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### Former Aurora cop pleads guilty to possessing child porn

March 27, 2012 1:29 PM

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LANCE BENZEL

THE GAZETTE

A former Aurora police sergeant averted a trial Tuesday by pleading guilty to possession of child pornography.

Under a last-minute deal with prosecutors, Morgan Sellman escaped most of the charges against him, pleading guilty to one count of sexual exploitation of children while 100 remaining counts were dismissed, court records show.

Sellman, whose December 2010 arrest effectively ended his 16-year police career, was due to face a jury beginning Tuesday.

The plea deal carried no sentencing agreement. Sellman faces between two and six years in prison, but a judge could order probation.

His sentencing was scheduled for June 18.

Colorado Springs police began investigating Sellman after receiving a tip from a Westminster police officer who found illegal material while probing a publicly accessible file-sharing network, detective Clayton Blackwell said in court documents.

Detectives linked some of the material to an Internet account registered to Sellman and his wife in Peyton, Blackwell said.

Police say they found child pornography on Sellman's home computer and a laptop that he brought back and forth to work at the Aurora police station, police said.

Sellman resigned in January 2011, according to Aurora police. He is a former DARE officer who counseled kids against drugs, but Colorado Springs police said there was no evidence of abuse.

His prosecution was fraught with courtroom delays and battles over access to evidence. Fourth Judicial District Judge Theresa M. Cisneros took the unusual step in December of forcing District Attorney Dan May to testify about his office's policies governing discovery practices – the turning over of evidence to the defense.

May defended his office – but heard stern words from Cisneros, who complained about other problems in her court.

In the end, Cisneros declined to dismiss the case or to punish prosecutors for the delays, though she ruled some evidence would be inadmissible.

Sellman's plea comes as another former officer is in trial.

Joshua Carrier, a former Colorado Springs police officer, is in the middle of a month-long trial on charges of child pornography and molesting 22 children.



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Morgan Sellman

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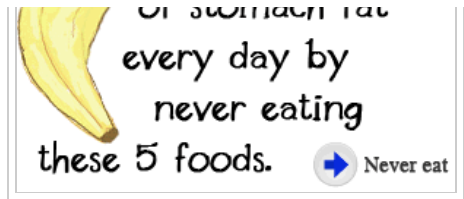
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