



Hernando County Sheriff's Office

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Media Release

From: Michael Terry
Community Relations Specialist, 352-797-3608

Re: Weeki Wachee Woman Charged with Four Counts of Animal Cruelty

Date: March 12, 2018

On 3-6-18 at 11:21 a.m., Hernando County deputies were dispatched to 11980 Robina Road in Weeki Wachee in reference to an animal complaint.

When deputies arrived they spoke to Patricia Pierce, a neighbor who called in the complaint.

Pierce said a group of construction workers, who were working in the area, were first to notice what appeared to be a dead dog inside the residence. When she learned of the deceased dog, she decided to call 911.

Upon looking into the residence, deputies observed the deceased dog lying on the living room floor.

Deputies then made telephone contact with the owner of the home, Lauren Kopp, W/F DOB 6-25-1982, who stated she was renting the house to a friend and did not have keys to get into the house. She denied ownership of the deceased dog.

Deputies eventually made entry into the garage through an unlocked side door.

Deputies noted the garage floor was covered in feces.

Deputies then entered the laundry room area between the garage and main house where they found two additional deceased dogs.

Upon finding the additional deceased dogs, deputies exited the garage.

Kopp was requested by deputies to respond to the residence.

When Kopp arrived, she continued to deny ownership of the deceased dogs. Kopp said she had given all her dogs to a shelter in Citrus County prior to moving. Attempts to contact the renter were unsuccessful.

While Kopp said she regularly checks the mail at the residence, she could not recall the last time she saw the renter at the residence.

While Kopp was speaking to deputies, several neighbors approached telling deputies the deceased dogs in question did in fact belong to Kopp.

Neighbors told deputies that no one had been staying at the house since Kopp left following Hurricane Irma in September.

Deputies returned to the residence on March 7, at which time Kopp was able to unlock the home.

In addition to the three deceased dogs located on March 6, deputies found the remains of a fourth dog. There was feces and urine located throughout the house with no access to food or water for the dogs. All four dogs were found to be in advanced stages of decomposition.

On March 9, investigators contacted Kopp's former boyfriend of nine years, Michael Oliveira.

He indicated Kopp owned four dogs prior to the end of their relationship in 2015. He was able to name and describe all four dogs in detail.

Using photographs provided by deputies, Oliveira was able to positively identify three of the deceased dogs as belonging to Kopp.

A warrant was issued on March 9 for Kopp's arrest on four felony counts of Animal Cruelty.

On March 10, Kopp was taken into custody at a residence located at 11380 Paoli Court, Weeki Wachee. Her bond was set at \$8,000.

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.