



Hernando County Sheriff's Office

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Media Release

From: Michael Terry
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Re: Deputies Recover Woman's Stolen Cell Phone in Parking Lot of Courthouse

Date: July 13, 2020

On 07-09-2020 at 9:35 a.m., Hernando County Sheriff's deputies assigned to the Hernando County Courthouse, responded to the front lobby regarding a report of a stolen cell phone.

The victim reported accidentally leaving her iPhone 11 on the front desk in the lobby of the courthouse. When she returned a short time later to retrieve her cell phone, the victim said her cell phone was missing.

Deputies interviewed a front desk clerk who advised she overheard two males talking about a cell phone. The clerk said she only overheard a portion of the conversation as she was helping someone else.

Another clerk advised one of the men left the courthouse and the other one was still in the lobby.

Deputies proceeded to make contact with the individual in the lobby identified by the clerk.

The man denied knowing anything about a missing cell phone.

He agreed to take deputies to his vehicle. The man said his friend, who was at the front desk with him earlier, was waiting in the vehicle.

The man allowed deputies to search the vehicle for the iPhone. Deputies were unable to locate the cell phone. An initial search of the immediate area was also unsuccessful.

The two individuals were allowed to leave the scene.

A short time later deputies located the cell phone next to the tire of a nearby vehicle in the parking lot.

The phone was processed for fingerprints prior to being returned to its owner.

After consulting with the State Attorney's Office, a warrant was issued for the individual who was found waiting in the car. Once located, the individual will be charged with **Grand Theft** of a cell phone.

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.