

# Serial child molester hunted

■ Ogle, DeKalb counties: Police fear that a man who lures children to department store restrooms may strike again in the region.

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**By SCOTT WILLIAMS**

The Register Star

ROCHELLE — Police in two counties are tracking a child molester who assaulted two young boys and approached two others by stalking the toy departments at Wal-Mart stores.

The suspect, blamed for attacks in Ogle and neighboring DeKalb counties during the past 16 months, preys on children left alone by luring them to a restroom.

Similarities in physical descriptions and the manner in which the man approaches children convinced authorities they are on the trail of a serial offender.

The latest incidents occurred in Rochelle, where a 4-year-old boy was molested in October after being lured from the toy department by a stranger who promised to give him a toy. A few weeks later, a 7-year-old boy was similarly approached but escaped unharmed.

Rochelle Police Chief Alexander Gorr said he fears that the man is a pedophile who will strike again, perhaps elsewhere in the region.

"These things were so random that I believe the guy is going to try again," Gorr said. "Maybe not here. Maybe not there. I don't know where."

Some Rochelle residents say police failed to warn the community that children were in danger.

"They're trying to keep it such a big top secret," said the 7-year-old's mother. "Then it happened again."

Gorr said authorities kept the incidents quiet because they thought publicity would make it more difficult to catch the perpetrator.

The incidents at the Rochelle store occurred Oct. 19 and Nov. 25. In the first instance, a man fitting the suspect's description was seen by employees about the same time the 4-year-old was molested. In the second incident, the 7-year-old ran away when the suspect tried to lure him to the restroom.

Please see Serial, 4A▷

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■ **Composite sketch of suspect**

■ **Where to call**

**Both on 4A**