

# Two men arrested for string of New Bedford robberies

New Bedford Police Detectives have arrested two men in connection with a string of robberies in the city over the past two months.

They will also face additional charges in connection with robberies throughout New Bedford as detectives continue their investigation. The two men have also been linked to robberies in nearby communities.

Isaiah Garcia Jr., 21, of New Bedford, was charged with armed robberies at the following New Bedford locations and dates:

- **Rent A Center, 446 Dartmouth St., Feb. 8**
- **Family Dollar, 160 West Rodney French Boulevard, March 18**
- **Family Dollar, 139 Hathaway Road, March 29**
- **Dollar General, 893 Church St., March 29**
- **Sunrise Bakery, 508 Bolton St., April 4**
- **Domino's Pizza, 109 Rockdale Ave., April 5.**

Detectives have also connected Garcia to robberies in Fall River, Somerset and Seekonk. Detectives are still actively investigating and additional charges are forthcoming against Garcia for residential and commercial robberies throughout New Bedford.

Cesar Berroa, 28, of New Bedford, was charged with armed robberies at the following New Bedford locations and dates:

- **Family Dollar, 139 Hathaway Road, March 29**
- **Dollar General, 893 Church St., March 29**

Detectives have also connected Berroa to robberies in Dartmouth, Fairhaven and Somerset.

Detectives are still actively investigating and additional

charges are forthcoming against Berroa for residential and commercial robberies throughout New Bedford.

Both men were arraigned Monday in Third District Court. The state requested they be held on \$50,000 cash bail.

Judge James J. McGovern set bail for both defendants at \$10,000.

Garcia is scheduled to return to court May 8. Berroa is scheduled to return May 9.

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## **Elm Street Garage to see new security, lighting and structural performance**

The City of New Bedford will make significant upgrades to the Elm Street Garage during a renovation project that is part of ongoing improvements to downtown parking.

Security, lighting, improvements to structural performance, and cosmetic changes to the lobby, stairs and elevator areas are all part of the renovation of the garage.

In Fiscal Year 2015, the City established the Downtown Parking Enterprise Fund to finance improvements and renovations to transportation facilities downtown. Aging parking meters were replaced in 2014, and the city began its planning for renovation of the Elm Street Garage, with preliminary engineering completed in 2015.

In addition to financing through the Downtown Parking Enterprise Fund, the City obtained a \$511,254 award from the

National Park Service's Federal Land Access Program (FLAP) that will go toward the project. In January 2017, the City Council unanimously approved a bond for \$5,039,280 to finance the project, which will be implemented in two phases.

The first phase of the project will begin this month and will address structural stabilization, enhancements to the appearance and curb appeal of the garage's façade, redesign and installation of new lighting and security for interior spaces throughout the garage, and a redesigned entrance lobby. The stairways will be renovated, and convenient auto-pay units for self-service will be installed in the Elm Street Garage as well as the Zeiterion Garage on Purchase Street. The projected cost of Phase 1 is \$3,179,088.

Phase 2 will address resurfacing the concrete parking deck, replacement of parking stops and a fire protection system, with a projected cost of \$1,860,192.

The full project, with a projected cost of \$5,039,280, will be financed through a combination of City bonds that may be supplemented by the \$511,254 FLAP grant. The Downtown Parking Enterprise Fund will fully support the debt service on the project.

"As New Bedford sees an increasing number of businesses and restaurants opening and drawing more visitors downtown, the need for improved parking options downtown has also grown," said Mayor Jon Mitchell. "These important upgrades to the Elm Street Garage will vastly improve its security, image and ease of use. This space will provide another accessible option for patrons of downtown businesses."

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# Fall River Carjacker Sentenced to More Than a Decade In Prison

A 39-year-old Fall River man who carjacked a senior citizen, robbed a city convenience store and drove the wrong way down a one way street in an attempt to elude police was sentenced to serve 12 to 15 years in state prison last week, District Attorney Thomas M. Quinn III announced.

Paul Gagne, a habitual offender, pleaded guilty to a multiple-count indictment charging him with carjacking, larceny of a motor vehicle, assault and battery with a dangerous weapon on a person over 60 (two counts), unarmed robbery and operating a motor vehicle to endanger last week in Fall River Superior Court.

On July 24, 2014 at 8:45 am, Fall River Police were dispatched to the Dunkin Donuts at 1023 N Main Street for a call of a stolen motor vehicle. Police arrived to find the victim, a 66-year-old woman, on the ground in the parking lot with an injury to her arm. She indicated that her 2012 Kia Soul had been stolen. In further conversation the victim and another couple, police determined the victim had been standing outside of the driver's door of her car (car was running) speaking to the other couple. A white male came running towards the car and jumped into the vehicle. The victim stuck her hand through the driver's side window to try and grab the keys. The suspect, however, immediately put the car in reverse, which forced the victim to the ground. The car then struck the victim's arm. As the suspect fled in the vehicle, he also struck the arm of another female senior citizen.

On the next day, at around 8:50 am. Fall River Police responded to the Low Price Convenience Store at 870 N Main

Street for a reported robbery. The female clerk told police that a white male wearing a ski mask came in and demanded all of the money in the register. The victim handed the suspect money and he fled the store. The female clerk and her manager both said they recognized the suspect as a frequent customer and were both able to identify the suspect from a photo array as Paul Gagne.

On surveillance video taken from outside the store, the defendant can be driving away in the vehicle he stole on the previous day. Then, on July 26th, police were able to locate the vehicle outside of a residence on Hope Street in Fall River. Police set up surveillance on the vehicle, and a short time later saw the suspect enter the vehicle and drive off. Police pursued the vehicle and attempted to pull it over, but the suspect began driving at a high rate of speed while driving the wrong way on a one way street. The suspect eventually left the vehicle on Whipple Street and fled on foot before being captured by Sergeant Jay Huard behind the Fall River Justice Center.

During his sentencing hearing last week, Judge Thomas McGuire sentenced the defendant to serve 12 to 15 years in state prison. The case was prosecuted by Second Assistant District Attorney Jennifer Sowa.

“This defendant is a habitual criminal who needs to be separated from society for a long period of time,” said District Attorney Quinn. “The 15 year sentence will accomplish that.”

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# **57-year old woman dies from drug overdose in New Bedford Parkdale Housing Projects**

According to New Bedford police, a 57-year old female accidentally overdosed on drugs and died on Summit Street in the New Bedford Parkdale public housing projects on Sunday, April 9th around 4:19pm.

Police report a second person overdosed, but survived at a Roosevelt apartment at 1:15am on Monday, April 10th.

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## **After large gains in the stock market a certificate of deposit is the smart bet**

A friend recently told me that he had a lot of cash sitting in a checking account. I mean a lot of cash. I used to teach investing, so he asked where I recommended putting it. He was great at earning, but not so great with putting his money to work.

If you don't need access to money in the short-term, keeping large sums of money in a checking account is a terrible option, especially when there are so many safe, high return options out there. Normally, I recommend putting money in the S&P 500 index. It's a great way to diversify, pay very few fees, and if you have a long-term outlook, you will get great returns. Here's a look at S&P 500 returns since 2003:

Dec. 31, 2017	5.94%
Dec. 31, 2016	11.96%
Dec. 31, 2015	1.38%
Dec. 31, 2014	13.69%
Dec. 31, 2013	32.39%
Dec. 31, 2012	16.00%
Dec. 31, 2011	2.11%
Dec. 31, 2010	15.06%
Dec. 31, 2009	26.46%
Dec. 31, 2008	-37.00%
Dec. 31, 2007	5.49%
Dec. 31, 2006	15.79%
Dec. 31, 2005	4.91%
Dec. 31, 2004	10.88%
Dec. 31, 2003	28.68%

In 14 years, there has only been one bad year for the S&P 500 index. The only issue would be if you started investing with a large chunk of money in 2008. Losing -37% of your money in a single year can be devastating.

The S&P 500 index has nearly quadrupled since its recent low of 683 in March of 2009 to today's level of 2,354. A correction, or steep decline, usually follows long term growth in the stock market as people take profits. We could be heading for a steep decline like in 2008, so I steered my friend away from investing so much money right away. Investing smaller amounts into the stock market over a few years would be the smarter option.

For short term investing, it's smarter to put money in a certificate of deposit or CD at your local bank or credit union. Most banks and credit unions offer 0.01 – 0.02% returns on checking accounts, but with the same amount of paperwork you could earn 1% or higher without pulling your money out of the institution. You wouldn't be able to touch your money for 6 months or longer, but you'd earn 5-10 times the rate of a checking account.

Locally, St. Anne's Credit Union offers CDs between 0.30% to 1.60% APY depending on how much you deposit and for how long. Check out their rates [here](#). Normally, you have to lock in your money for years to get an interest over 1%, but they have a

current 13-month CD at 1.3% APY.

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## **Massachusetts State Police investigating fatal car fire in Mansfield**

At 3:45 p.m., numerous 911 callers reported a car fire in the Mansfield Rest Area on Route 95 northbound, prior to Route 495. Troopers from the State Police Barracks in Foxboro responded to the scene with members of the North Attleboro Fire Department. A single male occupant had been inside the vehicle and was pulled from the vehicle by Good Samaritans.

North Attleboro Fire Department extinguished the fire. The man, who is not being identified at this time, was pronounced deceased at the scene. Troopers from the Crime Scene Services Section, Fire Marshal's Office, Troop H Detectives and the Bristol State Police Detective Unit responded to the scene to assist with the investigation into the cause of the fire and the death of the occupant of the vehicle.

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## **New Bedford fire fighters battle three-alarm fire on**

# Mount Vernon Street

Here's a look at our amazing New Bedford fire fighters battling the 3-alarm warehouse fire near on Mount Vernon Street this afternoon.

The New Bedford Fire Department reports heavy fire and smoke when they arrived with the fire extending into a second building. Due to the limited water supply the fire took hours to extinguish and fire fighters will be at the location throughout the night. No injuries reported

Video by Carlos Pimentel Felix.

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## Two men arrested for stealing over 50 items from garage on Campbell Street

New Bedford Police charged two men after they broke into a garage on Campbell Street early Sunday and stole more than 50 items.

Police were dispatched to the area of Shawmut Avenue and Campbell Street at about 4:30 a.m. for a report of two males who may have just committed a break-in. When police arrived, the two men were found near Smith Street with more than 50 items. The items included air compressors, tools, volt meters, a television and a chainsaw, among many others.

Police canvassed the area and found additional items and a garage on Campbell Street that appeared to be forced open. The owner of the residence identified a large number of the stolen

items that had been in the garage.

David Couch, 30, of Campbell St., New Bedford, was charged with breaking and entering in the nighttime for a felony, larceny from a building, carrying a weapon (a knife over two and a half inches), furnishing a false name, possession of class B substance (Suboxone) and three warrant arrests.

Thomas Perry, 32, of New Bedford, was charged with breaking and entering in the nighttime for a felony, larceny from a building, larceny over \$250 from a building, carrying a weapon (knife over two a half inches) and possession of burglary tools.

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## **New Bedford man chased by police, breaks into home to get away**

On Saturday at approximately 12:40 pm, members of the New Bedford Police Narcotics Unit, observed 21-year old Edmilson Gomes of New Bedford operating his motor vehicle. Gomes is known to have a suspended drivers license and therefor detectives attempted to stop him.

Gomes fled and refused to stop for police operating erratically failing to stop at stop signs, driving the wrong way on a one street. His vehicle then crashed into a stone wall on Smith Street. He then fled on foot running through yards damaging a fence on Sycamore Street. Gomes then forced his way into a home on Smith Street (not his) where he was apprehended by detectives.

Detectives then took him back to his residence of 115.5 Sycamore Street apartment 3, where they executed a search warrant they had for his residence with him being the target. As result of the search, detectives seized a small amount of cocaine, packaging materials, digital scales, and \$622.00 in cash.

Gomes was arrested and charged with:

1. Possession of class B cocaine
  2. Possession of class B cocaine school zone
  3. Operating motor vehicle with suspended license
  4. Fail to stop for police
  5. Reckless operation of a motor vehicle
  6. Leaving the scene after property damage
  7. Destruction of property
  8. B&E
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## **New Bedford man arrested for OUI drugs, alcohol after reportedly hitting 6 parked cars**

On Saturday morning, Police arrested 40-year old Wilber Urbina of New Bedford and charged him with several motor vehicle offenses to include OUI drugs and alcohol.

Police received a call around 5:25 am on Saturday, that the vehicle Urbina was operating had struck 6 vehicles parked in the Acushnet Avenue and Blackmer Street area. Witnesses also stated that Urbina was trying to get away. Once officers were

on scene they found Urbina to be under the influence of both Alcohol and drugs. A small amount of suspected cocaine and an open container of alcohol was also found in Urbina's vehicle.

Urbina's charges were as follows:

1. Leaving the scene after causing property damage (6 counts)
2. OUI drugs
3. OUI alcohol
4. Reckless operation of a motor vehicle
5. Possession of class B cocaine
6. Possession of an open container in a motor vehicle

Urbina is scheduled for arraignment on Monday at Third District Court.