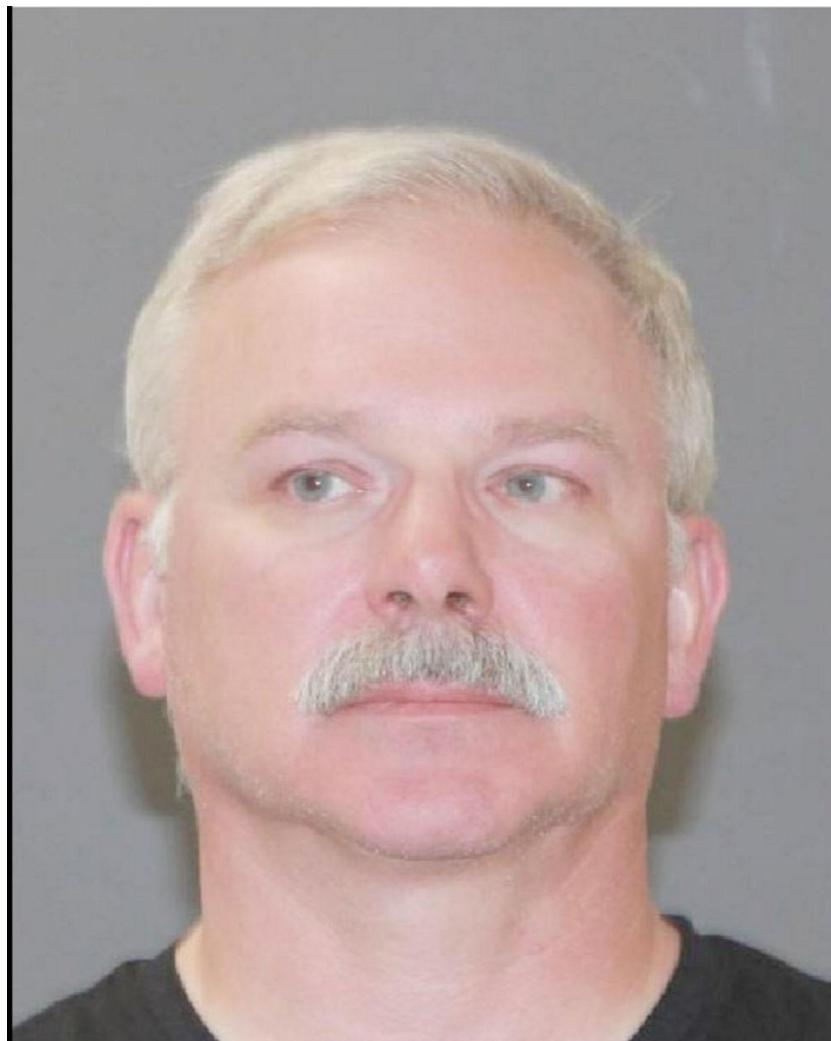


https://www.nny360.com/news/stlawrencecounty/boy-scout-leader-an-ex-cop-charged-with-sex-crimes-at-st-lawrence-county-camp/article_00717cf8-6d5f-5d1d-a97c-b767bbde89f2.html

Boy Scout leader, an ex-cop, charged with sex crimes at St. Lawrence County camp

Johnson Newspapers

Sep 6, 2019

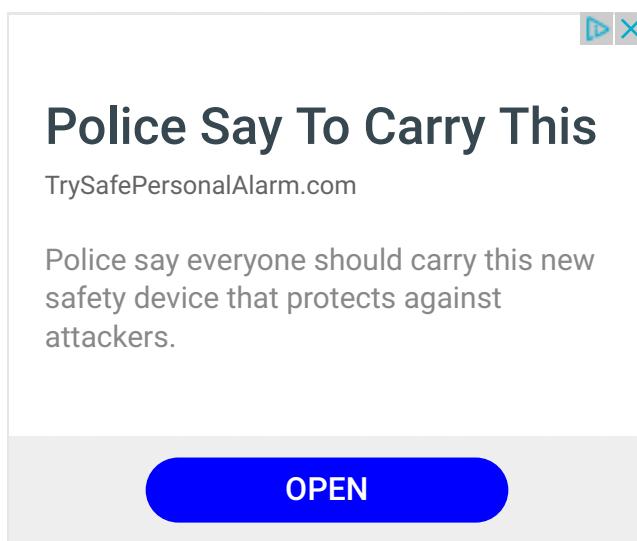


Rowcliffe

PIERCEFIELD — A longtime Boy Scout leader from Western New York is accused of having inappropriate sexual contact with several boys attending the Massawepie Boy Scout Camp in St. Lawrence County during the summers of 2017 to 2019.

On Thursday, state police arrested Ronald L. Rowcliffe, 55, Elba, after an investigation concluded he allegedly had sexual contact with several victims ranging in age from 12 to 17 in the Boy Scout camp in the town of Piercefield.

He is charged with two counts of first-degree sexual abuse and one count each of forcible touching and endangering the welfare of a child.



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The investigation is continuing and more charges are pending, state police said.

He was arraigned in the Piercfield Town Court and remanded to the St. Lawrence County Jail in lieu of \$10,000 cash bail.

Rowcliffe, who was not affiliated with the Boy Scout troop in Elba, was a range instructor at the Adirondack camp. He had been affiliated with a Scout troop in Brockport.

He also was a former police officer who was fired from the Holley Police Department in January 2001.

At the time, village officials refused to say why Rowcliffe was fired, only saying that he was charged with eight counts of official misconduct.

Rowcliffe also was fired as the village code enforcement officer.

Officials said that the firing and official misconduct charges were not related to charges filed against Rowcliffe in August 2000.

Rowcliffe was charged with three counts of endangering the welfare of a child after an Orleans County Sheriff's Office investigation revealed he gave teenage boys haircuts in his home, asked them to remove their clothes before the haircuts, had one shower and allowed another to view pornography on the internet.

Rowcliffe maintained his innocence and took the case to trial in Murray Town Court.

The trial never took place, though it went as far as jury selection.

Instead, Rowcliffe was allowed to plead guilty to one count of unlawful possession of a noxious material.

The case was adjourned in contemplation of dismissal.

The plea was contingent on his successfully completing any treatment recommendations and obeying all conditions set by the judge, which he did. At the conclusion of the six-month adjournment, the charges were dismissed.



Rowcliffe worked as a Holley police officer, left the force and worked as an officer in Wheatland. That department closed and Rowcliffe returned to Holley until he was fired. He was 38 at the time.

Rowcliffe has been involved in Scouts since he was a child and earned his Eagle Scout ranking while a member of Troop 4 in Batavia.

A search of the Web shows that Rowcliffe is listed as the scoutmaster for Troop 0086 in Brockport, which is not part of the Iroquois Trail Council that serves Genesee County.

At Massawepie Scout Camp, Rowcliffe served as shotgun range instructor.

It was there that allegations of abuse first came forward.

According to the Rochester Democrat and Chronicle, scouts reported allegations of misconduct to scout leaders, Stephen Hoitt, scout executive and CEO of Seneca Waterways Council, told the paper.

Rowcliffe was “immediately terminated,” he said, and police were contacted.

Trooper Jessica Fleishman, public information officer for Troop B, said as of Friday, no other people have come forward to accuse Rowcliffe.

“The investigation started when several complaints were made,” she said. “We do expect there are many more victims and that’s why we put this out there.”

More charges will be filed against Rowcliffe, she said, as investigators believe there are more victims.

State police are asking the public to help in the current investigation. If anyone has information regarding this investigation or believes they may be a victim, they are asked to contact the state police at 518-873-2750.