



## Hernando County Sheriff's Office

A STATE ACCREDITED LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY

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### Media Release

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**From:** Corporal Wendy McGinnis  
Public Information Officer, 352-754-6830

**Re:** Underage Alcohol Sales Thwarted

**Date:** October 25, 2011

**Case Number:** 2011-35400, 2011-34518, 2011-34514, 2011-34520

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On 10/11/11 and 10/18/11, the Hernando County Sheriff's Office conducted 21 Compliance Checks and Alcohol Buys at various convenience stores through Hernando County. This operation was made possible through the use of an investigative aide who was under the age of 21. Undercover Vice and Narcotics Detectives worked in conjunction with the Hernando County Community Anti-Drug Coalition during this operation.

A total of 21 stores were checked in this two day operation, which resulted in 3 store employees selling alcohol to a minor. An employee at the BP Station at 1394 Commercial Way sold alcohol to the underage informant. Due to the subject, Jayendrakumar Patel (O/M, 01/06/1960), not having any valid identification and claiming not to be a U.S. citizen, he was arrested and transported to the jail with a bond of \$500.

An employee, Bonnie Joan Melching (W/F 08/18/1961), at the Hess Express, 18635 Cortez Boulevard, sold alcohol to the underage investigative aide. Ms. Melching was also found to have a warrant for Failure to Pay Child Support and was placed under arrest for the warrant.

Joseph Nathan Revell Jr. (W/M, 06/07/1979) who is employed at the Lil Green Store, 204 East Avenue, was the third person to sell alcohol to the investigative aide. In lieu of a criminal charge, the employees who sold alcohol to the underage investigative aide were given an opportunity to attend a PREP training class conducted by the Coalition.

The Promoting Retailers Education Program (PREP) is used as a training tool. Employees learn the importance of responsible alcohol and tobacco sales and service; the laws that control the sale and service of alcohol and tobacco; how to check ID's; how to refuse service to underage or intoxicated persons; and how to prevent alcohol and tobacco sales to underage persons. If the subjects do not attend the class, then the appropriate criminal charge will be filed.

The Hernando County Community Anti-Drug Coalition has a common goal to successfully prevent, significantly reduce and effectively manage substance abuse issues in all segments of our community. The Hernando County Sheriff's Office strongly supports the Anti-Drug Coalition's goals and was pleased to work hand-in-hand with them during this operation.

According to a report released November 2010, by The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse (CASA) at Columbia University, 4 out of 5 juveniles who are arrested after committing a crime admitted to being under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

"Underage drinking is not a new problem, it has been occurring for decades" said Sheriff Al Nienhuis. "As a law enforcement agency, we have to be vigilant to the fact underage drinking is still very much alive in our communities. We will continue to monitor our local retail and convenience stores in an effort to make consuming alcoholic beverages more difficult for juveniles. The deputies at the Hernando County Sheriff's Office will continue to strictly enforce underage alcohol violations, to include the sale or delivery of alcohol to minors".