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Ex-deputy faces assault charges

Thomas Boysen is accused of sexually battering a girl he mentored more than 25 years ago.

By KRISTEN KRIDEL

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CHARLOTTE COUNTY -- A former sheriff's deputy was arrested Friday, accused of sexually battering a girl he had mentored in law enforcement more than 25 years earlier. Thomas Boysen, 56, is charged with the sexual battery and attempted sexual battery of a girl between the ages of 14 and 16.

The crimes occurred while Boysen was acting as a supervisor for the Charlotte County Sheriff's Office's Explorer program, according to a press release from the State Attorney's Office. The girl was a participant in the program, which is designed to teach children about law enforcement and encourage them to consider careers in the field.

Between March 1978 and March 1980, Boysen tried once and succeeded another time in forcing the girl to perform a sex act on him, according to court records.

The assaults occurred in a sheriff's patrol car, said a former law enforcement officer and relative of the victim.

"She said, 'I can still remember what it smelled like,'" said the man, whose identity is being concealed to protect the victim. "She can remember the color of the car, everything."

The victim moved out of the state as soon as she could but never told family members why she was moving so far away from them, the man said.

When he visited the victim, now 42, a few years ago, she finally explained why she had left, he said. He convinced her to report the assaults to the Florida Department of Law Enforcement about a year ago. The charges filed against Boysen are based on FDLE's findings.

The investigation is still ongoing, said FDLE Special Agent Pete Cumming. The department still is scrutinizing Boysen's activities during a specific period.

Boysen could not be reached for comment Tuesday. But a man did answer the door at a Port Charlotte apartment identified as his home through public records. The man said, Boysen "has no comment."

Boysen worked for the Sheriff's Office from Oct. 1, 1971, to Aug. 19, 2004. He retired as a sergeant and was never the subject of an internal affairs investigation.

Sheriff John Davenport did not return phone calls Tuesday.