



Hernando County Sheriff's Office

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Media Release

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

Re: Owner Leaves Dog in Vehicle to Deliver Food in Wesley Chapel – 2022-18779

Date: June 29, 2022

On 06-25-2022 at 10 p.m., Hernando County Sheriff's deputies responded to Linda Pedersen Park in Hernando Beach in reference to a report of an endangered animal.

The caller, who had gone fishing, advised a dog had been left alone inside a vehicle from approximately 2 p.m. until 10 p.m. when he returned to his vehicle from fishing. All the windows were closed except for the driver's side window, which was cracked slightly.

The outdoor temperature during this time reached 95 degrees.

Deputies immediately responded to the scene and removed the dog from the vehicle through a previously damaged window that was sealed with plastic sheeting.

Deputies noted the dog had defecated throughout the interior of the vehicle.

While deputies were on scene, the owner of the vehicle, **Amy Sitaro DOB/09-11-1972**, returned to the scene.

Sitaro advised deputies she left the park around 2 p.m. to ride with her boyfriend who was headed to Wesley Chapel to deliver food for DoorDash and Grubhub. Sitaro said neither company allows dogs in a vehicle while working.

Animal Enforcement Officers responded to the scene to take custody of the dog and complete a fitness petition.

A warrant for Sitaro's arrest is forthcoming on a charge of **Animal Cruelty**.

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.