



## Hernando County Sheriff's Office

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### Media Release

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

**Re:** Update – Arrest Made – Animal Cruelty  
Man Attacked by Dogs After Leaving Friend's House

**Date:** August 11, 2020

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#### Update

On 08-12-20, Deputy William Harsanyi drafted a warrant for the arrest of Colleen Meyer.

The warrant was presented to the Honorable Judge Donald Barbee and ultimately signed, charging Meyer with nine counts of Animal Cruelty.

The warrant was issued/signed as a result of Meyer leaving one adult female dog and eight newborn puppies unattended in an enclosed and unventilated travel trailer with no air conditioning, food, or water. The temperature inside the travel trailer was extreme.

Later in the day on 08-12-20, Deputy Harsanyi was conducting Traffic Enforcement on Wiscon Road in Brooksville when he observed Meyer driving westbound. Deputy Harsanyi observed the vehicle Meyer was driving had a broken windshield and conducted a Traffic Stop.

Upon approaching Meyer's vehicle, Deputy Harsanyi observed a gray adult male pit/mix in the passenger seat. Upon seeing the dog, Deputy Harsanyi realized this dog was the remaining dog that was unaccounted for from the investigation, as it was not located after it ran away.

An Animal Enforcement Officer (AEO) was summoned to the scene to take possession of the dog. The dog was delivered to Hernando County Animal Services for quarantine purposes.

Deputy Harsanyi placed Colleen Meyer under arrest for the Hernando County warrant. She was transported to the Hernando County Detention Center and charged as follows:

- Animal Cruelty (9 counts)

- Bond - \$4,500 (per the bond schedule).  
The case remains active.

### **Original Information – 08-11-20**

On 08-08-20 just before noon, Hernando County Sheriff's Deputies, Animal Enforcement Officers (AEO), and Hernando County Fire and Emergency Services (HCFES) were dispatched to 5370 California Street in Brooksville regarding a Dog Attack.

The caller told the 9-1-1 operator a man was being attacked by three dogs. The caller then disconnected.

Another caller reporting incident stated two of the three dogs had run off, and the other one was currently contained in a travel trailer on the property.

First Responders arrived to find the male victim suffering from severe injuries (dog bites) to his right leg. He was treated on scene by HCFES then transported to a local hospital.

Before leaving the scene, the victim told Animal Enforcement Officers he had been visiting a friend at the California Street address. When the victim left his friend's residence (one of three structures on the same property) he heard puppies whimpering and attempted to locate where the noise was coming from.

After talking a few steps in the direction of the whimpering sounds, the victim was attacked by three adult dogs. The dogs were described as one red (female) and two black and white (male) "pit/mix" type dogs. When the second caller called, the female was contained and the two males were still running loose.

Animal Enforcement Officers immediately began searching for the two male dogs. Each time the dogs were spotted, they fled before being caught. Finally, each of the male dogs was caught by Animal Enforcement Officers and Patrol Deputies. It was noted that both dogs were extremely aggressive, as AEOs attempted to impound them.

Another Animal Enforcement Officer responded to the travel trailer to impound the female dog. Again, the AEO noted extreme aggression with the female dog during the impound process. Two AEOs were required to impound the dog from inside the travel trailer.

While attempting to confine the adult female dog, AEOs heard puppies whimpering and saw one puppy on the floor of the travel trailer. The puppy, soaked with sweat and warm to the touch, was removed and placed in the cab of the AEO's vehicle in an effort to lower its body temperature. Upon removing the adult female dog, AEOs noted that she was emaciated, with her hip, back, and rib bones protruding.

AEOs and Firefighters returned to the travel trailer to retrieve the puppies. During this process, one of the AEOs became ill with heat exhaustion. The AEO was treated on scene by HCFES then transported to a local hospital.

The temperature was measured inside the travel trailer with an infrared thermometer; it registered 108 degrees. It should be noted, the door of the travel trailer (and only source of ventilation) had been open for approximately 30 minutes when the inside temperature was measured.

Additionally, AEOs noted there was no food or water in the travel trailer for the dogs/puppies.

In total, seven puppies were removed from various locations throughout the travel trailer. All were warm to the touch, panting profusely, wet with sweat, and whimpering. All of the puppies were placed together in the air-conditioned cab of the AEO's vehicle and transported, along with their mother, to Hernando County Animal Services (HCAS).

On 08-09-20, AEOs responded back to the scene to speak with witnesses. While on scene, Colleen Meyer, the owner of the dogs and puppies, arrived. AEOs requested a deputy to respond.

As AEOs spoke with Meyer, Meyer asked them how many puppies were removed the day before. Upon being advised that only seven puppies were removed, Meyer stated that there were eight puppies total. AEOs reentered the travel trailer and located the one remaining puppy under a piece of furniture. The puppy was taken to HCAS and placed with its mother and the other puppies.

Meyer was issued citations for Animal Bite, Mistreatment, and Unrestrained Animal. Charges are pending for Animal Cruelty.

The following animals were seized from the property:

- **Adult Female** – Pit/Mix – Red
- **Adult Male** – Pit/Mix – Black & White
- **Adult Male** – Pit/Mix – Black & White
- **Puppy Female** – Pit/Mix – Blue/White Nose
- **Puppy Female** – Pit/Mix – Blue/White Chest
- **Puppy Female** – Pit/Mix – Blue/White Chest
- **Puppy Female** – Pit/Mix – Black
- **Puppy Male** – Pit/Mix – Blue
- **Puppy Male** – Pit/Mix – Tan/Black Face
- **Puppy Male** – Pit/Mix – Blue
- **Puppy Male** – Pit/Mix – Black.

### ***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.***