Texas minister arrested for soliciting minor

Thursday, June 5, 2008
Shreveport, LA -- A Plano, Texas, minister is being held on Caddo Parish charges of computer-aided solicitation of a minor.

Caddo Sheriff Steve Prator said Joe David Barron, 52, was arrested in Bryan, Texas, on a warrant obtained by Caddo Deputy Jill Jones of the Northwest Louisiana Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force. The warrant also charges Barron with indecent behavior with a juvenile.

Barron is currently being held at the Brazos County Jail. Bond on the Louisiana warrant is $100,000.

Between April 30 and May 7, Barron took part in internet conversations with Jones, whom he believed to be a 13-year-old girl. During the conversations, Barron used sexually explicit language and e-mailed photographs of himself which were sexual in nature.

Jones and Barron stopped conversing around May 7 after Barron told Jones of plans he had to meet another juvenile girl in Texas. On May 15, he drove to Bryan from Plano for a meeting with a girl and was arrested by undercover Bryan officers, who also were investigating him. Barron was arrested by Bryan Police for online solicitation of a minor.

After bonding out of jail, Barron was picked up again on Wednesday afternoon when a Texas constable spotted him in Bryan and knew he was wanted on four additional Bryan charges. While booking him into jail, the constable was alerted of the warrant in Caddo Parish.

At the time of his May arrest, Barron was a minister at Prestonwood Baptist Church, which is described in some reports as a Dallas-area "megachurch" with a congregation of 26,000 members. Barron resigned that position after his first arrest.