



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: Deputies Arrest Convicted Felon in Possession of Firearm after Manhunt

Date: February 2, 2018

Between 01-27-18 and 01-29-18, a Residential Burglary was committed at 26307 Mountain Lake Road in Brooksville. During the burglary, a red Yamaha golf cart was stolen from inside the garage.

On 01-29-18, an Armed Residential Burglary was committed at 6190 Spring Lake Highway in Brooksville. During the burglary, several pieces of ladies jewelry and a loaded firearm were stolen. At the approximate time of the burglary, a witness observed a white male drive to the residence on a red golf cart, enter the residence, and then leave in the same golf cart.

On 01-30-18, Deputy Chris Downey utilized many of his neighborhood contacts in the area to gather suspect information and possible leads in these cases.

As a result of Deputy Downey's neighborhood contacts, the Hernando County Sheriff's Office received a call at approximately 11:45 a.m. on 01-30-18 regarding a Suspicious Person, matching the description of the suspect in the two burglaries.

Deputy Downey quickly responded to the area of 26925 Mondon Hill Road in Brooksville and located a male, matching the suspect description. As Deputy Downey attempted to make contact with the suspect, the suspect took flight, despite numerous verbal commands from the deputy to stop. A perimeter was established and both K-9 and Aviation responded to assist in the search for the suspect. Eastside Elementary School was immediately placed on lock-down as a precautionary measure, as the suspect was possibly still armed with the stolen firearm.

As deputies, K-9, and Aviation continued to search the area, a citizen called the Hernando County Sheriff's Office to advise that he had just provided a ride to a male who matched the

description of the suspect. The citizen advised he dropped the male off at the Sunrise Plaza near I-75 and Cortez Boulevard.

Several units responded to the plaza to locate and identify the suspect. Upon arrival, deputies located and positively identified the suspect. The suspect was immediately taken into custody.

Deputies noted that upon apprehension, the suspect was still in possession of the stolen firearm from the Armed Burglary on Spring Lake Highway. The suspect pulled the firearm out of his pocket before realizing he was outnumbered by law enforcement officers, and he quickly surrendered.

The suspect was identified as Kevin Bearden.

Contact was later made with Bearden's girlfriend with whom he had been staying. The girlfriend confirmed that Bearden had been in possession of the stolen golf cart and that he had been evading deputies. Bearden's girlfriend turned over a duffel bag to detectives that belonged to Bearden. The duffel bag contained several items stolen during the Armed Burglary on Spring lake Highway.

When questioned by detectives, Bearden implicated himself in both burglaries.

Probable cause was established for the arrest of Kevin Bearden.

A computer check revealed Bearden to be a convicted felon. **Kevin R. Bearden W/M DOB/01-04-1981** was arrested and charged as follows:

- Resist Arrest w/o Violence
- Felon in Possession of Firearm
- Felon in Possession of Ammunition
 - o **Bond - \$42,000.**

A wants and warrants check revealed that Bearden had an active felony warrant from Sumter County for Violation of Probation (VOP) – No Bond.

District Detective, Lou Genovese, closed out the two burglary cases, charging Bearden as follows:

- Burglary to a Dwelling (unoccupied)
- Grand Theft (auto) (golf cart)
 - o **Bond - \$15,000**
- Burglary to a Dwelling While Armed (stealing loaded firearm)
- Grand Theft
 - o **Bond - \$30,000.**

Bearden remains in the Hernando County Detention Center.

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.