



## Hernando County Sheriff's Office

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

### Media Release

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**From:** Denise M. Moloney  
Community/Media Relations Manager, 352-797-3609

**Re:** Arrest Made in Shooting at Delirium Lounge

**Date:** February 12, 2018

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On 02-11-18 at approximately 1:50 a.m., Hernando County Sheriff's deputies, on Augustine Road investigating an unrelated incident, heard gunfire coming from the area of Mariner Boulevard and Northcliffe Boulevard. As deputies headed toward the gunfire, numerous calls began pouring in the 9-1-1 center. Callers reported a Shooting at the Delirium Lounge, located at 4245 Mariner Boulevard in Spring Hill.

Deputies arrived almost immediately.

Upon arrival, deputies located one male with a gunshot wound to his abdominal area and another male with a gunshot wound to his left foot. Deputies utilized first-aid kits to care for the injured until Hernando County Fire/Rescue arrived on scene. Both victims were then transported to a local trauma center for treatment. It was later learned that both victims sustained non-life threatening injuries.

Witnesses on scene advised deputies that the male who fired the shots, along with an unknown male driver, fled the area in a light colored GMC pick-up truck.

Investigation revealed that the suspect, later identified as George Edward Downey, got into a verbal altercation with the victims, identified as Jose Alonso Jr. (abdominal wound) and Alonso's step-son, Xzavier Ramos (foot wound), outside the doors of the lounge. During the altercation, Downey attempted to strike Alonso with a closed fist; however, Alonso moved out of the way. A third victim, Carlos Aponte, who was standing behind Alonso, was struck in the face and fell to the ground.

Downey and Alonso then became engaged in a physical altercation. While this was occurring, the unknown male driver, later identified as Franklin Melo, drove the truck through the parking lot, at which time Downey entered the passenger side of the truck and

retrieved a firearm. Downey then proceeded back to the front of the lounge and began shooting Alonso and Ramos. After the two victims were shot, Downey got into the passenger side of the truck and fired at least three additional shots indiscriminately toward the crowd (no one was hit with this gunfire).

On 02-11-18 at approximately 11:30 a.m., detectives observed Downey leaving his residence in Sterling Hill and conducted a Traffic Stop. Both Downey and Melo were inside the vehicle. Both were detained by detectives.

During questioning, Melo confirmed his involvement and corroborated other eyewitness accounts as to the details of the altercation, and the reason it started.

Search warrants were executed on Downey's residence and on Melo's vehicle (located in the garage at Downey's residence).

As a result of the search warrants, detectives located the clothing worn by Downey during the shooting, the firearm, and a magazine with ammunition in it.

**George Edward Downey B/M DOB/08-03-1975** was arrested by detectives and charged as follows:

- Attempted Murder (2<sup>nd</sup> Degree – Not premeditated)
- Aggravated Battery w/a Firearm
- Discharging a Firearm in Public from a Vehicle
- Battery
- Bond - \$71,000.

The case remains under investigation.

#### **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.**