



Hernando County Sheriff's Office

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Media Release

From: Michael Terry
Deputy PIO, 352-797-3608

Re: Spring Hill Man Charged with Arson and Multiple Counts of Animal Cruelty

Date: April 11, 2022

On 04-07-2022, Hernando County Sheriff's deputies, on multiple occasions, responded to a residence on Collingswood Street in Spring Hill following numerous 9-1-1 calls made from a resident of the home.

On each occasion, the sole occupant of the home, **Evan Saslaw DOB/05-28-1992**, refused to speak to deputies at the scene or let them inside the residence.

Deputies planned to obtain an arrest warrant the following morning for Saslaw on a charge of **Misuse of 9-1-1**.

On 04-08-2022 at 9:40 a.m., numerous individuals called 9-1-1 to report an explosion and fire at Saslaw's residence on Collingswood Street.

Witnesses observed Saslaw running away from the residence, possibly armed with a handgun.

Deputies located Saslaw a short-time later in the area of Ludlow Lane and Norvell Road in Spring Hill. Saslaw was immediately taken into custody on the active warrant for the Misuse of 9-1-1. A gun was located in Saslaw's possession at the time of his arrest.

Hernando County Fire and Emergency Services responded to the scene to extinguish the fire. During a search of the debris, firefighters located three cats, two dogs, and a snake that had perished in the fire. Only a dog and a cat survived the fire.

Investigation revealed, Saslaw started the fire by pouring gasoline in the garage area and lighting it on fire. Saslaw told investigators he wanted to, "Cause a scene to get people to notice."

The heat generated from the fire damaged several windows of a neighboring home.

In addition to the warrant arrest, Saslaw was arrested on charges of Arson, Criminal Mischief, and six counts of Animal Cruelty.

Saslaw remains incarcerated at the Hernando County Detention Center in lieu of a \$36,000 bond.

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 was re-elected in 2020. Sheriff Nienhuis remains accountable to the people of Hernando County.