



**PATRICIA R. LYKOS
DISTRICT ATTORNEY
HARRIS COUNTY, TEXAS**

January 29, 2010

Donna Hawkins
George Flynn
(713) 755-3320

Serial Child Rapist Extradited from Thailand Gets Life Prison Terms

Houston Tx – Darren Ray Castleberry, a fugitive arrested in Thailand a year ago, was sentenced Friday to two life prison terms and two 20-year terms for the sexual assaults and aggravated sexual assaults of two girls, Harris County District Attorney Patricia Lykos announced.

The convictions tracked the period of assaults by Castleberry against both girls. They began at age 10 for one and age 8 for the second victim, and continued for both girls until they were 16. Castleberry had pleaded guilty to the two sexual assault charges at the beginning of the trial.

Castleberry received the maximum sentences on all the convictions. They were also “stacked” – he will serve each term consecutively rather than concurrently.

During the punishment phase of the trial, five more young women testified that they were also sexually abused by Castleberry. The 41-year-old defendant, formerly of Spring, sexually assaulted two young relatives and several family friends, some as young as five years old, from 1984 to 2005.

District Attorney Lykos said, “Darren Castleberry is one of the most monstrous child molesters in the history of Harris County.”

Testimony revealed that several of the young victims were repeatedly subjected to oral, anal and vaginal sexual assaults. Castleberry also photographed sex acts he perpetrated upon the two young girls. His ex-wife told the court she discovered a closet lockbox containing graphic photos of him and the two victims.

Castleberry abandoned his job as a contractor in Kuwait prior to his indictments in 2006. Lykos commended the actions and persistence of District Attorney’s Investigator John Kleindienst in coordinating the lengthy international search that led to Castleberry’s capture in Bangkok, Thailand.

“This should serve as a lesson to all fugitives, particularly those who would prey upon our children,” District Attorney Lykos said. “We will do what it takes to return you to face justice in Harris County.”

Kleindienst followed the Castleberry trail that went through Kuwait, Uzbekistan and finally Thailand. Agencies involved in the investigation and resulting extradition included the Harris County Sheriff’s Office, the Texas Governor’s Office, Los Angeles County Sheriff’s

Office, Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office, U.S. Marshals Service, Interpol, U.S. Department of State, and several foreign governments.

"We are grateful for the efforts, assistance and cooperation among authorities on many levels – local, state, federal and international – in tracking this criminal down and making him answer for his atrocities," the District Attorney said.

Lykos praised the performance of trial prosecutors Terese Buess, Division Chief of the DA's Public Integrity Division, and Assistant District Attorney Matthew Peneguy. "They were brilliant," Lykos said. "These are dedicated, extremely hard-working lawyers who are passionate about justice."

Judge Kevin Fine of the 177th Criminal District Court convicted Castleberry and assessed the punishment. He granted the District Attorney's motion for the sentences to be served consecutively, rather than concurrently.

In issuing his sentences, Judge Fine noted that it will be 80 years before Castleberry is eligible for parole. The judge called the defendant "a sick man," and added that "if I could give you more time, sir, I would."

(end)