



Rick Staly, Sheriff

## FLAGLER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

*"An honor to serve, a duty to protect."*

# NEWS RELEASE

**Date:** November 2, 2019

**Prepared by:** Brittany Kershaw

**Phone and Email:** (386) 586-2637; [bkershaw@flaglersheriff.com](mailto:bkershaw@flaglersheriff.com)

**Release #:** 219

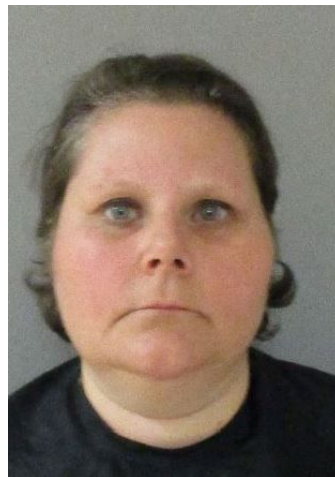
### **Parents Charged with Five Counts of Child Neglect After Juvenile Makes Desperate Call for Help on Halloween**

On October 31, the Flagler County Sheriff's Office (FCSO) received information through the Abuse Hotline stating that a 14 year old juvenile was contemplating suicide due to her living conditions and alleged physical and emotional abuse by her mother.

The juvenile also stated that she was currently being homeschooled but not being taught anything. Instead, the juvenile alleged that she was being used as a full-time caregiver for her four younger siblings (ages 6, 8, 9, and 12), three dogs, a rabbit, and two chickens while the parents, Betty Nicolichchia-Allen (42 years old) and Dennis Allen (33 years old), work until the late hours of the night.



Left: Dennis Allen



Right: Betty Nicolichchia-Allen

FCSO responded to the residence on Water Oak Road in Bunnell and immediately noticed that the home was in complete disarray. The grass in the front yard was high enough to hide a small child and littered with gas cans, beer cans, rust covered metal materials, and other trash. The front porch of the home was covered in fecal matter from two chickens that freely roamed the property.

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1769 East Moody Blvd., Bunnell, FL 32110

386-437-4116 – Fax 386-586-4820

Mailing: P.O. Box 879, Bunnell, FL 32110

[www.flaglersheriff.com](http://www.flaglersheriff.com)

FCSO deputies spoke with the juvenile who invited them inside the home. The 14 year old confirmed that she was the one who called the Abuse Hotline. Further inspection of the home revealed deplorable living conditions. Every room of the home contained an abundance of animal feces, animal urine, rotting food, roaches, and other flying insects. There was no edible food in the refrigerator and there was one bag of frozen chicken in the freezer. Some rooms were so littered with trash that deputies were unable to see the floor and their boots stuck to the filth-covered floors.

When deputies inspected the only bathroom within the home, they discovered a water hose being run through the window and into the shower due to the home having no running water. The toilet appeared to have been used for days on end with no way to discard the waste in the bowl.



Left: Kitchen



Right: Refrigerator

When interviewed, the children told deputies the last time they had been bathed ranged between 3 days to a week. The children also told deputies that when they did bathe they had to travel to Bull Creek Fish Camp since there was no running water inside the home.

“This is a traumatic situation for all of the children involved,” Sheriff Rick Staly said. “Halloween is a day where kids should be out having fun, not contemplating ending their life. I want to commend the girl for calling the Abuse Hotline and being brave enough to ask for help. These children were living in deplorable conditions. I am thankful that these kids are now safe from these two individuals who obviously do not know how to properly care for children.”

The Department of Children and Families (DCF) responded to the scene and took custody of the children. Based on statements made during the initial call to the Abuse Hotline and while deputies were on scene, one juvenile was taken into protective custody under the Baker Act.

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Betty Nicolicchia-Allen and Dennis Allen are each charged with five counts of Child Neglect. They were arrested on Friday afternoon, November 1, and transported to the Sheriff Perry Hall Inmate Detention Facility. They remain in jail on a \$5,000.00 bond each.

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