kentucky. "Our office will zealously pursue anyone who exploits or endangers children, and we will continue to work tirelessly with our law enforcement partners to bring offenders to justice. This prosecution underscores our unwavering resolve to safeguard the most vulnerable members of our community. It also illustrates the results that can be achieved by complementary investigations and prosecutions by state and federal partners."

"This sentence reflects the seriousness of these crimes, and ensures these offenders will no longer be able to harm children," said HSI Nashville Deputy Special Agent in Charge Michael Perez. "HSI remains steadfast in working alongside our law enforcement partners to identify offenders, safeguard victims, and pursue justice."

Jason Parman, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Kentucky; Michael Perez, HSI Nashville Deputy Special Agent in Charge, and Phillip J. Burnett, Jr., Commissioner of the Kentucky State Police, jointly announced the sentence.

The investigation was conducted by HSI Lexington, the Madison County Sheriff's Office and KSP. Assistant U.S. Attorney Justin Blankenship prosecuted the case on behalf of the United States.

This case was prosecuted 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 U.S. 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.projectsafechildhood.gov.

2 Texas men arrested in Pulaski theft cases

PCSO

Sheriff Bobby Jones reports the indictment of two individuals following an ongoing theft investigation that began in Pulaski County in 2023.

On November 30, 2023, a Ford truck was stolen from Miller's Tile and Flooring in Somerset. Deputies later responded to a complaint involving the Ford truck at First and Farmer's Bank in Nancy. Upon arrival deputies located the Ford truck, which had been used to forcefully remove the exterior ATM from its base. In what is often referred to as an "ATM smash and grab" the suspects were able to take over $50,000. The suspects then fled the area in another vehicle, leaving the truck at the scene.

The case was then assigned to Detective Branson Patterson with the Pulaski County Sheriff's Office Criminal Investigations Division. Through the investigation Detective Patterson was able to obtain evidence that identified two suspects involved. On October 7, 2026 the case was presented to Pulaski County Grand Jury. As a result, Traveon Ladarren Burnett, 27, of Pasadena, Texas, and Kent Draid Osby, 24, of Houston, Texas, were indicted on various charges.

Both were indicted on the following charges: Theft By Unlawful Taking-Auto $10,000 or More; two counts of first-degree Criminal Mischief; Theft By Unlawful Taking-All Others $10,000 or More; and Engaging in Organized Crime-Criminal Syndicate.

Both suspects are currently held in detention centers in different states. Both suspects will be later extradited to Pulaski County.

Detective Patterson was assisted by Deputy Noah Wesley, Detective Lieutenant Matt Bryant, Detective Ryan Jones and Detective Jay Picard. Several other law enforcement agencies in the United States assisted in the investigation.

The case remains under investigation by Detective Patterson and the Pulaski County Sheriff's Office Criminal Investigations Division.

Jury begins deliberating at Russell Brand's sexual assault trial

BY JILL LAWLESS
ASSOCIATED PRESS

LONDON (AP) — Jurors have begun considering their verdicts in the trial of Russell Brand on charges of rape and sexual assault.

After three weeks of argument and evidence, Judge Joel Bennathan told the jury at London's Southwark Crown Court that they must reach a unanimous decision.

"I can only accept a verdict that is the verdict of all 12 of you," he said.

Brand, who is free on bail, has attended court every day, accompanied by his wife, Laura Gallacher.

Six women accuse the actor-comedian of sexual misconduct between 1999 and 2009, a decade when Brand went from rising stand-up comedian to major celebrity in the U.K.

Prosecutors argued that during that time Brand was "a sexual predator" who attacked the women in a hotel room, the London offices of MTV, the toilet of a London bar, a radio station, a recording studio and his home.

Brand, 51, has pleaded not guilty to three counts of rape, three counts of sexual assault and one count of attempted indecent assault.

Giving evidence, the entertainer acknowledged that he had been obsessed with sex as a younger man, but said his encounters were always consensual.

Brand's lawyers argued that the claimants' cases were undermined by the fact that they only went to police years after the alleged assaults, and following the broadcast of a 2023 documentary that contained anonymous allegations against Brand.

Brand's lawyer, Ian Winter, said the "well of justice had been corrupted and contaminated" by the documentary.

In his closing statement on Monday, Winter said the jury must separate Brand's treatment of women from the question of whether he committed crimes.

"It is not criminal to treat women unkindly before, during or after sex," he said. "It is not, I am afraid, criminal to be disrespectful or rude or to act like a crazy idiot."

He said Brand "had an immense amount of sex and none of it was unlawful."

"Disgusting, distasteful, immoral, who cares?" the lawyer said. "It's irrelevant to your consideration."

Known for risqué stand-up routines and battles with drugs and alcohol, Brand rose to prominence in the early 2000s, hosting television programs and his own BBC radio show.

Ky. Supreme Court will not rehear Samuel Baker case

BY CARLA SLAVEY
COMMONWEALTH JOURNAL

The Kentucky Supreme Court has denied a petition to rehear an appeal by convicted murderer Samuel Baker.

The court previously ruled in the case back in June, upholding Baker's conviction and sentence of life without parole.

Baker, now 27, was found guilty by a jury in a Pulaski County Circuit Court trial in the shooting death of Robert Claunch.

Evidence at the trial showed that on the night of March 18, 2021, Baker had gone to the home of his father, Ronald Baker, while Claunch was there.

Samuel Baker and Ronald Baker got into an argument, and Ronald Baker told his son to leave the property.

Ronald Baker then went into a bedroom, where he said he was at when he heard gunshots in the main part of the house.

He came back to the living area of the residence to find Claunch lying on the floor after having been shot.

Ronald Baker also said the he heard Samuel Baker's vehicle leaving the area.

Samuel Baker was spotted later that evening by an Amish farmer coming out of a barn



SAMUEL L. BAKER

with items that didn't belong to Samuel Baker.

The farmer's report to Casey County 911 led to the police pursuit and eventual arrest of Samuel Baker. A gun matching the description of the one used to kill Claunch was found near where Samuel Baker was arrested.

Baker appealed that sentence, asking the Supreme Court to throw out the jury's decision because, as Baker and his attorney contend, the jury was not allowed to choose to convict on a lesser charge of Criminal Trespassing instead of the Murder charge.

Samuel Baker is currently serving his sentence at the Eastern Kentucky Correctional Complex in West Liberty.

The Supreme Court's original ruling affirming the sentence was published June 25 of this year. The denial to rehear the case came October 22.

WESTERN PULASKI COUNTY WATER DISTRICT,
SOMERSET, KENTUCKY

Separate Sealed BIDS for construction of the Denham Classic Homes, LLC Phase 1 – Trenton Court Water Line Extension, consisting of approximately 600 LF of 3-Inch PVC water line and appurtenances, will be received by the Western Pulaski County Water District, 2128 West Highway 80, Somerset, Kentucky until 5:00 PM, local time, November 17, 2026, where then, at the said office they will be publicly opened and read aloud.

The CONTRACT DOCUMENTS may be examined at the following locations:

WESTERN PULASKI COUNTY WATER DISTRICT, 2128 W. Highway 80, Somerset, KY 42503
MONARCH ENGINEERING, INC., 556 Carlton Drive, Lawrenceburg, KY 40342

Copies of the CONTRACT DOCUMENTS may be obtained at the office of Monarch Engineering, Inc., 556 Carlton Drive, Lawrenceburg, KY 40342, upon request in writing and payment of $50.00 non-refundable for each set. Bidders must purchase plans from the Engineer and payment shall be made via check in the name of the Bidder. Plans purchased by one party and bid by another party shall not be accepted. Plans will be available for purchase until 3:00 p.m., (E.D.T.), Friday, November 13, 2026.

Each Bidder must accompany his bid with a BID BOND in amount of not less than five (5) percent of the base bid. No Bidder may withdraw his bid for a period of 90 days. The Bidder awarded the CONTRACT shall furnish insurance as required, in the GENERAL CONDITIONS. CONTRACT shall be completed within 60 calendar days after date of authorization to start work. Liquidated damages shall be $1,000.00 per calendar day.

Attention of bidders is particularly called to the requirements as to conditions of employment to be observed and minimum wage rates to be paid under the contract, Title VI, Section 3, Segregated Facility, Section 109 and E.O. 11246. Local firms, minority firms, small and female businesses are particularly encouraged to participate. Also, if BIDDER anticipates the use of subcontractors as a part of this project, the use of local firms, minority firms, small and female businesses are encouraged. Any bid that is obviously unbalanced may be rejected. The Western Pulaski County Water District reserves the right to reject any and all bids and waive informalities.

Federal law prohibits discrimination on the grounds of race, color, national origin, religion, age, handicap and sex in this project.