

Third person arrested in animal cruelty investigation

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Ken J. Mascara
Sheriff of St. Lucie County, FL
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Headline: Third person arrested in animal cruelty investigation

Sheriff Ken Mascara announced that Charles Linear Cunningham, Jr., 31, was arrested today in connection to the April 19 investigation of 22 abused and malnourished dogs located in the 1300 block of Angle Road in Fort Pierce.

According to the Sheriff, information gathered in the ongoing investigation identified Cunningham as the spouse of Shayla Wade who was arrested on April 19. Cunningham was arrested at 9:35 a.m. in the 800 block of North 32nd Street in Fort Pierce.

"Our detectives identified Cunningham and a warrant was issued for his arrest on April 24," said Sheriff Ken J. Mascara. "One day later, he was located and is now behind bars for his involvement in mistreating these animals."

According to the Sheriff, the dogs, most of which were Pit Bulls, were located by the property owner who does not live at the home and called 9-1-1 upon finding them.

"The scene was absolutely disgusting," said Sheriff Ken J. Mascara. "The dogs were tied up with heavy chains around the necks, very tight-fitting collars, had no source of water or dog food and were covered in mange and sores. Two were unable to walk and had to be taken to emergency treatment on a stretcher."

According to the Sheriff, Shayla D. Wade, 31, was found inside the home and indicated she knew the dogs were on the property. Andreo Denetrick Hunt, 44, was identified as a friend of Wade and also admitted to knowing the dogs were on the property and to feeding them.

Wade and Hunt have both been released from jail pending court proceedings. Cunningham was booked into the St. Lucie County Jail on 22 counts of animal cruelty and held in lieu of a \$33,000 bond.

ABOUT THE SHERIFF:

The Florida Constitution establishes the Office of the elected County Sheriff who is responsible for preserving the peace, carrying out the orders of Florida courts and the Board of County Commissioners, and providing deputies at court sessions and meetings of the Board of County Commissioners. The Sheriff is the chief correctional officer of the county. Sheriff Ken J. Mascara is elected by the people of St. Lucie County and is accountable to them.