



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: Ridgeline Lane Shooting Deemed Accidental – 2024-03258

Date: February 1, 2024

On 01-21-24 just after 1 p.m., Hernando County Sheriff's deputies, along with Hernando County Fire Rescue were dispatched to an apartment residence on Ridgeline Lane in Spring Hill (Mariner's Cay Apartment Complex), regarding a shooting.

Upon arrival, deputies located the victim, a male juvenile, inside the apartment. The victim was suffering from one gunshot wound to his torso. The victim was treated on scene by fire rescue personnel before being transported to a local trauma center.

Witnesses identified the person who shot the victim as Thesani James DOB/08-16-2005 and stated James left the complex via Uber transportation.

Deputies immediately began searching for James.

Patrol deputies worked with school resource deputies to identify an address for James. James' last known address was listed within the Bridgewater Club apartment complex, just off Commercial Way, beside the Target store.

Deputies responded to the address, located James, and placed him in custody.

James immediately told deputies the shooting was accidental, as he was unaware the firearm was loaded. James and the victim are friends and were playing video games together in the apartment. James removed the firearm from his backpack to show it to the victim. While handling the firearm, it went off – striking the victim in the torso. James told deputies he fled because he was scared.

James told deputies the firearm was inside his apartment and allowed detectives to go inside to retrieve it.

It should be noted, before being transported from the scene, the victim also told deputies the shooting was accidental.

Detectives arrived to take over the investigation.

Two females who were present in the apartment just before the shooting occurred, also told detectives the shooting was accidental, stating the males are friends and were just playing video games together.

Once the victim was able to provide a statement to detectives, he again reiterated the shooting was accidental.

The investigation, coupled with statements from the victim, two witnesses, and James revealed the shooting was accidental, as James did not do it purposely, nor was it done with malice.

Thesani James was released from custody and transported back to his residence.

Detectives are still working to determine the origin of the firearm.

Hernando County Crime Stoppers / Anonymous Tips

If you have information on this case, please contact Hernando County Crime Stoppers. You will remain anonymous!

Hernando County Crime Stoppers can be reached by phone at 1-866-990-TIPS (8477) or **TIPS from a cell phone.

You may also submit your tip via the internet at <http://www.hernandocountycrimestoppers.com> .

You will remain anonymous and also be eligible for a reward up to \$5,000 cash!