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Former FHP Trooper Sentenced to Probation in Child Porn Case

July 10, 2011

By Stephen Hudak, [Orlando Sentinel](#)

TAVARES — A former Florida Highway Patrol sergeant accused of viewing child pornography on a home computer will serve two years probation as part of an agreement that spared him prison but not his job.



Daniel Bowden, former Florida Highway Patrol... (LAKE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE)
Officer Daniel Bowden
Florida Highway Patrol

Daniel Bowden, 42, who was once charged with 34 counts of possessing child pornography, pleaded guilty to two counts of contributing to the delinquency of a minor, a charge alleging the images were available on an unsecured computer at his Eustis home that could be accessed by children — including his own.

The other charges were either dismissed by Circuit Judge Lawrence Semento or prosecutors after an evidentiary hearing in which Bowden's lawyer had argued the images were in a "deleted state" and inaccessible.

Bowden, an 18-year FHP veteran fired after his arrest in 2009, maintained he did not have exclusive use of the computer on which Lake sheriff's detectives say they found sexually-explicit images. He also did not admit to viewing, downloading or attempting to delete images found on the computer.

Using special software developed by law enforcement to track child porn, detective Chris Loyko, then assigned to the sheriff's Cyber Crimes Unit, identified a computer in Bowden's home in 2008 as a device that had accessed a "host computer" in a file-sharing network and downloaded sexually-explicit images and videos of children. Investigators then obtained a warrant to search his home, seize the computer and examine its hard drive.

A forensic analysis of Bowden's computer found a digital "folder" that contained thumbnail files of images previously catalogued as child pornography by the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children.

Defense lawyer David Johnson said Bowden "struggled with whether or not to accept the [state's] offer of misdemeanors" as he was steadfast about his innocence but did not want to subject his family to a high-profile porn trial.

Bowden, assigned to an FHP post in DeLand when arrested, could not be reached for comment.

"This case has ruined his life," said Johnson, who expects that the ex-trooper may fight to regain his job and hold onto his police certification, which could be revoked by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement.

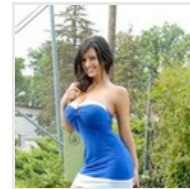
According to investigative records, detectives also found on the Bowden family computer a version of LimeWire — a file-sharing program used by child-porn collectors to search for illicit images using key words, but the former trooper said he had only used the software to download some Kenny Rogers songs.

He repeatedly denied viewing child pornography, although Loyko confronted him with digital tracking data and FHP records that showed he was off duty on the dates and times that the child images were downloaded.

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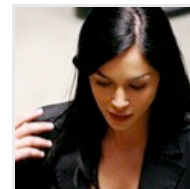
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