

Ex-deputy held for molesting

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NEW CASTLE — When Marvin J. Geraci was placed on probation more than 20 months ago, he indicated he might return to his old stomping grounds, in Louisiana or Florida.

This week, Geraci — and perhaps other New Castle residents — likely wish he had followed through on his inclination to leave town.

The 67-year-old resident of the 1100 block of South 25th Street was arrested last week on child-molesting allegations. Henry Circuit Court 1 Judge Mary Willis on Friday ruled Geraci would be held without bond pending the filing of formal charges and an initial hearing that was set for today.

On Tuesday, however, Geraci was transferred to the custody of federal marshals and apparently taken to a holding facility in Indianapolis. Henry County Prosecutor Joe Bergacs said Geraci faces prosecution, in U.S. District Court, on federal charges stemming from the same allegations that led to last week's arrest.

Details of those allegations were not immediately available.

The details of events surrounding Geraci's arrest by New Castle police in May 2010, however, reflected that he was a senior citizen who spent a lot of time in the company of children, particularly girls. Some of them had apparently been left in his care by their parents.

A city police detective pulled over Geraci's self-styled "police" vehicle — equipped with blue and red emergency lights, which were flashing at the time — and found it was being driven by a 13-year-old girl.

Geraci and two other girls, ages 12 and 10, were also in the vehicle, as were a half-dozen guns.

The detective said that Geraci assured him he was "an officer, too," producing a badge that appeared to identify him as a reserve deputy sheriff in Plaquemines Parish, La.

However, officials with that department said Geraci had not been a reserve deputy there since 2005.

Geraci in January 2011 pleaded guilty to neglect of a dependent, part of a deal that saw four other charges — two other neglect counts, impersonation of a public servant and contributing to the delinquency of a minor — dismissed.

Then-Henry Superior Court 1 Judge Michael Peyton accepted the terms of the plea agreement, which saw Geraci placed on probation for a year.

Last May, Edward Dunsmore, at the time acting judge of what is now Henry Circuit Court 2, granted a request to reduce Geraci's felony conviction to misdemeanor status.

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