



## Hernando County Sheriff's Office

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

### Media Release

---

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

**Re:** Brooksville Woman Charged with Lewd and Lascivious Battery on New York Teen

**Date:** March 31, 2021

---

On 05-25-2020, the Hernando County Sheriff's Office received information about a missing juvenile from New York who was possibly in Hernando County.

At the time, the 15-year-old juvenile was last seen at his home in New York on 05-24-2020. The juvenile's mother reported she received a text from her son on 05-25-2020 indicating he was in a gated community by the name of either "Brooksville" or "Brookridge."

A friend of the juvenile advised police in New York that the juvenile paid money for a person to drive him to Florida to meet a female he met online.

The friend described the female, later identified as **Kelley Gaudette W/F DOB/01-21-1989**, as a woman in her thirties with long brown hair and a 9-year-old child.

On 05-26-2020, Hernando County Sheriff's deputies were able to locate the missing juvenile at a residence on Scepter Avenue in Brooksville. The woman living at the residence matched the description given by the juvenile's friend.

Initially, Gaudette denied knowing of the missing juvenile's whereabouts. Gaudette eventually went into the house and had the juvenile come to the door to speak to the deputy.

Upon speaking to the juvenile, the deputy noted the teen appeared to have hickeys on his neck. The juvenile indicated the marks were from a barstool hitting him in the neck.

The juvenile advised Gaudette paid a friend to drive him to Florida. He also indicated Gaudette bought him a cell phone so they could communicate.

Investigation revealed the juvenile met Gaudette two months prior via an online chatroom for depression. The juvenile indicated he was trying to get away from a verbally abusive family situation. The juvenile further stated he had permission from his mother to be in Florida.

The juvenile denied having a sexual relationship with Gaudette. The juvenile's mother indicated her son suffers from mental illness and did not have access to his medication.

The mother further advised she was aware of her son communicating with an older woman online and told her son it was unacceptable.

Investigation revealed Gaudette believed the juvenile was considering self-harm due to his situation, so she offered him a place to stay and paid a friend to drive him to Florida.

Gaudette indicated she viewed the juvenile as a son and denied any inappropriate contact. Gaudette advised she believed the juvenile's mother gave him permission to be in Florida.

The juvenile was removed from the residence and taken to a facility until his mother could pick him up.

On 06-18-2020, deputies made contact with the juvenile's mother who indicated she found disturbing messages between her son and Gaudette.

The mother indicated the messages revealed her son and Gaudette were in a romantic relationship, which she provided to law enforcement.

On 07-29-2020, the mother contacted law enforcement again about nude images and videos she found of Gaudette on a thumb drive belonging to her son. This evidence was also provided to law enforcement.

On 03-05-2021, detectives in Hernando County received a recorded interview with the juvenile conducted by authorities in New York. The juvenile advised Gaudette sent him nude photos and videos of herself via an online app. Upon arrival at Gaudette's residence, the juvenile advised they engaged in sexual relations.

On 03-29-2021, detectives questioned Gaudette again. Gaudette continued to deny any inappropriate contact with the juvenile. When confronted with the evidence collected, Gaudette requested an attorney.

Gaudette was arrested and charged as follows:

- **Lewd and Lascivious Battery on a victim older than 12 but less than 16 years of age**
- **Principle to Traveling to Meet a Minor**
- **Unlawful Use of a Two-Way Communication Device**
- **Transmission of Harmful Materials to a Minor using an Electronic Device**

Gaudette was transported to the Hernando County Detention Center where her bond was set at \$19,000.

## **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.