



Hernando County Sheriff's Office

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Media Release

From: Denise M. Moloney
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Re: Vice and Narcotics Search Warrant - 20 Cherry Street – 2019-42214

Date: January 13, 2020

On 01-10-2020, Hernando County Sheriff's Vice and Narcotics detectives executed a Search Warrant at 20 Cherry Street, within the city limits of Brooksville.

The search warrant was a culmination of a months-long investigation into the resident, Phillip Stephens, who was suspected of selling illegal narcotics, including Fentanyl and Heroin.

During a search of the residence, detectives located the following illegal narcotics:

- Fentanyl (4.1 grams) – trafficking amount
- Heroin (2.4 grams)
- MDMA/Ecstasy (four pills – equaling 2 grams)
- Alprazolam (four pills – equaling 1 gram)
- Marijuana (16 grams)
- Unknown Pill (22.6 grams) – the pill has yet to be identified/sent to FDLE for testing.

Detectives also located:

- Five shotgun shells
- \$2,430 in US currency.

Detectives seized the shotgun shells and the US currency. Phillip Stephens is a convicted felon; he is not permitted to be in possession of ammunition. Additionally, Stephens is not employed and could not provide a source of income.

It should also be noted that Stephens resides within 1,000 feet of Hernando High School.

Phillip Wade Stephens DOB/01-12-1960 was arrested on scene and charged accordingly.

Stephens was also charged with Sale and Possession of a Controlled Substance and Trafficking in Heroin (outside of the search warrant). His bond was set at \$188,000.

The case remains active.

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 remains accountable to them.