



Search input fields

ADVERTISEMENT

Obituary: John Shallenberger / Fugitive child molester dies in Mexico

February 16, 2005 12:00 AM

By Steve Twedt Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

A fugitive child molester from Fayette County who violated a court order by trying to organize trips for youth choirs has died in Mexico.

John Shallenberger, 87, of Connellsville, had been wanted by Pennsylvania authorities since 1996, when he placed an advertisement in an alumni magazine, seeking young people to join him in Mexico where he claimed to be serving as a Christian missionary.



Print



Email



Read Later

Share with others:

Tweet

State prosecutors contend that advertisement violated a judge's order forbidding Shallenberger from organizing youth choir trips abroad.

Shallenberger, a former choir director in Connellsville, was convicted in 1975 and 1985 of sexually abusing young boys during choir trips. He was ordered to stop organizing choir tours and recruiting children to sing on those tours.

Instead, Shallenberger began using an alias, John Shortridge, to recruit 12 children from Illinois for a trip to Mexico in 1994. When law enforcement authorities learned about the trip and tried to bring him to court, he fled to Mexico. Mexican authorities were closing in on him in 1999, but Shallenberger managed to elude them.

Mexican officials filed a death certificate for Shallenberger, who died of a heart attack Jan. 2 in Chapala, Mexico, state prosecutors said.

"The long, dark chapter of John Shallenberger is now closed," the state attorney general's spokesman, Kevin Harley, said.

Shallenberger was cremated and his remains turned over to his family, authorities said.

Steve Twedt can be reached at stwedt@post-gazette.com or 412-263-1963.

ADVERTISEMENT

LATEST IN NEWS OBITUARIES

Obituary: Marilyn Patterson / She sold real estate here since early 1970s
about 18 hours ago

Obituary: Peter Grieg Veeder / Outstanding volunteer fundraiser for multitude of nonprofit groups
1 day ago

Obituary: Don Asmonga / Belle Vernon coach, social studies teacher
2 days ago

Obituary: Marilyn Patterson / Ran successful real estate business with her sister
2 days ago

Obituary: Paul Myers / City firefighter for 29 years
2 days ago

Obituary: James Bowman / Tuskegee Airman and father of city school chief Linda Lane
4 days ago

Three Quick Questions

Do you believe the "Bridge Scandal" has ruined any chances Chris Christie had to be elected president some day?

- Yes
- No
- I'm not sure

Submit

Post-Gazette Question

Powered by CivicScience

ADVERTISEMENT

ADVERTISEMENT

Get unlimited digital access - web, mobile, tablet, apps and more.