

The Henderson County Sheriff's Office arrested two men today on multiple felony sex related crimes. Each of the two investigations are independent of its own and are not related or insinuated to be related to the other in any way.

### **INVESTIGATION # 1:**

Henderson County Sheriff's Office Detectives arrested JAMES RONALD BARNETT, 23 years of age of Green Cove Road in Tuxedo, NC for:

- (1 count) Solicit Child by Computer, N.C. G.S. 14-202.3(A)
- (2 counts) Indecent Liberties with a Child, N.C. G.S. 14-202.1

All three counts are felonies, BARNETT has been processed in the Henderson County Detention Center where a magistrate judge placed bond at \$ 35,000.00 secured. A booking photo of JAMES RONALD BARNETT is attached.

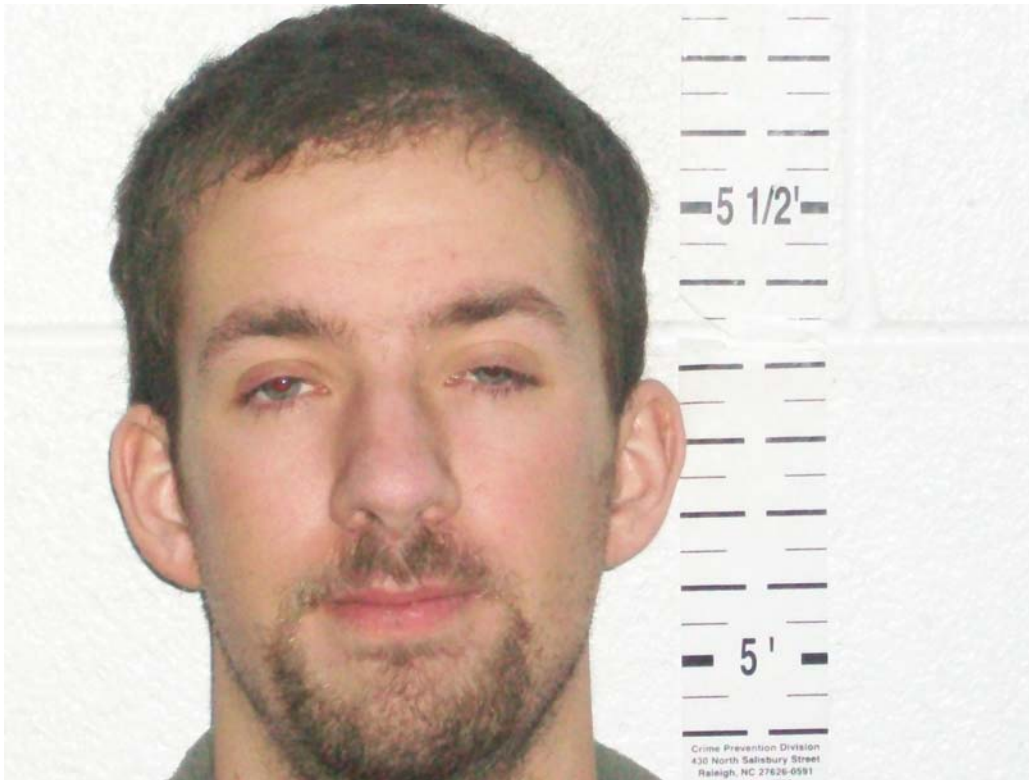
Investigators first alerted to BARNETT after he placed an add on Craig's List soliciting amateur porn in Hendersonville with the add quoting to say, "*seeking GIRLS, for porn, ALL GUYS WILL BE IGNORED, any age, looks, size, no experience required...*" Investigators with the Buncombe County Sheriffs Office and the Henderson County Sheriff's office alerted to this where the undercover investigation began.

Email contact was exchanged with BARNETT and the undercover officer who presented herself as a 12 year old girl. BARNETT continued with aggressive explicit chatting over the internet about specific sexual acts and included nude video footage of BARNETT to the 12 year old girl (the undercover investigator). BARNETT requested to meet the 12 year old girl where he could '*teach and show her what to do*' and inquired on the possibility of getting away from her house so the two could meet.

A meeting place was presented to BARNETT and a specific time to meet the 12 year old girl where BARNETT arrived in expectation a 12 year old girl would be there to meet him, instead, Henderson County Sheriff's Officers and Detectives were there to meet him where he was placed under arrest without incident.

According to Sheriff Davis: "*This is exactly why we need a dedicated, full-time, Internet Crimes Against Children detective. If we jump on this problem soon we can major impact. Children are getting more computer savvy at earlier ages and we must act swiftly to protect them.*"

This investigation is continuing, where further charges are pending.



## **INVESTIGATION #2:**

Henderson County Sheriff's Office Detectives arrested LUIS ANTONIO CRUZ, 42 years of age of Howard Gap Road in Hendersonville, NC for:

- (4 counts) 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree Rape, N.C. G.S. 14-27.3(A)
- (2 counts) Attempted 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree Sex Offense, N.C. G.S. 14-27.5
- (1 count) Indecent Liberties with a Child, N.C. G.S. 14-202.1
- (1 count) Felony Child Abuse, Sexual Act, N.C. G.S. 14-318.4(A2)

All eight counts are felonies, CRUZ has been processed in the Henderson County Detention Center where a magistrate judge placed bond at \$ 280,000.00 secured. A booking photo of LUIS ANTONIO CRUZ is attached.

According to Sheriff Davis: *"Mr. Cruz was identified by our 287(g) unit as being in the country legally, but not a citizen. Persons in this category, after completion of a sentence, are deported as an aggravated felon and returned to their country of origin."*

Investigators found that CRUZ was having sex with an eighteen year old girl that had been occurring since the girl was ten years old.



**Captain Steve Carter,  
Criminal Investigations Division**

**Henderson County Sheriffs Office**  
201 North Main Street  
Hendersonville, N.C. 28792  
Office: 828.694.2793  
Cell: 828.674.9202  
Fax: 828.697.4979

Email: [scarter@hendersoncountync.org](mailto:scarter@hendersoncountync.org)  
Web: [www.hendersonsheriff.org](http://www.hendersonsheriff.org)