



## Hernando County Sheriff's Office

P.O. BOX 10070 – BROOKSVILLE, FL 34603-0070 FAX 352 796-0493 PHONE 352 754-6830

### Media Release

---

From: Denise M. Moloney  
Public Relations Manager, 352-797-3609

Re: Man Arrested for Child Abuse, False Imprisonment, and Possession of  
Incendiary Device - 2023-15827

Date: May 17, 2023

---

On 05-16-23 just before 8:30 p.m., Hernando County Sheriff's Deputies E. Miller and D. Hadsell were conducting proactive patrols in the area of California Street and Narrow Street in Brooksville when they observed a silver Nissan being driven recklessly in the area.

As the deputies attempted to conduct a Traffic Stop, the driver threw something out the driver's side window.

The driver, later identified as Ricky Thomas, then pulled over in the area of Orlando Avenue and Chancas Street. Thomas was detained by deputies.

Upon making contact with Thomas, deputies detected a strong odor of gasoline emanating from within the vehicle and also from Thomas' person. Further investigation revealed, the area where the driver had just been driving, also smelled of gasoline.

Investigation revealed that Thomas was previously in a relationship with a female who lives in the general area. Upon making contact with said female, deputies learned that Thomas was parked in her driveway for several hours, harassing her and a juvenile who was also present.

Ultimately, Thomas exited his vehicle and began arguing with the female. The juvenile, hearing the argument, responded to the back patio and got in between Thomas and the female. Thomas then struck the juvenile in the head. Immediately after striking the juvenile, Thomas picked up the juvenile, from behind, and forcefully carried the juvenile off the patio and toward Thomas' vehicle. All the while, the juvenile was fighting to get free of Thomas' grip. Finally, the juvenile broke free and ran into the residence.

Deputies noted several injuries on the juvenile's body, both from being struck and being forcefully removed from the patio and carried toward the vehicle.

Utilizing a gas can that was stored on the property, Thomas filled a plastic water bottle with gasoline. Thomas then added items to create a "wick" thus, making a "Molotov Cocktail" that he planned to toss onto the female's property, where he had recently poured gasoline.

Deputies located the Molotov Cocktail in the area where they observed Thomas throw something out the car window. Fortunately, deputies observed, and were able to detain Thomas, before he deployed the device.

**Ricky Eugene Thomas DOB/11-23-1988** was placed under arrest and charged as follows:

- Child Abuse
- False Imprisonment
- Discharge/Place Destructive Device
- Bond- \$15,000.

#### *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.*