



Hernando County Sheriff's Office

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Media Release

From: Denise M. Moloney
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Re: Hernando County Sheriff's Office Hosts Dangers of Synthetic Drugs Seminar

Date: October 25, 2016

On Monday, 10-24-16, the Hernando County Sheriff's Office Vice and Narcotics Unit hosted a seminar on "The Dangers of Synthetic Drugs." The seminar focused on a community-wide approach to dealing with emerging drug trends in the State of Florida regarding synthetic and designer drugs. Realizing that drug abuse is not just a law enforcement problem, Sheriff Al Nienhuis invited representatives from various agencies and organizations throughout the community to attend the seminar. Attendees were able to gain knowledge of the potential problems relating to synthetic and designer drugs and how to address such issues.

Members from the Hernando County Sheriff's Office included Vice and Narcotics Detectives, School Resource Deputies, Major Case Detectives, Patrol Deputies, and Detentions Deputies. Attendees from other agencies included members of the Hernando County Fire Rescue, Brooksville Police Department, Florida Highway Patrol, the Medical Examiner's Office, Hernando County Health Department, Florida Department of Law Enforcement, the State Attorney's Office, Springbrook Hospital, and the Hernando County Community Anti-Drug Coalition.

The seminar was taught by members of the Broward County Sheriff's Office. Since 2012, Broward County has led the country in synthetic drug activity. Their team of instructors helps to educate what designer and synthetic drugs are, where they come from, and the effects that they have on individuals, as well as the community.

While designer and synthetic drug incidents in Hernando County are rare, there have been a few cases in the last couple of years that have led to the death of the person ingesting the drug(s). Sheriff Nienhuis, along with the detectives in the Vice and Narcotics Unit, feels the best way to combat the problem is to be well-informed. By bringing this training to Hernando County and offering it to our local partners in public safety, our hope is to educate our population and eradicate this from our community.

The Office of Sheriff:

The Office of the Sheriff is established by the Florida Constitution. As a constitutional officer, the Sheriff has the exclusive authority to administer his or her agency and is responsible for preserving the peace throughout the entire county, carrying out the laws of the state, the orders of Florida courts, and the ordinances of the Board of County Commissioners. The Sheriff is the chief law enforcement and correctional officer of the county.

Sheriff Al Nienhuis was initially appointed as the Sheriff of Hernando County by the Governor in January of 2011. He was then elected by the people of Hernando County in 2012, and remains accountable to them.