

Hernando County Sheriff's Office

P.O. BOX 10070 - BROOKSVILLE, FL 34603-0070 FAX 352 796-0493 PHONE 352 754-6830

Media Release

From: Denise M. Moloney

Community/Media Relations Manager, 352-797-3609

Re: Woman Arrested for Organized Scheme to Defraud

Date: December 18, 2017

On or about 05-02-17, RE/MAX Realty and Home Adventures LLC owner Barbara Quist reported that several thousand dollars had been stolen from her bank accounts. Ms. Quist told detectives that she suspected her long time book keeper, Dawn Sokolowski, stole the money.

Ms. Quist advised detectives that she became suspicious of Sokolowski after noticing that Sokolowski had not reconciled the company's bank accounts for several months.

Ms. Quist obtained bank statements and immediately noticed payments being made on accounts that she did not have. Older bank statements revealed the fraud began in 2011.

Ms. Quist told detectives that Sokolowski was a trusted friend and employee, and she never questioned her or suspected anything out of the ordinary until recently.

Detectives issued subpoenas for several of the company's bank accounts. Bank statements confirmed that Dawn Sokolowski was in fact using Ms. Quist's money to pay her own bills.

The charges listed below were made by Dawn Sokolowski, using funds from various business accounts, belonging to Ms. Quist:

- Direct TV \$700.23
- Bright House \$11,237.61
- AT&T \$10,556.78
- Ally Financial \$6,218.76
- Ally Financial \$14,790.68
- Synchrony Bank \$3,412.
- Synchrony Bank \$7,966.99
- Synchrony Bank \$798.31

- Cash Reconciliation Summary \$10,112.
- LTD Commodities \$1,141.25
- Comenity Bank (HSN) \$387.62
- Florida Blue \$4,658.33.

Dawn Sokolowski used a total of \$71,980.56, of funds that belonged to Ms. Quist, without authorization from Ms. Quist.

Dawn Marie Sokolowski W/F DOB/12-20-1970 was arrested on 12-16-17. Sokolowski was charged with Organized Scheme to Defraud (over \$50,000). She was booked into the Hernando County Detention Center, with a bond of \$10,000.

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.