



## Hernando County Sheriff's Office

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

### **Media Release**

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

**Re:** Celebratory Gunfire During the Holidays

**Date:** December 31, 2020

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For many communities it is the time of year when some people celebrate the festivities by firing gunshots into the air. Illogical thinking we agree because we all know what goes up must come down. In these cases, it's bullets moving at deadly speeds.

In years past, many people have been seriously wounded or killed by falling bullets on New Year's Eve. Those tragic deaths and serious injuries, which resulted from stray bullets, have motivated Sheriff Nienhuis to remind everyone once again that stray bullets can injure or kill innocent bystanders.

The Hernando County Sheriff's Office will be taking a zero tolerance stance on any and all illegal gun use and gun crime during the holiday. Please do your part to make the holiday a happy and safe one.

"Celebrating the New Year should never be at the expense of someone else's safety. Impaired driving and celebratory gunfire are both ways to start the New Year off with the sobering reality that your actions took the life of an innocent person. Please leave the firearms secured and never drive impaired," said Sheriff Al Nienhuis.

If anyone hears gunfire or observes suspicious activity, they are encouraged to call the Hernando County Sheriff's Office or their local law enforcement agency.

**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.