

New Bedford man charged with OUI after hitting fire hydrant

At 3:49 pm on Sunday, New Bedford police officers discovered a vehicle idling and resting against a fire hydrant near 665 Union Street.

After investigating and talking to the driver, officers determined the driver was under the influence of alcohol. 30-year old Gerald LePage was arrested and is being charged with OUI Liquor.

Local man who committed at least eight area house breaks-ins sentenced to prison

A 31-year-old man with listed addresses in Fall River, Taunton and Providence who committed at least eight house breaks in one week in late July of 2015 was sentenced last week in Fall River Superior Court to serve six to nine years in state prison, Bristol County District Attorney Thomas M. Quinn III announced.

James Stanzione pleaded guilty to indictments charging him with eight counts of larceny from a building, six counts of unarmed burglary and two counts of breaking and entering.

All the housebreaks occurred between July 21, 2015 and July 26, 2015. Four of the break-ins occurred in Seekonk, two occurred in Swansea and another two occurred in Fall River.

The defendant was eventually arrested after surveillance images taken from some of the robberies were published in the media. A Bristol County House of Corrections employee identified the defendant from the images, and told police the defendant had just been released from jail about a month prior to the house-breaks.

The defendant had previously served jail time at least three times on past breaking and entering convictions.

The case was prosecute by Assistant District Attorney Jeanne Veenstra and the state prison sentence was imposed by Judge Raffi Yessayan. The judge also placed the defendant on supervised probation for an additional two years.

“The defendant has a terrible record of breaking into people’s home and invading their sense of privacy and security,” District Attorney Quinn said. “Simply put, this defendant is a menace who should be kept off the streets for as long as possible.”

Brockton man sentenced to 6-8 years for three convenience store robberies

A 24-year-old Brockton man, who robbed three separate convenience stores on the same night in July of 2015, was convicted at trial and sentenced to serve six to eight years

in state prison last Thursday in Fall River Superior Court, Bristol County District Attorney Thomas M. Quinn III announced today.

Amadeu Filho pleaded guilty to indictments charging him with three counts of armed and masked robbery.

His co-defendants in the case, Erickson Gomes and Jose Gomes, were convicted of the same charges in February 2018 and are currently serving five-year state prison terms.

In the early morning hours of July 11, 2015 (between approximately 3:50 a.m. and 4:45 a.m.), the co-defendants, armed with knives and wearing masks, committed robberies at three different businesses: first, at the CVS Pharmacy on Kempton Street in New Bedford; second, at the Hess Gas station at 943 County Street in Taunton; and, third, at Junior's Convenience Store on South Main Street in Freetown. The modus operandi for each robbery was essentially the same: Erickson Gomes (wearing a blue hood and white mask) and Amadeu Filho (wearing a gray hood and black mask) entered the stores and, while holding the employees at knifepoint, stole cash from the registers.

Additionally, Filho dragged the CVS worker with a knife pressed to her back to the back office before stealing the money, and one of the men punched the Hess worker in the face when they demanded he open a safe. Despite the disguises, surveillance videos from each store were sufficiently clear to show that the same two men committed each robbery. They stole approximately \$850 from CVS, several packs of Backwoods cigars and between \$100 and \$200 from Hess, and about \$325 from Junior's Convenience Store. Jose Gomes acted as the driver. Footage from the Taunton Hess showed Erickson and Filho running to a waiting car after that robbery, and a witness in Freetown saw a car with its headlights off driving away from Junior's Convenience Store following the robbery.

Lakeville Police Sgt. Michael Dwyer overheard the radio dispatches regarding the robberies in Taunton and Freetown. He went to Joe's Gas on Route 18 to check the property, but the store was still closed. Sgt. Dwyer exited the lot and checked a fenced-area nearby. There, he found a silver car with Rhode Island plates. Sgt. Dwyer observed defendant Filho pretending to be asleep in the front passenger seat. In the back seat, he saw in plain view a large amount of money scattered over the seat, a black knife, and a white plastic bag of money. After Dwyer "woke up" Filho by calling out and knocking on the window, Filho explained that he had been at a club with Jose Gomes and gotten drunk, although he did not seem intoxicated. He also claimed he did not know who owned the car. When police removed Filho from the car to speak with him, Dwyer looked where he had been sitting and observed black pants, a gray hoody, a black glove, and a black mask on the floor.

Taunton and Freetown Police sent Sgt. Dwyer still photos from the robberies and Dwyer recognized the clothing in the images as the items that were in the car. In the car, police also observed several packs of Backwood cigars, a white Hess bag containing large rolls of cash, and a white ripped pantyhose. Police located a second knife in the grassy area of the adjacent property. Police started receiving 911 calls about two men running in the woods not far from the area. The area, which includes the Ocean Spray headquarters and surrounding property, is heavily wooded and contains swamps and marshland. Police set up a perimeter around this area in order to find Erickson and Jose. Following an extensive search of the woods which lasted over an hour, police located and arrested Erickson near Cross Street at about 7:25 am. A short time later, after a foot pursuit, police located Jose, shoeless, behind Ocean Spray headquarters.

Defendant Filho was held in custody from the date of arrest on July 11, 2015, until a \$50,000 cash bail was posted on August 1, 2016. After his release and pending trial in this matter,

the defendant was arrested on June 29, 2017, for drug and gun offenses in Brockton. Police executed a search warrant at the defendant's residence after three controlled buys from the defendant and his girlfriend. Upon entry, the police located the defendant, his girlfriend, his mother and two young children inside. Inside the defendant's bedroom, the police located approximately 249 grams of heroin, approximately 42 grams of a cutting agent, \$10,000 cash and two handguns with ammunition. On June 29, 2017, the Commonwealth's motion to revoke the defendant's bail on this case was allowed. Subsequently, the defendant was indicted by a Plymouth County Grand Jury for trafficking heroin in 200 grams or more, possession of a firearm without an FID card (2 counts), and firearm violation with 1 prior violent/drug conviction (2 counts). The case in Plymouth Superior Court is still pending. On March 19, 2018, the bail revocation period on this case expired and the defendant was released on the same \$50,000 cash bail after a bail hearing.

On May 10, 2019, at 11:50 pm, ten days before the trial date, the defendant was allegedly involved in a hit and run accident in Brockton.

The jury trial before Judge William Sullivan lasted one week and was prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Carolyn Morrisette.

"I am very pleased jury held the defendant accountable for his violent armed robbery spree that occurred in three separate communities. Unfortunately, the defendant posted the \$50,000 cash bail and then committed a serious drug and gun crime in Plymouth County. He was later released again after the bail revocation time period expired," District Attorney Quinn said. "This case highlights the need for bail reform because the defendant never should have been released after committing the second crime. He clearly posed a danger to the community. It is no surprise he was arrested again 10 days before the trial. I would like to thank Lakeville Sgt. Michael Dwyer whose

alertness and efforts led to the arrest of the defendant and co-defendants.”

UPDATE: Man arrested after accosting woman walking with baby in Wareham

On Sunday morning at about 10:15 a.m., a female was out walking with her baby on 11th Street near Waban Avenue. During the course of her walk she observed a male on East Boulevard, and then a few moments later while on 11th Street the male came up from behind and physically accosted her before running off. The victim was not injured.

The victim was able to snap a picture of him fleeing on 11th street toward the East Boulevard area. Officers under the command of Sgt. Kevin Reilly canvased the area extensively, however, could not locate the suspect initially.

Officer James White remembered an individual he had dealt with recently who fit the description of the suspect. With the assistance of members of the Detective Division, the suspect, a juvenile male, was interviewed and subsequently placed under arrest.

He is charged with indecent assault and battery and accosting another person.

Five Dominican Nationals Arrested For Identity Theft in Massachusetts

Five Dominican nationals were charged in federal court in Boston as a result of a federal investigation targeting offenders of document and benefit fraud. The defendants have allegedly used the identities of U.S. Citizens from Puerto Rico as their own. All five defendants have been previously arrested on drug charges under the names of the victims whose identities they have stolen.

The following individuals have each been charged with aggravated identity theft and false representation of a Social Security number:

- Jesus Ernesto Barbosa Pimental, 54, a Dominican national residing in South Boston. According to court records, Barbosa Pimental obtained a Massachusetts identity card in the name of a U.S. citizen.
- Edward Obispo Garcia, 38, a Dominican national residing in Roxbury. It is alleged that Obispo Garcia obtained a Massachusetts driver's license in the name of a U.S. citizen.
- Juan Jose Heureaux Carmona, 27, a Dominican national residing in Roxbury. It is alleged that Heureaux Carmona obtained a Massachusetts ID card in the name of a U.S. citizen.
- Jose Narciso Rosario Maria, 47, a Dominican national residing in Boston. According to court documents, Rosario Maria obtained a Massachusetts driver's license in the name of a U.S. citizen.
- Jesus Alberto Baez Pimental, 37, a Dominican national residing in Fitchburg. It is alleged that Baez Pimental obtained a Massachusetts driver's license in the name of a U.S. citizen, and MassHealth records reflect an application

for health benefits under this same name.

The investigation was conducted by Homeland Security Investigation's Document and Benefit Fraud Task Force (DBFTF), a specialized field investigative group comprised of personnel from various local, state, and federal agencies with expertise in detecting, deterring, and disrupting organizations and individuals involved in various types of document, identity, and benefit fraud schemes.

The DBFTF is currently investigating suspected aliens who are believed to have obtained stolen identities of United States citizens born in Puerto Rico. The DBFTF has investigated individuals who have used stolen identities to obtain public benefits which they would not otherwise be eligible to receive, including Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles identity documents, Social Security numbers, MassHealth benefits, public housing benefits, and/or unemployment benefits.

In July 2018, a DBFTF-led investigation resulted in the arrests of 25 individuals on charges of identity theft and Social Security fraud, and in April 2019, a separate DBFTF-led investigation resulted in 11 additional arrests.

The charge of aggravated identity theft carries a mandatory two-year prison sentence that must run consecutively to any other sentence imposed, up to one year of supervised release, and a fine of up to \$250,000. False representation of a Social Security number provides for a sentence of up to five years in prison, three years of supervised release and a fine of \$250,000. Sentences are imposed by a federal district court judge based on the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors.

United States Attorney Andrew E. Lelling; Peter C. Fitzhugh, Special Agent in Charge of Homeland Security Investigations in Boston; and Phillip M. Coyne, Special Agent in Charge of the

U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Office of Inspector General, made the announcement today. Valuable assistance was provided by the Social Security Administration, Office of Inspector General, Office of Investigations, Boston Field Division; U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Inspector General, Northeast Regional Office; U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General, Office of Investigations; U.S. Department of State, Diplomatic Security Service, Boston Field Office; U.S. Postal Inspection Service; U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Enforcement and Removal Operations, Boston; U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, District 1; HSI Country Attaché Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic; HSI Santo Domingo Transnational Criminal Investigative Unit; and the Massachusetts State Police. Assistant U.S. Attorney David Tobin and Special Assistant U.S. Attorney Karen Burzycki of Lelling's Major Crimes Unit are prosecuting the cases.

The details contained in the charging documents are allegations. The defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

New Bedford man arrested for riding dirt bike, drug possession near court house

A New Bedford man was arrested on Thursday for operating a dirt bike on a public way while possessing a Class B drug near the Third District Court in downtown New Bedford.

New Bedford police approached the man who then fled on the

dirt bike. While being pursued, the man fled on foot but was arrested shortly after.

22-year old Jose Montanez of New Bedford is being charged with reckless operation of a recreational vehicle, failure to stop for police, operation a recreational vehicle on a public way, and possession of a class B drug.

New Bedford man arrested for marijuana distribution

I don't blame New Bedford police officers for arresting people for marijuana distribution. While marijuana is legal for consumption, It's still against the law to sell without a retail license from the state.

On Thursday, 18-year old Ryan Chase of New Bedford was arrested on County Street for distributing over two ounces of marijuana. It's actually legal to gift less than an ounce of marijuana, but since he was allegedly selling more than an ounce he's now facing charges of possession to distribute, distribution and conspiracy to violate drug laws.

New Bedford is still one of the only cities south of Boston without an approved or operating retail marijuana store, so New Bedford residents have to travel to places like Fall River or Wareham to purchase marijuana legally or buy it through New Bedford's black market.

Woman stabbed on Esplanade, Massachusetts State Troopers apprehend male after foot pursuit and struggle

Massachusetts State Police Troopers responded to a stabbing today that occurred on the Charles River Esplanade in Boston in the area of the footbridge between the Esplanade and the Lagoon, roughly parallel to the intersection of Dartmouth Street and Storrow Drive

The stabbing occurred at approximately 3:50 p.m. and the victim, a young woman, was transported to Massachusetts General Hospital where she is receiving emergency treatment. Her injuries are not believed to be life-threatening at this time.

Preliminary investigation suggests that the victim does not know the suspect and that the victim was running or walking by herself when she was attacked.

The suspect was apprehended at the intersection of Commonwealth Avenue and Dartmouth Street after a foot pursuit and a struggle, during which a Trooper was forced to discharge his electronic control weapon to subdue the suspect and end the violent threat the man was posing to responding Troopers and other people in the area. A weapon that was in the suspect's possession was recovered and secured.

The suspect is being booked at a State Police Barracks.

New Bedford Domestic Abuser Sentenced to 5-7 Years in State Prison

A 29-year-old New Bedford man who assaulted his girlfriend and then held her against her will for two days was convicted in Fall River Superior Court Wednesday after a one-day bench trial before Judge Gregg Pasquale, Bristol County District Attorney Thomas M. Quinn III announced.

Luis D. Castro was convicted of kidnapping, assault, and battery on a family or household member and assault and battery on a family or household member-subsequent offense.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Zachary Mercer.

On September 27, 2018, New Bedford Police responded to an address on Tallman Street in regard to a domestic assault. Upon arrival, officers spoke with the victim. She reported that she had entered in a dating relationship with the defendant roughly one month prior, and within the last two weeks the relationship had become violent. This violence culminated in an argument on September 25 when the victim asked the defendant to leave her apartment on Nye Street.

The defendant rushed up to the victim, held her down, and punched her in the ribs. He stated he would "kill her" before he left the apartment. The victim stated that the defendant would not allow her to leave the apartment in the following days.

On September 27, the defendant briefly left the apartment to procure food, at which point the victim escaped to a friend's house on Tallman Street to alert the police. While speaking with the officers outside the home, the defendant walked by

the scene, and the victim pointed him out to the police.

The victim was driven to St. Luke's Hospital by the police officers, where she was treated for a contusion to her chest wall.

Assistant District Attorney Mercer argued for a six to 10 years state prison sentence, while the defense requested a two-year state prison term. Judge Pasquale sentenced the defendant to serve five to seven years in state prison, to be followed by four years of supervised probation.

"This defendant has a history of violence against women. The sentence imposed by the court will protect the victim and the public," District Attorney Quinn said.

Massachusetts Man Charged With Sex Trafficking

A Springfield man was charged in federal court in Springfield Thursday with sex trafficking.

William Coleman, 48, was charged with one count of conspiracy to commit sex trafficking and nine counts of sex trafficking. Coleman was arrested on Dec. 23, 2018, and has been in custody since.

According to court documents, William Coleman ran a prostitution business and used violence, as well as the drug addictions – primarily heroin – of female victims to coerce them into engaging in commercial sex acts with paying customers. The women were typically required to turn over all of their earnings to Coleman, while being subject to his tight

control over their daily lives. Most of the women were not allowed to keep any of the money they earned, and they were only allowed to obtain the drugs they were addicted to from Coleman. Victims who did not engage in prostitution for Coleman, or who did not follow his rules, were subjected to physical assaults, sexual violence and the withholding of drugs. Coleman allegedly used websites to post prostitution advertisements for the victims working for him. His business covered the greater Springfield and Hartford areas, and other parts of Connecticut.

The maximum sentence for sex trafficking and conspiracy to commit sex trafficking is life in prison, five years of supervised release and a \$250,000 fine. The Sex Trafficking statute also imposes a mandatory minimum sentence of 15 years for offenses committed by means of force, threats of force, fraud or coercion. Sentences are imposed by a federal district court judge based upon the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors.

United States Attorney Andrew E. Lelling; Peter C. Fitzhugh, Special Agent in Charge of Homeland Security Investigations in Boston; Hampden County District Attorney Anthony D. Gulluni; Colonel Kerry Gilpin, Superintendent of the Massachusetts State Police; and Acting Springfield Police Commissioner Cheryl Clapprood made the announcement today. Assistant U.S. Attorney Alex J. Grant of Lelling's Springfield Branch Office is prosecuting the case.

The details contained in the indictment are allegations. The defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.