

Denver sheriff's deputy arrested for plying teen-age girls with booze

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A Denver sheriff's deputy supplied three teenage girls with alcohol during an overnight visit to the Ameristar casino in Black Hawk, where he filmed them at the pool and lay in bed with them, police wrote in an arrest affidavit.

Paul Della Rosa, 52, a 14-year veteran of the department, has been held in the Gilpin County Jail on \$10,000 bond since his Tuesday arrest. He has been charged with three counts of contributing to the delinquency of a minor, a felony, stemming from the casino visit, which police reports show happened in July.

The case came to light in November, when one of the girl's mothers discovered hundreds of lewd and explicit Facebook and text messages between Della Rosa and her daughter and showed them to a Parker police detective. The detective said they were evidence that Della Rosa was "grooming" the girl for a possible sexual encounter, according to the eight-page affidavit.

Della Rosa told police he took the 14 and 15-year-old girls to the casino, stopping at a liquor store for Mike's Hard Lemonade and Smirnoff Ice, which he insisted he bought for himself, but "the girls kept bugging him so much to have some, he just gave in," the affidavit says. The girls said they drank so much that one of them threw up in the hot tub.

Della Rosa denied having a sexual relationship with any of the girls, though one told police he would film them at the pool, which made her uncomfortable.

The investigation also showed Della Rosa spent about \$49,000 gambling at Black Hawk between January and July; he told police he didn't gamble while the girls were with him.

Della Rosa, who processes inmate laundry at the Downtown Denver Detention Center, is off on his own time, said Maj. Frank Gale, a department spokesman. It's unclear whether he will be allowed to return to work if he is released from jail.

"We don't purport to know what happened until we've been presented with some more concrete facts," Gale said.

Della Rosa's arrest is the latest embarrassment for the sheriff's department, which last year had several high-profile misconduct issues.

The department saw one of its deputies help a convicted felon escape from jail, escorting him out in a sheriff's uniform. The city's independent monitor found that the department failed to investigate dozens of serious allegations of deputy misconduct. And, as the year was drawing to a close, the second-highest-ranking member of the department abruptly resigned, himself the subject of a misconduct probe.

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