

Media Release

Yavapai County Sheriff's Office

Scott Mascher – Sheriff

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Prostitution Sting nets 3 Suspects seeking Minors/Adult Women for Sex

On August 23, 2015, the Yavapai County Sheriff's Office again joined with several area law enforcement agencies to combat Human Trafficking/Prostitution in Yavapai County. YCSO along with Prescott PD, Cottonwood PD, Gang Intelligence Team Enforcement Mission task force (GITEM - DPS), Partners Against Narcotics Trafficking (PANT), and the Department of Homeland Security, conducted an operation to target the buyers of child and adult prostitutes. The operation took place in the Village of Oak Creek area. It is the intent of these operations to provide some level of deterrence to those who would solicit children for sex.

It is important to understand that Human Trafficking is the second most prolific crime in the world, second only to narcotics trafficking in terms of revenue generated. The victims of human trafficking are often teenaged girls who, for various reasons, are forced to engage in repeated sexual assaults for the profit of a "pimp" soliciting customers for prostitutes. *In an effort to eliminate the demand for prostitutes, this operation targeted buyers who would otherwise willingly hire underage and/or adult teen prostitutes for sexual gratification.* After the suspects initiated contact in response to a notice from an internet publication, they made arrangements to meet the "prostitutes," actually undercover law enforcement officers, in a specified Yavapai County motel room. The team of combined law enforcement officers apprehended these men who, even with knowledge some of the "prostitutes" were legally considered children, still intended to exploit them anyway through paid sex acts.

A total of 3 adult men were arrested and booked at the Camp Verde Detention Center following their request for sex acts and an offer or presentation of payment in the hotel room. Names, details, and booking information follow:



Sankar Gurusamy, 40, from Utah was arrested for arrested for 1 count of Engaging in Prostitution a violation, a misdemeanor, by soliciting one law enforcement officer posing as an adult prostitute that he believed to be nineteen years of age. He remains in-custody on a \$5,000 bond.



Luigi Galea, 30, from Flagstaff, Arizona was arrested for 1 count of Engaging in Child Prostitution, a felony, and 1 count of Engaging in Prostitution a violation, a misdemeanor, by soliciting two law enforcement officers posing as 17 and 20-year-old prostitutes. He has since been released on a \$25,000 bond.



Jefferson Perales, 28, from Sedona, Arizona, was arrested for Engaging in Child Prostitution, a felony, by soliciting a law enforcement officer posing as a 16-year-old prostitute. He has since been released on a \$25,000 bond.

“I will continue to make these types of operations a priority for the Yavapai County Sheriff’s Office because the goal of protecting our children from sexual predators must continue. I would like to thank all the assisting agencies for their support and participation in the investigation. On behalf of my fellow law enforcement partners, it is my hope these arrests send a message that preying on our children will not be tolerated in this County.”

Sheriff Scott Mascher

Citizens can contact the Yavapai County Sheriff’s Office with information or questions at 928-771-3260 or the YCSO website:

www.ycsoaz.gov