

Fugitive Wanted for New Bedford Motor Vehicle Homicide Captured in Rhode Island

Late this afternoon, Troopers from the Massachusetts State Police Violent Fugitive Apprehension Section, assisted by officers from the Massachusetts Department of Corrections, the Massachusetts Department of Parole, and Rhode Island police, located and arrested fugitive vehicular homicide suspect JAMES BENNETT-WERRA, 21.

BENNETT-WERRA has been sought by authorities since March 27, when a car in which he was fleeing crashed into another vehicle in New Bedford and caused the death of a woman in the car and serious injuries to another occupant. At the time of the crash, BENNETT-WERRA was already a fugitive, having cut off his court-ordered electronic monitoring device prior two days to causing the fatality.

Following the fatal crash on March 27, the Massachusetts Violent Fugitive Apprehension Section worked tirelessly for several days to locate BENNETT-WERRA, along with Troopers from the Bristol County State Police Detective Unit and DOC and Parole Officers, and Officers from the Taunton, Easton, New Bedford and Fall River police departments. Investigators eventually developed intelligence that led to an address in Rhode Island.

Today at approximately 5 p.m. MSP Troopers, DOC and Parole Officers, and Rhode Island Police located BENNETT-WERRA at a residence in Pawtucket and took him into custody without incident. He was brought to the Pawtucket Police Department and booked as a fugitive from justice. He will be held pending

rendition to Massachusetts.

On the morning of March 27, a Chevrolet Malibu being driven by BENNETT-WERRA struck another vehicle at the intersection of Ashley Boulevard and Tallman Street in New Bedford. Shortly before the crash, BENNETT-WERRA had fled from Fairhaven Police when they tried to stop the Malibu in their town.

The suspect's car drove into New Bedford, traveled west on Tallman Street, failed to stop at the stop sign at Ashley Boulevard and collided with a Toyota Corolla. One occupant of the Corolla, Janet Murphy, 68, died as a result of the crash, and another occupant, a male, suffered serious injuries.

BENNETT-WERRA fled from the crash scene on foot. A male passenger in the Malibu with him remained at the scene.

BENNETT-WERRA was previously convicted of assault and battery on a family or household member and carrying a dangerous weapon. After serving time he had been paroled to a family member's home and ordered to wear a monitoring bracelet. It is believed he cut off the bracelet on March 25. Parole officers immediately began searching for him.