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## Ex-mayor, GOP leader must file as sex offender Adams gets probation for kid porn

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By: Nicholas P. Alajakis

[nalajakis@scn1.com](mailto:nalajakis@scn1.com)

Thomas Adams, the former Green Oaks mayor and Lake County Republican chairman, was sentenced to probation Monday in his child pornography case.

Judge Patricia Golden, who was brought in from Kane County to hear the case, went along with a recommendation from a pre-sentencing investigation and prosecutor Patricia Fix's suggestion that Adams is suitable for probation.

Adams, 71, pleaded guilty in February to 16 counts of possession of child pornography, a Class 3 felony, which is punishable by up to five years in prison, but is also probationable. As part of his plea deal, more serious charges connected to the dissemination of child pornography were dropped.

Golden told Adams she had to think hard before settling on 30 months of probation, and cited his crime-free past and the belief that he can be helped with treatment.

Golden also ruled that Adams must serve 30 days of periodic imprisonment in Lake County Jail. He can only be released during that time for treatment. Adams must also complete 200 hours of community service, pay a \$10,000 fine and register as a sex offender.

"This is not in any way a victimless crime," Golden said. "If no one was looking at (child pornography), then the children wouldn't be exploited."

Adams was arrested on July 24, 2006, after authorities discovered that he e-mailed pornographic photos to an undercover agent in Clearwater, Fla. He was charged with 33 counts of child pornography, including 11 counts for dissemination. The images mostly depicted young boys.

In the days after his arrest, Adams resigned as mayor and as leader of the Lake County Republican party.

Mark Pleasant, an investigator for Lake County State's Attorney's Office, said during the sentencing hearing that Adams got most of the photos through AOL Instant Messenger and AOL chat rooms. In one online conversation, Adams discussed the possibility of having sex with an undercover agent's teenage sons, though it never progressed, Pleasant said.

Pleasant added that Adams was "cooperative, contrite and concerned" during the investigation.

Adams and his attorney, Thomas Briscoe, called the behavior a lapse in judgment, and said that Adams was going through a difficult and emotional time because of the death of his son and the cancer treatment his wife was undergoing.

Adams broke down and cried twice while reading a prepared speech in front of the court.

"Every morning for the past 1,072 (days), the first thing I think about is the terrible episode I have caused," Adams said. "I'm strongly motivated and committed to putting this whole thing behind me."

Briscoe asked Golden to give Adams probation, saying that she should follow the same sentencing guidelines she would for anyone, and not feel that Adams deserves a more harsh sentence because he is a public official.

"I ask that you treat him like a regular person, and expand to him the privilege of probation," Briscoe said.