



Hernando County Sheriff's Office

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Media Release

From: Michael Terry
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Re: Weeki Wachee Property Manager Charged with Organized Fraud

Date: October 26, 2022

In August 2022, the Hernando County Sheriff's Office began receiving numerous complaints from rental property owners regarding a local property manager who they believed was committing fraud.

John Bonesteel DOB/04-29-1961, operator of Nature Coast Assistance, served as the property manager in Hernando County for the rental properties in question.

Starting in 2022, several of the property owners began noticing inconsistencies in their rental incomes as well as changes to their online booking accounts through various online rental sites.

Upon further investigation, the victims discovered Bonesteel was renting the properties "off-site" and pocketing the proceeds.

Detectives with the Sheriff's Office soon got involved in the investigation.

Investigation revealed Bonesteel developed several schemes to field bookings of the victims' rental properties off-site.

Over a 24-month period, detectives found Bonesteel conducted 54 off-site bookings totaling \$107,127.

The investigation also revealed several instances in which people prepaid for bookings in the coming year (2023), which will result in no rental property for the booking.

On 10-17-2022, Bonesteel was arrested on charges of **Organized Fraud** and **Grand Theft**. He was transported to the Hernando County Detention Center where his bond was set at \$11,000.

The investigation is ongoing, and additional charges are pending.

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.