



Hernando County Sheriff's Office

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Media Release

From: Denise M. Moloney
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Re: Woman Arrested for Setting Neighbor's House on Fire

Date: August 9, 2013

On 08-06-13, units from Hernando County Fire/Rescue and the Hernando County Sheriff's Office responded to a Residential Structure Fire at 7882 Pinehurst Drive in Spring Hill. Upon arrival, units observed grey smoke billowing from the roof.

Once inside, firefighters quickly determined the residence was not occupied and the origin of the fire was suspicious.

The State Fire Marshal was requested to respond to the scene.

Deputies interviewed neighbors to determine if anyone had seen any suspicious persons or vehicles in the area. Deputy Chris Owens interviewed Debra Daines, who lives next door. Daines told Deputy Owens that she had not seen anyone or anything suspicious, but that she had been in the residence at 7882 Pinehurst Drive earlier that day assisting the landlord, John Timmerman, with the fire extinguisher.

Deputy Owens noted in his report that Daines appeared to be under the influence of an alcoholic beverage, as she was slurring her speech and she had an odor of an alcoholic beverage emitting from her breath.

Deputy Owens contacted the landlord who stated that he was at the residence last week, not earlier that day. The landlord went on to say that the resident of the home, Donald Thayer, was currently in jail, and had been for the last three months.

The State Fire Marshal collected samples of charred debris. The debris will be analyzed to see if accelerants were used to start the fire.

On 08-08-13, while conducting an unrelated investigation, Daines advised Deputy Brian Timothy that she set the fire to the residence at 7882 Pinehurst Drive. She was then transported to the District Two Office for interview with the State Fire Marshal's Office Investigator and Detective Bill Hillman.

Post Miranda, Daines advised that she set the fire by placing a lit wick from a camping lantern under a sleeping bag that was next to the apartment on the back porch. The fire spread from the porch into the kitchen.

Daines stated that she set the fire because she knew that Mr. Thayer was going to be getting out of jail soon, and she did not want him moving back in next door to her.

Debra L. Daines W/F DOB/02-19-1958 (7888 Pinehurst Drive, Spring Hill) was arrested for Arson to an Occupied Dwelling. Her bond was set at \$10,000.