ONLINE

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ty Sheriff's Office, Roberts asks Curtis if he will stop exchanging sexual messages with minors to which Curtis reportedly replied 'Yes.'"

Authorities later allegedly found child pornography on Curtis' phone, Deputy Troyal Cox claimed in testimony.

Roberts told the Advocate catching child predators and making Kentucky safer is what Predator Poachers is all about.

"I can't see myself stopping until every child in Kentucky is safe," Roberts said.

Roberts was previously vocal in his support of legislation in the General Assembly that addressed the grooming of children for sexual purposes.

Roberts said the legislation placed him on the map and he was contacted by the national organization to learn more about what it was doing.

Roberts was admittedly impressed.

In September, Roberts founded a Kentucky chapter of Predator Poachers and serves as its president.

The organization uses adults posing as children to target individuals trying to entice minors into sexual acts over social media.

The organization then contacts law enforcement.

Roberts said he has been appalled by some of the conversations with these alleged predators.

Roberts cited one case in which he claims he spoke with a man who tried to initiate an intimate relationship with an 8-year-old.

The man, Roberts claims, saw nothing wrong with what he was doing, which Roberts said he finds to be most disturbing.

"I was staring in the eyes of a demon," Roberts said. "It lit a fire under me."

In the Curtis case, public defenders argued in court last week during a preliminary hearing that it is improper for private citizens posing as children to be involved in criminal investigations.

Roberts, a Constitutional lawyer by profession, claims this argument is "morally bankrupt."

He says his organization explains during confrontations that speaking with them is strictly voluntary and they comply with current law as it is written.

Roberts said the Kentucky Court of Appeals upheld the right of citizens groups to participate in these types of investigations.

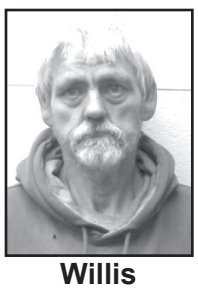
Roberts said his faith also inspires his involvement with Predator Poachers.

"My faith absolutely influences what I'm doing," he said. "They all are children of God and deserve protection."

Use of decoy in child sex crimes case sparks debate among attorneys

By Tom Marshall
Senior Advocate writer

A sheriff's deputy claimed in testimony Oct. 29 he searched the cell phone of a suspect charged with soliciting a 13-year girl for sexual acts and allegedly found a stash of child pornography.



Willis Anthony Curtis

Montgomery County Sheriff's Deputy Troyal Cox testified at a preliminary hearing that based on the reported evidence additional charges will be presented against the suspect, Willis Anthony Curtis, 50, of Jeffersonville.

Cox testified before District Judge Don Blair the alleged pornography reportedly included sexual acts involving what appeared to be an approximately 15-year-old girl.

The deputy claimed in his testimony there were also nude photos of what appeared to be minors.

Cox told the court he was called Oct. 17 to a residence in the 100 block of Old Ridge Road in reference to a sex abuse/neglect complaint.

Cox said there he met members of Predator Poachers, a social media-based citizens group created to expose alleged child sex offenders.

The deputy said he overheard a conversation between group members and Curtis, in which Curtis allegedly admitted sending sexually explicit text messages to a 13-year-old female decoy.

During an interview at the Montgomery County Regional Jail, Cox claims Curtis allegedly admitted sending the messages to the decoy.

In the messages, Curtis allegedly solicited the decoy to perform sexual acts, according to the deputy's testimony.

Cox claimed the decoy clearly stated several times she was 13, but Curtis reportedly told authorities he thought she was an adult.

The use of the decoy sparked a legal debate among attorneys.

Attorneys representing Curtis claimed it was improper to use a private citizen in a sex sting involving a decoy.

They claimed it was actually two adults having a sexual conversation, which they say is legally protected under the First Amendment.

Assistant County Attorney Kaye Leighton countered that the statute involving the charge—procuring or promoting the use of a minor by electronic means—does not exclude the use of a private citizen in such an operation.

Blair ruled that the case could move forward to the Montgomery County Grand Jury for purposes of probable cause.

STAB

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The Advocate reached out to ICE for comment but had not received a response by last week's newspaper press time.

A response from ICE was received via email at 5:18 p.m. Oct. 28.

"ICE Chicago deportation officers assigned to the Louisville suboffice lodged a detainer with the Bourbon County Jail in Kentucky for Juan Jose Garcia Ponce, 20, of Mexico, on Oct. 22," the statement said.

"Earlier that day, local law enforcement arrested Ponce on charges of murder, assault in the first degree, auto theft, hit-and-run, two counts of criminal mischief, leaving the scene of an accident, failure to render aid or assistance, fleeing or evading police in the first degree, reckless driving, wanton endangerment, assault on a police officer and wanton endangerment of a police officer," the statement added.

The statement from ICE concluded by claiming, "The safest way to arrest and remove criminal illegal aliens from our streets is by lodging arrest detainers. Seven of the 10 safest cities in the United States cooperate with ICE."

A uniform citation filed by Det. David Thompson of the Bourbon County Sheriff's Office alleges Garcia-Ponce stabbed a friend with the intent to kill him over a reported theft of money from his younger brother.

The friend, Adolfo Nataren, was transported to the University of Kentucky Hospital. His last condition report was stable.

The stabbing incident reportedly occurred about noon Oct. 22 in the 700 block of Stoney Point Road in Bourbon County.

According to the detective's citation, Garcia-Ponce then allegedly proceeded to unlawfully take his friend's vehicle, hit a fence causing $1,000 in damage and left the scene, eventually leading law enforcement from multiple agencies in three counties in a pursuit.

While Garcia-Ponce was being medically cleared at Centerpoint Health in Paris, the citation claims he was interviewed under Miranda with a translator and allegedly said he made up a reason to be alone with the victim, reportedly using his own knife to stab him.

Garcia-Ponce reportedly told authorities he fled law enforcement allegedly because he was afraid they were ICE agents, the citation stated.

Garcia-Ponce is charged in Clark County with fleeing or evading police, first-degree (motor vehicle; first-degree wanton endangerment-police officer; and first-degree wanton endangerment.

He is charged in Montgomery County with reckless driving; first-degree wanton endangerment, first-degree-police officer, first-degree criminal mischief; and third-degree assault-police officer or probation officer.

Winchester Police Chief Travis Thompson said his office was notified around 12:15 p.m. Oct. 22 of a stabbing incident that reportedly occurred in Bourbon County and that the suspect might be headed towards Winchester.

"Patrol officers responded to the area and shortly thereafter located the suspect vehicle inbound passing Rolling Hills Lane (Industrial Park). Patrolman Blake Smithson and Patrolman Blake Gabbard attempted to conduct a traffic stop on the vehicle and it failed to yield. Due to the serious, violent nature of the offense, I authorized our officers to pursue this vehicle," Thompson said in a social media post.

Thompson added that multiple agencies assisted, including the Clark County Sheriff's Office, Bourbon County Sheriff's Office, Paris Police Dept., Montgomery County Sheriff's Office and Mt. Sterling Police Dept.

The Advocate has also obtained a citation on Montgomery County's involvement.

A uniform citation filed by MSPD Officer Wayne Mays states that at 12:47 p.m. Oct. 22 the suspect vehicle was seen driving south on North Maysville Road.

Mays said he blocked the entrance to Paris Pike with his cruiser.

The suspect reportedly cut the shoulder, driving through the grass from North Maysville Road near the entrance of a business on Paris Pike. When the suspect came back onto the road, the citation alleges Garcia-Ponce intentionally rammed Mays' cruiser causing damage to both the front and back passenger side doors.

The pursuit continued until a Paris Police officer was able to perform a precision immobilization technique near the Montgomery/Bourbon County line and the suspect was apprehended without further incident, according to the citation.

Jeffersonville City Commission awards bids for parking lot sealing, resurfacing

By Jamie Vinson
Advocate Managing Editor

The Jeffersonville City Commission opened sealed bids for sealing the main parking lot around the community center building and resurfacing parking lots that surround the city park.

Just one bid was received for the sealing project—Barnes' Seal Coating—in the amount of $4,596.

The figure includes resealing and re-striping, Mayor Steve Barnes said.

The commission unanimously approved awarding the bid to Barnes'.

Two bids were received for the resurfacing project. The lowest bid came from Walker Construction at $55,905.

The total includes an inch and a half surface as well as pavement restriping.

Barnes' Seal Coating also submitted a bid in the amount of $70,126.

The commission unanimously approved awarding the bid to Walker.

Barnes previously told the commission that resurfacing is an expensive project and the city has tried to have lots resealed every other year or so. This is the first time to his knowledge as mayor for resurfacing.

In other business, the commission:

• Approved advertising for bids for a new truck to be utilized by water dept. employees and surplusing an existing truck.

• Heard from Commissioner Ryan Hurt the Montgomery County Fire Dept. had requested use of the softball field at the city park this month for a benefit for a fallen comrade. The dept. does not plan on offering concessions, Hurt said.

Mt. Sterling Advocate

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ADVERTISING DEADLINES
Display and Legal—noon Monday
Classified—10 a.m. Tuesday

SUBSCRIPTION RATES
$42.10 per year for Montgomery
Remaining Kentucky counties, $50.49 per year
Out-of-state (in continental U.S.), $50.49 per year
E-edition in state, $35
E-edition out of state, $35
Print plus e-edition, $57.10 in Montgomery and surrounding counties; $65.49 out of county

The new protein maxing trend and how it could impact people with diabetes

Current trends in increased protein consumption have led to some innovative ways to boost your protein intake, such as protein Doritos and protein pancakes, but how much protein is too much? Cleveland Clinic suggests that you should aim to consume 0.5-0.75g of protein per pound of body weight, so if you weigh 180 pounds you should aim to consume 90-135g of protein, which is approximately 30-45g of protein per meal for someone who eats a typical breakfast, lunch and dinner daily.

However, if you are diabetic, your kidneys are already under more strain than most people because they must filter excess glucose and the blood vessels, over time, can become narrow and clogged. Without enough blood, kidneys can become damaged and strained doing their normal job. If you consistently consume excess protein, that will put more work on already compromised kidneys, which can lead to further complications or permanent damage for diabetics.

Protein, like most other nutrients, are an essential part of our diets and should be consumed in moderate levels. If you are diabetic, take a few days to track your daily meals to see where you stand in how much protein you are consuming. You may find that you are already in your goal and don't need to increase your protein. If you are lacking, try to gently increase your protein over time to see how it will affect your kidneys. Spread your protein out throughout the day rather than consuming the bulk of it in one meal, and include a healthy balance of animal based proteins, like cottage cheese and meat, with plant based proteins, like beans and nuts. Focus primarily on getting your protein through whole foods rather than ultra-processed, protein boosted, junk foods, which you are more than welcome to enjoy in moderation. When in doubt, consult with your healthcare provider or your nutritionist about your options that will help you control your diabetes and satisfy those protein cravings.

—Article submitted by the Montgomery County Health Dept.

The city's annual leaf collection began Nov. 2 and will continue through Friday, Dec. 4. The full schedule appeared last week and can be accessed by scanning the QR code at right.