



Rick Staly, Sheriff

FLAGLER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

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

NEWS RELEASE

Date: July 12, 2022
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Release #: 2022-173

Traffic Stop Ends Felon's Multi-State Crime Spree

Last Friday morning deputies conducted a traffic stop that put an end to a multi-state crime spree. The driver, identified as 36-year-old felon Stephen Johnson, was arrested for Unlawful Possession of Personal Identification Information, three counts of Petit Theft and Violation of Probation for recent Burglary charges in Pompano Beach, FL.



Around 7 a.m. Friday, deputies conducted a traffic stop on South I-95 on a silver Kia with a South Carolina tag that was observed impeding the flow of traffic in the left lane and had a tag on the vehicle that did not belong to it. Deputies also observed the driver not wearing a seatbelt. The driver continuously slowed down to 45mph trying to prevent the deputy from getting behind him, but the deputy was ultimately able to successfully conduct a traffic stop.

The driver was identified as 36-year-old Stephen Johnson, and upon speaking with the deputy, he provided an AVIS rental agreement for the 2022 silver Kia, but deputies confirmed that the tag attached to the vehicle was not assigned to it. The tag attached to the vehicle belonged to a 2007 Saturn Outlook from Daufuskie Island, SC, which had attached to the Florida tag with double-sided tape. It was confirmed that the attached tag was reported stolen from Beaufort, SC.

Upon questioning, Johnson claimed he didn't know why his Florida tag was "concealed" by the South Carolina tag or where the tag came from. Shortly after, he advised he "found it." Johnson was arrested without incident for having a Tag Attached Not Assigned along with Violation of Probation.

Deputies then conducted a search of the vehicle and found the same double-sided tape in the center console and stuck to the visor sunglass holder. Behind the passenger seat, a purse was recovered with identifying documents for a Clay County, FL resident, who confirmed she was a victim of a car burglary on July 8. Along with the purse, deputies also found two laptop computers and four cell phones, with one of the laptops appearing to be owned by a healthcare company. Also recovered was a green notebook containing multiple usernames and password credentials for medical databases, believed to

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belong to the laptop owner's company. Johnson was questioned about the items found in the vehicle and advised deputies that he bought the laptop off the Internet, but didn't know where it was from. Utilizing investigative techniques, deputies confirmed the owner of the laptop to be a healthcare company.

Johnson's criminal history dates back to 2004. He's been charged with 70 felonies prior to his arrest in Flagler County, resulting in 31 felony convictions and 15 misdemeanor charges. Along with his recent charges in Pompano Beach, FL, Johnson has previously been charged by Orange County Sheriff's Office, Plantation Police Department, Coral Springs Police Department, Broward County Sheriff's Office, Indian River County Sheriff's Office, St. Lucie County Sheriff's Office, Marion County Sheriff's Office, Delaware State University Police Department, Georgia State Patrol and the Glynn County Sheriff's Office.

"This dirtbag made the mistake of driving through Flagler County after committing crimes in South Carolina and Clay County, Florida," Sheriff Rick Staly said. "Fortunately an eagle-eye deputy brought his crime spree to a halt before he could prey on our community. Even after 70 felony charges for various crimes and convicted 31 times since 2004 he hasn't learned his lesson. Time for him to go away to prison so he can no longer prey on people. I'm proud of the deputy who was patrolling our roadways that led to putting this felon back behind bars where he belongs."

Johnson is facing charges for Possession of Identification of Person without Authorization, Petit Theft, Attached Tag Not Assigned and Violation of Probation for Burglary in Pompano Beach, FL. He is being held at the Sheriff Perry Hall Inmate Detention Facility on no bond. The investigation is continuing by authorities in South Carolina to South Florida.

View footage of arrest here: <https://youtu.be/KyZcbRH7XD0>

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