



Rick Staly, Sheriff
FLAGLER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
"An honor to serve, a duty to protect."

NEWS RELEASE

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Bunnell Shoplifting Duo Busted After Stealing Over \$850 in Merchandise from Grocery Store

BUNNELL, Fla. – On July 18, the Flagler County Sheriff's Office (FCSO) Problem Area Crime Enforcement (PACE) Unit teamed up with the Bunnell Police Department (BPD) to arrest two suspects – already on felony probation – that had stolen over \$850 worth of goods from a Palm Coast grocery store.

The shoplifting incident took place the day before at the Winn Dixie located at 111 Flagler Plaza Drive, where, at approximately 6:00 p.m., a black sedan pulled into the parking lot. A white female exited the car and went into the store. For the next half hour, she went through the store, placing items in her shopping cart. She then exited the store with the full cart, passing all points of sale without paying. Surveillance camera footage showed her making a large loop around the parking lot before walking to the black sedan and loading it with the items.

Later, a black male entered the store, walked around collecting items in a shopping cart and then abandoned the cart filled with items near a checkout lane. He spoke with an employee at the register about a missing EBT card. The employee assisted the male in his efforts to locate the card before he exited the store.

When the male left the store, appearing to look for his EBT card, he walked to the black sedan and spoke with the female near the trunk of the SUV next to the black sedan. After the conversation, they both reentered the store. The female noticed the male's filled cart had been moved to the customer service desk. She then exited the store with the cart and walked straight to the black sedan. Video showed her loading the items into the black sedan and entering the back seat. The sedan is then seen

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leaving the parking lot while the male was still inside the store. Later, the vehicle returned to pick up the male.

The first cart had a total of \$366.34, and the second cart had a total of \$490.67 of merchandise. Together both carts had a value of \$857.01.

FCSO's Real Time Crime Center issued an attempt to identify the individuals' using photos from the store surveillance system to Northeast Florida law enforcement agencies. Sergeant Weaver of the FCSO and Lieutenant Groth of the BPD identified both suspects and located Willie Lee London, Jr. and Michele Ann Sofia in a tent behind a residence on South Church Street in Bunnell. Lieutenant Groth had received information that London was a fugitive living at this location.

London, 41, of Bunnell resisted officers while he was being taken into custody and was also already on probation. He was arrested for Violation of Probation (VOP) – On Site Felony (2 counts), Obstruction without Violence, and Retail Theft – Over \$750. He is being held on a \$3,500 bond. Sofia, 38, of Bunnell was arrested for Grand Theft \$750-\$5,000 and VOP Misdemeanor. She is being held on \$2,500 bond. Both were taken to the Sheriff Perry Hall Inmate Detention Facility.



Willie Lee London, Jr. (Flagler County Jail mugshot)



Michele Ann Sofia (Flagler County Jail mugshot)

“I guess these thieves thought they were in another state or city, where you can just go in a store and steal what you want. We don’t allow that in Flagler County,” said Sheriff Rick Staly. “With their carts full of stolen groceries, they earned themselves a cot at the Green Roof Inn. I commend the outstanding teamwork between the Bunnell Police Department and our Deputies for identifying and then finding these thieves and putting them where they belong.”

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