



Hernando County Sheriff's Office

A STATE ACCREDITED LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY

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Media Release

**From: Sergeant Donna Black
Public Information Officer, 352-754-6830**

Re: Trailhead Car Burglar Caught

Date: February 14, 2011

Case#: Key case 2011-00850

ARRESTED: ANDREW RAE CLARK, DOB 12/19/83, Address 38836 Coit St. Lacochee, Fl.

CHARGES: 8 Counts BURGLARY- AGGRAVATED ASSAULT, FLEEING TO ELUDE

Hernando County Sheriff's Office has put an end to a car burglar who was targeting vehicle parked at Rail to Trails hiking/biking areas in Brooksville.

On January 7, 2011, the Hernando County Sheriff's Office began receiving reports of car windows being smash out and personal items removed from cars while the owners were biking or hiking the trails. The crime spree ended for the suspect on Friday after he broke into a bait car placed in a targeted location.

On February 11, 2011, Hernando County Sheriff's Office Deputies parked a bait car, containing a laptop computer at the trail head parking lot where other car burglaries had occurred. Unbeknownst to the suspect later identified as **ANDREW RAE CLARK**, deputies were waiting and watching in the woods as **CLARK** went to the bait car and removed the planted laptop computer. **CLARK** spotted deputies, ran to a waiting truck and fled from the area at a high rate of speed but not before almost hitting one of the deputies. **CLARK** was last seen fleeing in a dark colored truck with a rebel flag on the front bumper.

Coincidentally, off duty Hernando County Deputy Vincent Spallino was driving his personal vehicle on Croom Rd when a dark colored truck drove up behind him, following him extremely close, driving aggressively until he passed Deputy Spallino. As the vehicle passed, Spallino took a photo of the vehicle with his phone. During the course of his shift Deputy Spallino learned the vehicle he photographed matched the description of the vehicle that fled from the deputies at Rails to Trails. Deputy Spallino photographed the suspect vehicle seven minutes after it fled from the deputies.

On February 12, 2011, Detectives and Deputies followed up on the tag number provided by Deputy Spallino and located the vehicle parked behind a house located at 26350 Seidel St. Brooksville. **CLARK** was located inside the house and positively identified by the Deputies who he fled from. **CLARK** was taken into custody and transported to the Hernando County Sheriff's Office where he admitted to eight (8) vehicle burglaries (including the bait car). Detectives were able to recover some of the stolen items after searching **CLARK'S** vehicle.

CLARK is currently being held on a NO BOND status. These cases are still open with the possibility of other suspect(s) being charged.

"A deputy sheriff's responsibility, unlike most professionals, does not stop when his or her tour of duty is over" stated Sheriff Al Nienhuis. "Deputy Spallino exemplifies the dedication and commitment it takes to be a Hernando County Deputy Sheriff".