



## 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:** UPDATE - ARREST MADE - Detectives Investigating Two Commercial Robberies

**Date:** March 7, 2019

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#### Update

The suspect responsible for committing the two Commercial Robberies described below was identified on 03-06-19 and placed under arrest.

**Joseph Constanzo Jr. W/M DOB/02-28-1963**, of New Port Richey, was taken into custody yesterday afternoon in Pasco County after he committed a Bank Robbery in Port Richey.

Hernando County detectives responded to Pasco County to interview Constanzo, who confessed to committing both robberies in Hernando County. Constanzo told detectives he committed the robberies to support his drug addiction.

Constanzo was charged with the two Commercial Robberies in Hernando County and four additional robberies in Pasco County.

#### Original Information – 02-20-19

On 02-19-19 just after 4 p.m., Hernando County deputies were dispatched to the Dollar General store, located at 331 Commercial Way in Spring Hill, regarding a Commercial Robbery.

Upon arrival, deputies met with the clerk who advised that a white male approached the register with some candy. As the clerk was scanning the items, the male stated, in a deep voice, to “keep the register open.” The clerk believed the male needed change and was not initially alarmed.

When the cash register drawer opened, the male (suspect) began reaching into the drawer and grabbing at the cash. The clerk grabbed the suspect's hands in an effort to restrain him but soon lost his grip. The suspect then pushed the clerk backwards and away from the register. The suspect continued pulling cash from the register and then fled from the store.

The suspect was described as a white male, mid 50's, weighing approximately 240 pounds. He had dark eyes and salt/pepper hair that was balding on top and he was un-shaven. He was wearing a blue t-shirt and khaki pants. The suspect had an unknown tattoo on his right forearm.

Witnesses reported seeing the suspect get into what they believed was a newer model, white Dodge Caravan that was parked facing the store, just south of the front doors. The suspect then backed out and left northbound through the parking lot toward Caribbean Drive, then southbound on Commercial Way at a high rate of speed.

When pulling out onto Commercial Way, witnesses stated it appeared a Mercedes Benz almost struck the white Dodge Caravan. The driver of the Mercedes continuously beeped the horn at the van until they were out of sight.

Just before 4:30 p.m., deputies were dispatched to the Beall's Outlet, located at 1460 Pinehurst Drive in Spring Hill, regarding a Commercial Robbery.

Upon arrival, deputies made contact with the clerk who advised that a white male, matching the description from the previous robbery, approached the register with a soda and a pair of shoes. As the clerk began to process the transaction, the male leaned over the counter, closer to the clerk, and whispered, "This is a robbery."

The clerk advised the suspect that she was unable to open the register. The suspect told her again to open it, and again she refused. The clerk called her supervisor, who came to the register, not knowing the suspect was attempting a robbery. The supervisor advised the suspect that neither one could open the register until he paid for his items. He became angry, grabbed the soda off the counter and walked out of the store.

Witnesses at this location also described the suspect vehicle to be a newer model, white Dodge Caravan.

Detectives are currently investigating both cases.

If you have information on these cases or the individual responsible for these crimes, please contact Detective Jason Tippin at 352-754-6830.

If you would like to remain anonymous – Please call Hernando County Crime Stoppers at 1-866-990-TIPS (8477) or submit your tip via the internet at <http://www.hernandocountycrimestoppers.com> . You will remain anonymous and also be eligible for a reward up to \$1,000 cash!

PHOTOS AVAILABLE ON THE HCSO FACEBOOK PAGE.

### **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.**