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CHP's Swaim charged with lewd, lascivious conduct with a child

November 18, 2011 6:23 PM

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BY JAMES GILBERT - SUN STAFF WRITER

Lt. John Swaim, the commander of the Winterhaven office of the California Highway Patrol, has been formally charged with four felony counts of lewd and lascivious conduct with a child under the age of 14.

Swaim, who has been placed on administrative leave, turned himself in to the Imperial County Jail on Thursday, where he was arraigned during a hearing held at the courtroom inside the jail building.

During the nearly half-hour-long hearing, Swaim's attorney, Bob Espinoza, entered pleas of not guilty on behalf of his client on each of the four charges, which stem from allegations made by two different victims that Swaim sexually abused them on separate occasions more than 10 years ago.

Lt. George Moreno of the Imperial County Sheriff's Office said Swaim was taken into custody following the hearing after he informed the judge that he could not pay the \$100,000 bond that had been set in his case.

Swaim, who was placed in handcuffs and booked into jail, has since made bail and is now out of custody.

In August, two girls, who are now ages 16 and 19, claimed that Swaim had committed acts of sexual misconduct against them when they were younger.

While they claim the alleged misconduct began about a decade ago when they were 7 and 8 years old, they say that some of the sexual misconduct has occurred since then.

Moreno said as the investigation into the allegations unfolded, several more witnesses and possible victims were discovered and interviewed.

Swaim, who is the highest ranking CHP officer at the agency's Winterhaven office, is scheduled to be back in court at the beginning of next month.

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This animal molested my daughter in 1992–1994 yes he was acquitted in 1995 of all wrong doing even though you had a child that knew as much about sex if not more than the jurors them selfs, we were totally robbed of JUSTICE and now 2 more innocent victims. We have started a movement called Aarika'sLaw that will make it a felony for (failer to report) for any responsible adult. Aarika was victim number 5 if not higher, this will stop with Aarika'sLaw. You will have to register under Megan'sLaw as a PEDOPHINE PROTECTOR anyone that would let a pedophine destroy a child's life and let him go free to destroy another child and his families lives is no better than the PEDOPHINE himself. What reason or excuse can you use to make this (O.K), NONE. Support us at www.facebook.com/AarikasLaw and www.AarikasLaw.org together we can STOP this. Lets put our children first in our life's, Aarika'sLaw will get rid of PEDOPHINE'S safe havens, their wife's, girlfriend's, family members protecting their family name and institutions protecting their name. Society will no longer except this behavior, no more larger cases like the Catholic Church, Penn State, Boy Scouts, CHP Lt. John Swaim etc...GOD BLESS YOU ALL!

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Yolanda Miranda Cornejo · Patterson High

Oh Elias..I am so glad for you and your daughter. This is very, very exciting news!! This was a long time coming. Please continue to keep us posted.

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Sue Cowey · Top Commenter

"Swaim, a 24-year member of the Highway Patrol, was acquitted in 1995 of sexually victimizing a girl in the mid-1990s" (as per IVP) sounds like a re-opened case – Poses the question why were the girls still exposed to this person in their lives if there was reason for close family members to believe that this was going on? In either case guilty or not guilty, his life and reputation have been destroyed. If guilty then rightfully so and they should jack up the jail and put him under it, if not then? –

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Gemi Brown Armijo

The article keeps saying he "is" a CHOICE officer, not "was". He's been formerly charged and not yet fired?

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