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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**DA BROWN: SCOUTMASTER SENTENCED TO 20 YEARS IN PRISON
FOR SEXUALLY ABUSING TWO 13-YEAR-OLD BOY SCOUTS**

Queens District Attorney Richard A. Brown today announced that the scoutmaster of a Great Neck Boy Scout troop has been sentenced to 20 years in prison for sexually abusing and taking sexually explicit photographs of two 13-year-old members of his troop on numerous occasions over the past several years. The incidents took place in the Little Neck, Queens, church where the troop held its weekly meetings and at the defendant's residence.

District Attorney Richard A. Brown said, "The defendant abused not only his two young victims who looked up to him as a leader, a responsible adult, but exploited the trust of their parents who unknowingly placed their children in harm's way by committing their care to him. In the process, he destroyed his victims' innocence and scarred them emotionally and psychologically for life. The lengthy sentence imposed by the court is more than warranted."

District Attorney Brown identified the defendant as Ronald E. Occhipinti, 46, of 58-14 East Hampton Boulevard in Bayside, Queens, who was employed by a Long Island burglar alarm system company while serving as the scoutmaster of Troop 183 in Great Neck. The defendant pleaded guilty on May 8, 2006 to Course of Sexual Conduct Against a Child in the First and Second Degrees before Acting Queens Supreme Court Justice Pauline A. Mullings who imposed today's determinate sentence of 20 years in prison.

District Attorney Brown said the defendant admitted in court that on various occasions between September 1, 2003, and August 6, 2005, he brought one victim to his residence and the other victim to a church before boy scout or leadership meetings – almost every week over an eleven-month period – and performed sexual acts on both victims. He also admitted that he had the children remove their clothes and pose in lewd and obscene positions which he then photographed.

District Attorney Brown expressed his appreciation to Detective James A. Held and the NYPD Child Sexual Exploitation Unit for their assistance in the investigation.

Assistant District Attorney Frank DeGaetano, Supervisor of the District Attorney's Special Victims Bureau, prosecuted the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorney Marjory D. Fisher, Bureau Chief, and the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Major Crimes Charles A. Testagrossa.

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Note to Editors: E-version of this press release is posted on www.queensda.org.