

Sex site causes net controversy



MIKE WENDLAND

I'm not going to tell you the address of the Web site. I know. This is usually what I do. I always share the Web site I've stumbled across during the past week.

But not this week. The Web site I'm reporting on this week is one I wish wasn't online.

Police, parents and a lot of retailers deplore what is posted there and I'm not going to give the guy who runs it any more traffic by publicizing his Internet address. See, the more "hits," or Web visitors he gets, the more he takes in from advertisers who share his "interests."

The site in question is run by an East Coast man and blatantly, with plenty of detail, chronicles places where men can go and have anonymous sex with other men. The site is stirring quite the controversy.

I did an I-Team investigative report for Channel 4 television in Detroit this week, as have other journalists across the country as they've discovered their cities were made this dubious "list," too.

In Metro Detroit, 38 different spots are mentioned on the site. Many are parks, adult bookstores, freeway rest areas. Those kinds of places may be controversial when used for sex, but it's not necessarily surprising that they're listed. We're used to police sweeps and arrests for such activity there.

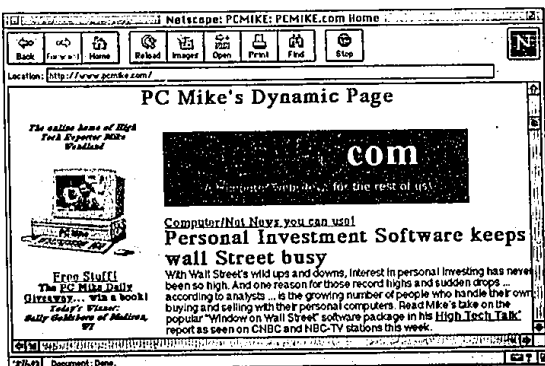
What is surprising ... no, shocking is a better word ... are the number of public restrooms in shopping malls across the area. We verified open sexual activity in rest rooms in Hudsons, at both Northland and Eastland; Montgomery Ward at the Summit Place shopping center in Waterford Township; Universal Mall in Warren and the Henry Ford Centennial Library in Dearborn.

We notified all of the management of the malls about being on the so-called "Sex Listings" Internet list and our independent verification that these public restrooms were indeed being used for sex by men. Some of the activity was behind stalls. Other illicit activity was right out in the open and could be seen by anyone who walked in.

It happened at all times of the day and night.

In all of the places, we observed unsuspecting parents sending their children in to use the rest rooms alone.

"This is what's so wrong with this," Michigan State Police Lt. Steven Kraft told me when I showed him the video we shot. "This

PCMike: You can check out Wendland's Web site at www.pcmike.com.

activity is illegal. It constitutes gross indecency, a five year felony. And these people don't seem to see who catches them. We even get reports of youngsters and adults being approached and harassed when they stumbled onto this behavior. To think that the Internet is being used to steer these people to these public places is pretty sad."

The owner of the Web site is nonplussed by the criticism. He agreed to a videotaped interview, as long as his full name wasn't used and his face not shown. His first name is Keith.

He says he gets hundreds of tips every week from people who want to publicize their places for sexual rendezvous. He says if people are offended by what they see when they walk into a restroom "they can turn around and walk out."

He says there is nothing unusual about what happens in some of the shopping center restrooms. "It's always been that way. Perhaps the unusual element is now we have this technology that allows for distribution to the masses very quickly and rapidly."

That is causing a lot of concern by retailers.

A vice president for Hudsons at the department store chain's Minneapolis headquarters told me the Web site has caused "major problems" for retailers across the country.

"This is intolerable," said the Hudsons

executive. "We are very dismayed to see this material on the Internet. This is criminal activity and we will be taking sweeping steps to stop it completely in our stores. Our customers can be sure of a safe and protected environment in our stores." He refused to be specific about the security measures the retailer would be implementing because he did not want to alert those they intend to catch.

And intend to catch them they do. And then have police arrest them.

But what about Keith and the Internet site?

Not much can be done to stop the postings he receives or his listings. "I have an entire section which deals with entrapment so that I can alert visitors to my site places they should avoid because someone has sent me a tip from the police that a sting operation is about to begin," he says.

Police, however, have some ideas on what to do to control the problem.

"We think we can confiscate the cars of the men who drive to these places for the express purpose of engaging in this criminal conduct," says Lt. Kraft.

So far this year, state police in the metro area have arrested 26 men for illicit sex in restrooms. They include professionals, educators, factory workers even a local clergyman.

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tax-deferred. Qualifying small employers may offer employees the option of deferring a portion of their salary to an IRA.

Starting in 1997, a SIMPLE plan may be set up by an employer that has no other retirement plan and who during the preceding year has 100 or fewer employees earning at least \$5,000.

Employees may elect to defer a specified percentage or their pay to the plan but no more than \$6,000 per year.

Employees covered by 401(k) retirement plans at work and barred from also having a deductible IRA can contribute up to \$9,500 in this tax deductible plan.

The money can be subtracted from the salary automatically, and the plan to grow income tax-deferred, except that, if applicable, Social Security taxes must be fully paid.

The employer frequently contributes additional money, which raises the yield even more.

If you are employed by a state or local government public school, or by a tax-exempt religious, charitable, scientific, or educational organization, or are on the civilian staff or faculty of the Uniformed Services of the Health Sciences (Department of Defense), you may be able to arrange for the purchase of a nonforfeitable tax-sheltered annuity.

Another name for such a tax-sheltered annuity is a 403(b) plan. 403(b) plan may be funded in a mutual funds shares.

The purchase of the annuity is generally made through a reduction of salary which is used to pay for the contract. The amount of the salary reduction used to buy the contract is not taxable if it comes within specified limits.

Deferral with after-tax dollars

Insurance contracts purchased with after-tax dollars provide an excellent vehicle for after-tax accumulation of earnings as long as these earnings accumulate within the policy contract.

The types of insurance con-

An individual who is not covered by retirement plans as work ... can deposit annually up to \$2,000 in IRAs.

tracts which qualify include single premium deferred annuity, single premium whole life, single premium universal life, and variable annuities.

In general, at the time of withdrawal, that part of the annuity payment which is allocated to the cost of the initial investment is treated as a non-taxable return of principal; when withdrawn, the remaining balance is taxed as ordinary income.

A second choice consists of nondeductible IRAs. These contributions can be made by those taxpayers with earned income who do not qualify for a deduction.

The reason to make nondeductible IRA contributions is that earnings on such deposits, like earnings on deductible deposits, accumulate without being immediately taxed.

Incidentally, unlike deductible IRAs which cannot be withdrawn before age 59½, without penalty, nondeductible IRA deposits (but not the related earnings) can be withdrawn at any time without incurring a tax on principal or tax penalty for early withdrawal.

For this reason, it is a good idea to segregate nondeductible IRAs from their deductible counterpart.

It should be mentioned here that under the new law, taxpayers can now contribute to a Roth IRA with nondeductible dollars up to \$2,000 per person per year. From this account, principal and earnings can be withdrawn tax free, if age 59½ has been attained and the account is at least five years old.

Also, if the money is used to buy a first home or pay college bills, up to \$10,000 may be distributed tax free. Deposits are limited when income exceeds \$150,000 for couples or \$95,000 for singles.

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ADHD (Attention Deficit)

<http://www.adhdoutreach.com>

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<http://www.legalnotice.com>

ANTIQUES & INTERIORS

Watch Hill Antiques & Interiors

<http://www.watchhillantiques.com>

APPAREL

Hold Up Suspenders

<http://www.suspenders.com>

ART AND ANTIQUES

Hug Gallery

<http://www.huggallery.com>

ART GALLERIES

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<http://www.everythingart.com>

ART MUSEUMS

The Detroit Institute of Arts

<http://www.dia.org>

ASPHALT/CONCRETE PAVING

Alex Paving Industries

<http://www.alexpaving.com>

ASTROLOGY/METAPHYSICS

The Turning Point

<http://www.psychicpoint.com>

ASSOCIATIONS

ASM - Detroit

<http://www.asm-detroit.org>

Building Industry Association

<http://www.biausa.org>

of Southeastern Michigan

<http://www.southeastern.org>

Naval Airship Association

<http://www.naa.org>

Society of Automotive Engineers-Detroit

<http://www.sae-detroit.org>

Suburban Newspapers

<http://www.suburban-news.org>

of America

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Suspender Wearers of America

<http://www.suspenders.com>

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John Rogin Buck-Isuzu-Suzuki

<http://www.johnrogin.com>

Ramchargers Performance Centers

<http://www.ramchargers.com>

Universal Bearing Co.

<http://www.unibearing.com>

AUTOMOTIVE MANUFACTURERS

REPRESENTATIVES

Marks Mgmt. Services

<http://www.marksmgmt.com>

AUTO RACING

Mean Dragway

<http://www.meandragway.com>

BAKING/COOKING

City Mix - Chelsea Milling Company

<http://www.citymix.com>

BICYCLES

Walsh Bicycle Company

<http://www.walshbicycle.com>

BOOK/KEEPING PRODUCTS

Big E Z Bookkeeping Co.

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BOOKS

Appellate Communications

<http://www.appellate.com>

BUSINESS NEWS

Insider Business Journal

<http://www.insiderbiz.com>

CERAMIC TILE

Stewart Specialty Tiles

<http://www.stewarttiles.com>

CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE

Livonia Chamber

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of Commerce

<http://www.livonia.org>

Birmingham/Bloomfield Chamber

of Commerce

<http://www.birminghamchamber.org>

Redford Chamber of Commerce

<http://www.redfordchamber.org>

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

St Vincent & Sarah Fisher Center

<http://www.stvincent.org>

CLASSIFIED ADS

AdVantage

<http://www.advantage.com>

Observer & Eccentric Newspapers

<http://www.observer-eccentric.com>

COMMERCIAL PRINTING

ColorTech Graphics

<http://www.colortechgraphics.com>

COMMUNITIES

City of Birmingham

<http://www.birmingham.mi.us>

City of Livonia

<http://www.livonia.org>

COMMUNITY NEWS

Observer & Eccentric Newspapers

<http://www.observer-eccentric.com>

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Beverly Hills Police

<http://www.beverlyhillspolice.com>

Wayne County Police

<http://www.waynecounty.org>

Wayne Community Living Services

<http://www.wcls.org>

COMPUTER GRAPHICS

Logic, Inc.

<http://www.logic-usa.com>

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HARDWARE/PROGRAMMING/SOFTWARE SUPPORT

Applied Automation Technologies

<http://www.applied-automation.com>

BBB Software

<http://www.bbbsoftware.com>

Mighty Systems Inc.

<http://www.mightysystems.com>

COMPUTER PRODUCT REVIEWS

Cybernews and Reviews

<http://www.cybernews.com>

CONSTRUCTION

Frank Rowland Construction

<http://www.frankrowland.com>

EDUCATION

Fordson High School

<http://www.fordsonhigh.com>

Global Village Project

<http://www.globalvillage.com>

Oakland School

<http://www.oakland.k12.mi.us>

Reuther Middle School

<http://www.reuther.com>

Rochester Community

Schools Foundation

<http://www.rochesterhills.com>

The Walker School

<http://www.walkerhills.com>

Wayne County Transit User Group

<http://www.wctug.org>

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Canlit Electric Supply

<http://www.canlit.com>

PROGRESS ELECTRIC

ABL Electronic Service, Inc.

<http://www.ablsvr.com>

EMPLOYEE LEASING COMPANY

Genesys Group

<http://www.genesysgroup.com>

EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

Employment Presentation Services

<http://www.epsws.com>

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Resource Recovery and Recycling

<http://www.rrecycling.com>