



## 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:** District Two Detectives Apprehend Another Property Crimes Suspect

**Date:** August 23, 2019

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Between 08-17-19 and 08-19-19, the Hernando County Sheriff's Office received several reports of burglaries to vehicles and structures in Spring Hill. Most of the offenses occurred west of Mariner Boulevard, between Spring Hill Drive and Elgin Boulevard. The cases were assigned to District Two Detectives Owens and Desmond. The detectives received valuable surveillance video from a vehicle burglary victim who captured the suspect and the suspect's vehicle on their RING doorbell camera. In addition, the detectives obtained surveillance video from a convenience store where the suspect attempted to use a stolen credit card from another vehicle burglary.

On 08-20-19, Detective Owens was assigned a missing person case in which John Lew made several suicidal statements to family members before disappearing. Upon reviewing the case, Detective Owens noticed Lew matched the suspect depicted in the RING doorbell video. Detective Owens also determined that the vehicle Lew owned was the same as what appeared on the surveillance video.

The detectives departed the office in search for Lew. Less than 10 minutes later, they found Lew's vehicle parked at a residence on Deltona Boulevard. As the detectives were approaching the residence, Lew walked outside, but ran back inside when he saw law enforcement. A perimeter was set up around the residence and dialog was established. Two minutes later, Lew surrendered peacefully and was placed under arrest. Lew never attempted to harm himself and did not meet Baker Act criteria.

During an interview with Lew, he admitted to his involvement in many of the burglaries. The detectives also recovered numerous items from Lew's vehicle, his residence and a local pawn shop. The detectives were able to return a large amount of stolen property to the victims, who were extremely grateful.

**John Lew DOB/10-12-1979 has been charged with the following:**

- Vehicle Burglary (7 counts)
- Structure Burglary (2 counts)
- Dealing in Stolen Property
- Defrauding a Pawn Broker

**Lew will also be charged with** (detectives are awaiting additional evidence):

- Petit Theft
- Uttering a Forged Instrument

This apprehension will close 12 cases with an arrest.

#### **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, ran unopposed in 2016, and remains accountable to them.**