

Couple Arrested For Breaking Into New Bedford Home with 2-Year Old Daughter in Minivan



Suspects

This morning at approximately 11:50am officer Jeremy DeMello was dispatched to the 100 Block of Durfee St. regarding a break in progress into a single family home.

An alert neighbor observed a Dodge Caravan pull into the driveway of a neighbor's home and witness a female get out. The female knocked on the front door several times but got no answer. It was at this time that the male suspect exited the vehicle and went to the rear of the home and the witness heard loud banging. As this was going on, the female paced in the driveway looking around and was acting as a lookout.

The male suspect then exited the home and passed off items to the female. They both left in the Caravan heading in an easterly direction.

Officers went to the home and observed that the rear door had been forced open and the home burglarized. Within minutes, Officer Elvin Ramos spotted the van on Mt. Pleasant St. near

Durfee St. and conducted a motor vehicle stop. The female passenger had an amount of jewelry that was taken from the home secreted in her pants. There was also a hammer in the van that was used in the break.

Also in the van was the couple's two year old daughter. DCF was notified and placed the girl in the custody of her grandmother.

The arresting officer is Jeremy DeMello.

Both parties were transferred to the Ash St. Jail and will be arraigned tomorrow in New Bedford District Court.

- Jeffrey Pina age 26 of New Bedford, Ma.
- Christie Marie Hoffman age 26 of New Bedford, Ma.

Breaking and Entering in the daytime with intent to commit a felony

Larceny in a building

Possession of Burglarious tools (hammer)

Source: New Bedford Police Department

Local woman's story of family hardship and addiction

My name is Jane Doe, I am 27 years old and a mother of three children: Kelly, Danny, and Marcus.

Kelly and Danny's father and I, were together for several years. In the final year of being together, I found out that he had an addiction to opiates. I found out because he traded my birthday present for percocet and stole our daughter's

piggy bank that I had been putting money in since being pregnant with her.

When Danny was born, he took our rent money and our TV, and got drugs with both of those, thus causing us to lose our apartment. After a year of trying to get him help, only to have him take several thousand dollars of our tax money and use it all in two weeks time.

Finally, I got the strength to kick him out of our home. He continued to "use" while at his mother's house, while she enabled his behaviors and he had little to no interaction with our children throughout the year thereafter. During which time, I met somebody else and Marcus came along.

In January 2013 I found out through the newspaper that Dave had been arrested for breaking and entering and receiving stolen property to support his addiction. He went to jail. He got out on bail and shortly after I had Marcus, he was at my home visiting with the kids and I for a while. He found out Marcus's dad had dropped off some clothes for him, which made Dave angry and jealous, and he nearly strangled me to death.

The day after, he filed for emergency custody of Kelly and Danny, insinuating I was the assaulter and the 'crazy' one, denying his addiction and the court granted custody, only to return it to me two weeks later, luckily.

However, he declared he did not want Marcus's father to be around the children. Marcus's father proceeded to try and have a relationship with Marcus despite that court order, and Dave pursued custody again in September with the support of the Department of Children and Families, having them remove my children, placing Kelly and Danny with him and saying they had no concerns with him or his addiction any longer, but only with me and my 'choice in men around my children' (Dave included, ironically.)

Marcus went to a foster home for two weeks, and a care and

protection case was filed, but a lawyer appointed to me by the court, helped me reach an agreement with DCF to get Marcus home. However they said the case with my other two children had 'nothing to do with them' being that it is a 'probate matter.'

Dave has been, that I know of, arrested and jailed for violating his probation at least twice since having custody. Living at his parents in a two level home, where the children sleep in the basement with him and his parents sleep upstairs, not even knowing when Dave leaves – my children are often left unattended and virtually uncared for while Dave goes out on dates, drug binges, to bars, and getting arrested.

The courts continuously let him go on stricter probation terms, but never actually locking him back up because he claims there is 'nobody else' to care for the children. I have had numerous people confirm to me that he is not only using drugs, but selling them, and he got put on stricter probation for stealing someone's cell phone and trading it for drugs and somebody told his probation officer.

He is in community service four times a week and using the welfare money to buy alcohol and other things unnecessary, while his mother provides diapers. He has no license, because he lost it due to crashing a work vehicle while under the influence in 2011.

He has brought my children on drug deals, which has been confirmed by people who've seen so. He's abusive not only verbally and physically towards me, but emotionally towards my children – telling Kelly that "Mommy is a whore and a slut, and does not care about her family, and this is her fault." He broke pictures of Kelly as a baby in front of her face and told her "mommy doesn't care about you," while she cried and cried. He said I broke the pictures, and told police and DCF so. And they believe him, always, and never me.

My children want to come home and he won't even let them see me despite my court order saying I can. He won't have me at their birthday parties or any of my friends or family, and I have not seen them in a month because he is trying to tell people I am crazy and unfit. I took care of my children by myself while he was getting high for three+ years, and one day he decides to play daddy and takes them from me.

Above all else, most baffling to me is that he claims to have been clean and drug free since January 2013 when he was locked up – yet only got on the opiate blocker, “SUBOXONE”, in November 2013. Why would somebody who has been clean for that amount of time need suboxone almost a year into sobriety? It does not make sense and it just proves he has been using while having custody of them.

DCF is all over the news for being crooked and unjust, placing many children that have ended up beaten and/or dead by way of them placing them with the wrong parents. I need help getting my children out of the hands of their father who is only using them as a power trip in trying to hurt me since I won't take him back. I have tried everything and don't know where to turn...

New Bedford Police Seek Assistance to Catch Burglary, Stolen EBT Card Suspects

Burglary Suspect



In the early morning hours of March 9th, a business break occurred in the 1700 Block of Purchase St.

The suspect entered the business through the rear door and stole a cash register with an undisclosed amount of cash.

Anyone with information on this male is asked to contact Det. Scott Brown at 508-991-6300 ext. 131.

Stolen EBT Card Suspect

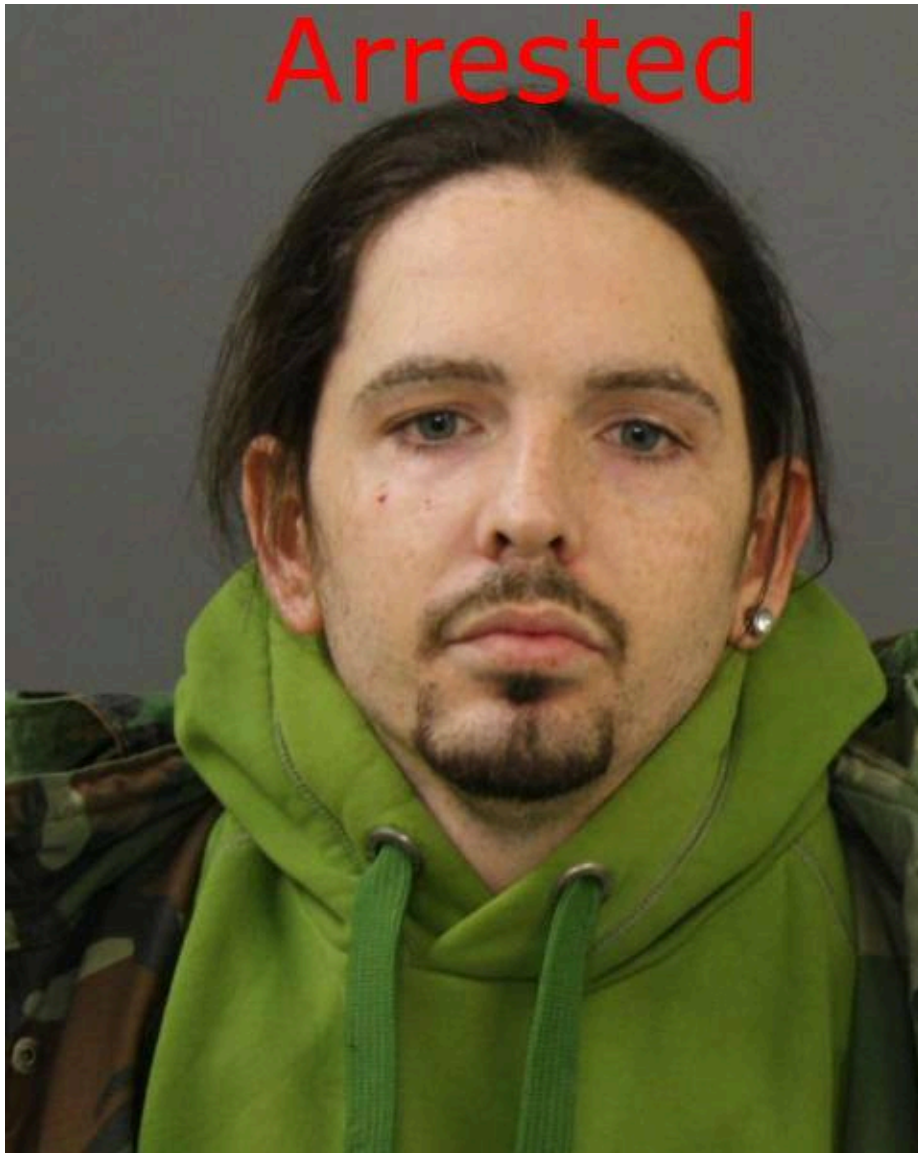


New Bedford Police are seeking the public's help in identifying the depicted male in this photo.

He is wanted for questioning regarding the use of a stolen EBT card at the Stop and Shop located at 438 Dartmouth St.

Anyone with information is asked to contact Det. Jonathan Pavao at 508-991-6300 ext. 137.

Man Arrested in New Bedford for Assaulting Man and Stealing His Sneakers



Mug Shot from the New Bedford Police Department.

On Saturday afternoon at approximately 4:15pm Officers Edward Rene and Sasha Vicente were on patrol in the downtown area when they observed a male running in the area of the bus terminal carrying a pair of sneakers. A passerby yelled out that the male had just robbed someone.

The officers chased the suspect westerly on Elm St. and took him into custody as he tried to enter his home at 176 Elm St. In his possession was a folding pocketknife and he was still carrying the sneakers.

The officers were then able to locate the victim who is a 21 yr. old New Bedford man.

The victim stated that he had just gotten out of a cab at the bus terminal when he was approached by the suspect. The suspect immediately started punching him and knocked him to the ground. Once on the ground the suspect kicked him several times and pulled the sneakers off his feet.

The victim sustained minor injuries to his facial area but refused medical attention.

Scheduled to be arraigned this morning in New Bedford District Court;

Sean Everson age 29 of New Bedford.

Armed Robbery

Carrying a dangerous weapon-knife

Source: New Bedford Police Department

News to Me...



The 1st Annual Madeira Fast will surely pack 'em in!



by Faust
Fiore

Here's the news you don't get in mainstream media. Remember, you heard it here first.

In conjunction with and protest of the 100th Feast of the Blessed Sacrament, a group called Vegetables Are Food! will hold its 1st Annual Madeira Fast this coming August.

In an online, low carbon footprint press conference, organizer Solange Greenbriar stated, "We did a study that shows that if you ate Madeira Feast food every day for six months, it would be really, really gross, plus you'd probably at least have some skin problems. We feel that a healthy alternative festival is needed to show the other side of the dietary story."

The Madeira Fast will offer baked kale chips, barbecued pulled spaghetti squash sandwiches, solar-cooked soy cakes dusted with honey flakes and vegan sausages on 23-grain bread. And organic, locally-made hot sauce. Lots of it, too. "We expect the hot sauce to be very popular," said Greenbriar. "It'll probably add a little, you know, flavor to the food."

Also on tap at the Madeira Fast will be over 150 handcrafted beers, a delightful California Pinot Noir and kale-pomegranate-mango smoothies.

Entertainment includes the world/roots/rap/rock music of The Earthy Earth Band, The One Gig Jazz Ensemble (a group of extremely talented young musicians who have decided to stay in school, get jobs and eventually move to Marion) and ReikiCize!, an audience participation, holistic dance troupe.

On March 20th, The X-Treemly Underground Gallery will open its inaugural exhibit entitled, "X-Treemly New Works: Art From the Last Half Hour or So." Curator, Chairman of the Board of Directors and chief lookout Elias Jones stated at an impromptu press conference, "We hope to have all media represented, but so far, it looks like mostly spray paint. We'll see how it goes. I don't really care. But there are enough shows of so-called new works – we want to exhibit art that is so new that it hasn't even been created yet. We're a cutting-edge collaborative. We've got attitude, spontaneity and, in some cases, arrest records."

Asked the location of the new gallery, Elias said, "Right now, we're in the basement of an old mill, but if they find us, we'll have to move. We're asking people to come in to the exhibit quietly, preferable at night."

The New Bedford Wood Siding Preservation Committee has announced a walking tour called "A Walking Tour of Houses with Wood Siding," on Sunday, April 6 at 1:00 PM. Committee spokesperson Kia Skoda stated, at a small press conference outside her home in Padanaram, "We've identified more than two dozen houses in New Bedford that still have wooden clapboards or shingles."



The DoT plans to raze the Fairhaven Wal-Mart to ease traffic. Problem solved!

But it won't always be that way. We need to raise awareness,

yes. We need to preserve this siding while we still have some. But we want to have fun, too. And that's what the tour is really all about."

Participants are encouraged to bring cameras, "even if they're not Nikons," Skoda said.

Firm plans are afoot to finally ease traffic concerns on the New Bedford-Fairhaven Bridge. A spokesperson for the Massachusetts Department of Transportation, citing anonymity, made a brief conference call last week, claiming, "The Department has determined that most of the traffic on the bridge is New Bedford residents going to the Fairhaven Walmart. That said, or being said, or having been said, the solution is obvious – we just knock the down the Walmart. The state can take it by immanent domain, or eminent domain, or whatever it is that we do, and replace it with a new courthouse."

"It's a perfect location," said the spokesperson, who identified himself only as Dave at Transportation. "There's ample parking, good highway access and besides, it's right across the street from The Pasta House."

When asked if a courthouse in Fairhaven would only exacerbate the bridge traffic problem, Dave responded, "We'd have to study that. Right now, we just don't have the data. So any decision is probably a few years off, anyway. But it remains a top priority at the state level."

"There's also some talk in Boston that the TV networks are getting tired of the Zakim Bridge," he said, "and there is the possibility that it will be dismantled and brought to Pope's Island. Fall River has expressed interest in the bridge, but only if it's slated to come to New Bedford. So we'll have to study that."

That's it for now. I'll continue to follow these and other stories. Oh – a couple of things I'm working on – rumors of a

reality show called Ruth and Emily – Love It or List It and tips on how to avoid accidentally entering Dartmouth.

11 Things To Do This Weekend (Jan 01-Feb 02)



Get a load of these temperatures! Days where we won't go below freezing, in spite of the fact that it's the dead of Winter?! Sure, we'll take it! Sure, the nights will drop drop below freezing, but that's an excuse to curl up with a loved one or a good book near the fireplace, or if you are like me and don't have one, in front of the "Fireplace For Your Home" on Netflix. No snow is forecasted though we may get some drizzle on Saturday and some morning showers on Sunday. Good news is a hoodie or your thermals will be all you need to head out and some stuff!

As always, click on the title for more or detailed information on the event. Most of the events were pulled from our [event calendar](#) where you can find hundreds of local area events each month. The event calendar is FREE, so if you are a local business, and not taking advantage of FREE publicity, shame on you! Are you a local business and want to sponsor this high traffic, weekend guide? Contact info@newbedfordguide.com for

more details. Have an event to add? Check out our tutorial. For more info, you can click on each title. Know of another event this weekend? Post a reply!

Friday, January 31st

Winter Fun Fridays (9:00 am-11:00 am)

Get out of the house and join the education staff in the warm classroom as we have fun and learn with unstructured play. Each Friday will have a different focus. Winter Fun Fridays are for preschoolers and their favorite adult. Feel free to drop in anytime and stay as long as you like. Pre-registration is not required for this program.



*Visit the happy
animals of
Buttonwood Zoo
during "Winter Fun
Fridays!"*

(ButtownwoodZoo.org)

South Coast Chamber Music Society (Marion) (5:00 pm)

Presents Viola, Piano and Oboe concert at St. Gabriel's Church, 124 Front St. Marion. Vaughan Williams: Romance for Viola and Piano, Charles Loeffler: Two Rhapsodies for Oboe, Viola and Piano, Beethoven: Piano Sonata No. 17 in D Minor, Op. 31 no. 2 "The Tempest", Benjamin Dale: Suite for Viola and Piano in D Major, Op. 2.

Scrabble and Chess (7:00 pm-9:00 pm)

Want to test your vocabulary or have a game of wits? Monthly Scrabble Night, now with the addition of chess. Beginners to experienced players welcome. FREE. Phone: (508) 996-1498. Pilgrim United Church of Christ Home, Purchase and School streets, New Bedford, MA.

Kool Kids After School program (Fairhaven) (2:30-5:30 pm)

Includes homework time, computer activities and various sports and games, transportation from all Fairhaven schools, including on early release days. Phone: (508) 993-9269. Fairhaven Recreation Center at 227 Huttleston Ave.

Saturday, February 1st

9th Annual Race Up Boston Place (Boston) (7:15 am)

Step up to the 2014 Race Up Boston Place! The stair climb is for just about anyone: from your everyday athlete to couch potatoes looking to get in shape. Together we will fight to improve lung health one stair at a time! So please join the ALA this February because we want YOU to experience the climb of your life and help us fight for air. One Boston Place, 201 Washington St. Phone: 781-890-4262.

“America’s Got Talent” Auditions (Providence) (8:00 am-7:00 pm)

Got some talent you want to show off? The NBC reality show “America’s Got Talent” will be holding auditions at the Rhode Island Civic Center on a first-come, first-serve basis.



*Groundhog
Day Hike on
Saturday!
(lloydcenter
.org)*

These are NOT in front of the celebrity judges. You will have a minute and a half. You can pre-register online by clicking on the event title, though it's not mandatory.

Free Krav Maga Self Defense Class (9:00 am-10:00 am)

Krav Maga Boston South Coast will be conducting a free introductory class. This is a great opportunity to experience the most realistic self defense system available. Whether you're looking to gain a valuable tool to keep yourself safe, or looking to switch up your current work out regimen, this class is for you. This class is open to men and women and no martial arts experience is necessary to train. During this class you will learn basic strikes such as punches, elbows, knees and kicks, as well as a basic choke defense.

Experience New England's first Krav Maga organization that has trained civilians, as well as local, state and federal law enforcement officers, and local professional athletes. Space is limited to twenty students. Contact us at (508) 259-1592 to guarantee your spot.

Groundhog Day Hike (Dartmouth) (10:00 am-11:30 am)

Will the groundhog see his shadow? Is spring just around the corner? Become a groundhog, look for your shadow and search for signs of these elusive creatures. Throughout this 90-

minute hike full of games and activities you will find out where a groundhog lives, learn how a groundhog whistles and discover why we celebrate Groundhog Day! Pre-register online, or call the Center's Event line at 508-558-2918. If you have specific questions regarding the program, please call Jen at 508-990-0505 x 14, or email jen@lloydcenter.org. Lloyd Center For the Environment. \$5 members and \$15 for member families, \$7 for individuals and \$21 for families. Space limited to 15.

South Coast Chamber Music Society (Marion) (4:00 pm)

Presents Viola and Piano and Oboe concert at Grace Church, 422 County St. New Bedford. Reception to be held at Wamsutta Club. Vaughan Williams: Romance for Viola and Piano, Charles Loeffler: Two Rhapsodies for Oboe, Viola and Piano, Beethoven: Piano Sonata No. 17 in D Minor, Op. 31 no. 2 "The Tempest", Benjamin Dale: Suite for Viola and Piano in D Major, Op. 2.

Sunday, February 2nd



The 4th Annual Fish Bowl Tournament. A Fun, Family Friendly Day – All For A Good Cause!

Greater New Bedford Track Club: Sunday Striders (8:00 am)

Sunday Striders, weekly training runs starting at 8 a.m. on Sundays. All levels of ability welcome; non-members are encouraged to join group. Marathon training continues. Phone: (508) 994-7209. Buttonwood Senior Center, 1 Oneida St.

4th Annual Souper Bowl Fundraiser (12:00 pm-1:00 pm)

\$7.50 suggested donation gets you two samples of soup and one bowl from that which you sampled! Soups this year are donated by Destination Soups, Shawmut Diner, Tia Maria's, Cork, Wine and Tappas, Rose Alley Ale House, Voc. Tech School and Pub 6. Vote for the best soup! Bring your change to change lives, dollar bills, checks and credit card donations accepted also. Live Music! Take Homes will be available!

Want to sponsor this weekend guide? Contact info@newbedfordguide.com for more details.

Double Homicide Investigation Underway in New Bedford



New Bedford Police, Massachusetts State Police Detectives assigned to this office and prosecutors from District Attorney Sam Sutter's Homicide Unit are currently actively investigating a homicide which occurred in the City of New Bedford.

Police and rescue personnel received 911 calls Wednesday around 4:30 p.m. to respond to 598 Brock Avenue in New Bedford. Upon arrival, emergency responders located a male and female victim. Both were found dead at the scene.

The victims have not yet been identified at this time.

The State Medical Examiner's Office will take custody of the deceased and will perform an autopsy to determine the official cause and manner of death.

The investigation is being coordinated by Assistant District Attorney Dennis Collins.

Since the investigation is active and ongoing, no further information can be disseminated about the case at this time. If and when more information becomes available, this office

will send out a follow up press release.

Five Places to Escape Your Unbearable Family



One of the city's prime destinations, unless you are a communist! (Craig Ribeiro)

by Patrick Correia

Throngs of diaspora will shuffle back to our own grey homes for the holidays. You'll eat pork prepared 37 different ways and drink enough *Port* to think you can totally take your sister in a fist fight. You will lose. Try and get some physical activity in, because 10 pounds of Cacoila would slow

anybody down. That's the excuse for your poor performance in the tag football game in the street after lunch. I have a favor to ask: Somewhere in between travelling to see family and friends scattered throughout the 14 square miles of home, can you try and get to these for me?

1) Gary's Best

Go in with a five, leave with 3 hot dogs, a bag of chips, and change. I don't regularly eat hot dogs. I don't particularly like them, but Gary's best will always remind me of a reward for being terrible at baseball or the trip back from Mary's Pond.

It's a tiny shack and they pass those savings onto you! Now I want a chili dog and I can't have one. I already hate myself for writing this.

2) Metro Pizza

Sorry Me & Ed's, but I grew up on the border of the West End and South End and Metro is just better. Me & Ed's and G & S are both standard Italian style pizza, but this list is about New Bedford and New Bedford seems to go Greek fast. Thick crust pizza topped with ground chouriço in the sketchiest little quasi-diner. I've heard they make other food, but I don't think I've ever ordered it. I imagine it's subs?

3) The Irish Immigrant

Yup, that's how I'm going to refer to it. Go there and remember what it was. The fellows urinating on the back of the building are now queued up for the cramped men's room. People use the front door and the floor has less spit on it. The prices are imported from Boston and New York.

Go for a drink or two, realize it's entirely too bright to be a good bar, then leave. You'll probably run into people you know. If you see them, run fast and don't look back or hug them. I have no idea how your relationships work. .

4) Carmen's Portuguese Bakery/ Sunrise Bakery

If you're like me, you love linguica rolls and have a hard time finding a good one anywhere outside of the South Coast. I stumbled into Carmen's Portuguese Bakery one morning at 6 AM. I had not slept and had a bit of a walk to where I was staying. The beauty found in a fresh baked linguica roll, the bakery smell, and the fact that they only looked a little disappointed in me will forever hold a place in my heart.

If you're sober and driving, Sunrise has a drive-thru. I don't know why you'd be sober and driving, but hey it's your vacation.

5) The Pour Farm

A play on words for locals who remember playing hockey on the South End's Poor Farm, this is where Downtown New Bedford is heading and it looks amazing. The clientele is a reflection of the budding art community, influence of younger residents, mustaches, and tasty beer. The food is meat and starch, but it gets the job done and you should be eating with family anyway. Shame.

The Pour Farm will lead you straight to the Bus Station. Enjoy the terror induced euphoria now, because, in the indeterminate future, trains will return to New Bedford. Also a Helipad for Providence commuters and a Walrus that performs vaudeville acts will be at the Orpheum.

I'm sure I've forgotten a plethora of establishments and beautiful seaside spots, but I trust you to experience at least these five in my place. My family has been dispersed throughout the country and I am severely lazy. Enjoy the smell of cooking oil and pine that leads into the salt air on Cove Rd. Revel in the magnificent church architecture and the unceasing camaraderie of neighborhoods.

Notice with fury the way no one uses a blinker. Try not to get stabbed.

Recycling Is Nothing New; Short History of Recycling

by Anne Staley

The History of Recycling

I always considered recycling to be a fairly recent phenomenon. Maybe that's because we tend to associate recycling with environmental degradation, which we all know has become a problem of mammoth proportions in the recent times.

So, imagine my surprise when while digging up information for this post I found out that recycling as a concept has existed for as long as the human race. Huh?

Yes, recycling in its current form of trash separation and curbside collection was not present all those years ago, but there are studies to suggest that recycling was a common practice as far back as 400 B.C. necessitated by scarcity of resources.

In pre-industrial times, recycling of bronze and other scrap metal was fairly common driven by the affordability of recycled feed-stock as opposed to virgin ore. Industrialization spurred this demand for affordable materials even further.

The 19th and early 20th century witnessed railroads, automobile, and steel industries making use of metal scrap for manufacturing. Peddlers roamed streets, went from door to

door, and scavenged dump sites in search of sources of metal. By the time the First World War started, American cities were swarming with thousands of such peddlers.



*The three-arrow
recycling symbol
(Source:
en.wikipedia.org)*

During the two world wars, shortage of resources put pressure on administrations to promote recycling and resource conservation programs. Recycling received another shot in the arm during wartime and some of the programs initiated at this time were continued even after the war.

Circa 1970's – years of unchecked industrial growth had raised considerable environmental issues. This accompanied by rising energy costs ensured that recycling as a movement gained momentum. The year 1970 also marked the observance of the first Earth Day, birth of the U.S. Environment Protection Agency (EPA), and formulation of the famous three-arrow recycling symbol that we're all so familiar with.

Among the first bill to be introduced in the U.S. to encourage recycling was the "Bottle Bill" of Oregon in 1971. The bill provided for a nickel in refundable deposit on beer and soda cans as an incentive for people to recycle.

The first curbside recycling program was introduced in Berkeley, California in 1973. By 1998, the number of curbside recycling programs increased to more than 1000 and by 2006, this figure had sky-rocketed to over 8,000.

Recycling was on its way to becoming big! Very big!

The present & the future

According to the EPA, we Americans produce more than 200 million tons of garbage each year. We also have the dubious distinction of producing more trash per person per day than anywhere in the world. In 2010, this figure stood at 4.43 pounds of municipal solid waste (MSW) per person per day. Of this, we managed to recycle and compost about 1.51 pounds equivalent to a recycling rate of 34.1 percent per this EPA fact sheet.



*One of the many
landfills in the US
(Source:
www.treehugger.com)*

Compare this to recycling rate of three decades ago (the recycling rate in 1980 was 9.6 percent) and we can take pride in the progress we've made so far as recycling is concerned.

Something else that we can be proud of is the drop in the total amount of municipal solid waste going into landfills. While in 1990, the total amount of MSW going into landfills stood at 145.3 million tons, we managed to reduce this figure to 135.5 million tons by 2010.

While that's a significant drop, clearly a lot of work still needs to be done in the area if we want to prevent the harmful impact landfills have on our environment. If the sight of our overflowing garbage bins is any indication, we're still some distance away.

A few things you can do to make sure that the future of recycling is safe in our hands include composting your organic waste, making your trash cans leaner by reusing and recycling more, disposing electronic waste and metal scrap in a proper manner.

One of the more profitable ways of managing e-waste and metal scrap is to sell them to a private recycler like SIMS Metal Management. Not only will it ensure that the waste is disposed of properly, but you'll also be able to make a quick buck from it.

We need to do this because on the future of recycling depends our future on this planet!

5 Things Rarely Heard About The Kennedy Assassination

by Andrew O'Leary

Try to recall any regular murder conviction you can think of and consider this: there is probably far more evidence linking Lee H. Oswald to the murder of President John F. Kennedy than seen in common courtroom convictions. Why then do so many people think of conspiracy and intrigue when the murder of

Kennedy should be nothing more than a simple murder case?

Here are five things you rarely hear about the Kennedy assassination:

1. The “magic bullet” was not magic at all.

The Warren Commission concluded that assassin Lee Harvey Oswald fired three bullets from his Italian military rifle. Since then, conspiracy theorists have added bullets, changed firing locations, but have mostly questioned the Commission claim that a bullet entered JFK’s back and went through him to hit John Connolly, calling this the “magic” bullet.

The first point to note is that it is extremely difficult to track a bullet from a high velocity rifle travelling downward at over one thousand feet per second. In any firing, predicting what a bullet does on impact with a body is nearly impossible. Why then are the theorists so certain that the Commission is wrong? Worse still, why do almost all theorists display Kennedy’s car, Kennedy’s sitting position and Connolly’s location incorrectly? In the blueprints and images they use to discuss the “magic “, theorists display the bodies in mannequin style with perfect posture, seated eyes to the front at the exact same height as each other, with both sets of shoulders well above the car door level. This is wrong in almost every respect. This display ignores mundane issues like Kennedy’s slouched posture and ruffled clothing, Connolly’s much lower jump seat and Connolly’s real position – turned toward the right side of the car.

If you are trying to trace a bullet’s straight line without considering these issues, of course it looks “magic.” The Commission and recent TV reenactments show that, when the victims are represented accurately, it is far easier to see how a bullet could enter Kennedy’s back, exit his throat and continue downward through Connolly’s turned armpit, exit via Connolly’s rib and smash his wrist.

There's very little magic involved.

2. Oliver Stone's JFK movie is largely a work of fiction.



One of Oliver Stone's most recent projects is the "Untold History of the United States" where he takes an alternative view of American history since the 1940s. Despite claiming his Untold History would throw the lid off the secrets of the Cold War, Stone refuses to include even one of the two dozen theories he used in his JFK movie.

Look again at the 1991 movie and you'll see why: at the mid point of JFK, Kevin Costner's Jim Garrison admits, "I don't have much of a case." He's right! In reality, in 1969 the Garrison case was laughed out of court in less than an hour!

Just as Stone has run for cover today, Garrison was barely there when his theories collapsed, with the New Orleans District Attorney rarely participating in his own courtroom parade of hypnotized witnesses, convicts and drug addicts.

3. Conspiracy theories are not covered up.

Far from it! Conspiracy theorists are not a minority of courageous truth tellers, they are the most celebrated and

most popular part of the murder investigation. Attacking the official Warren Commission report on the murder is an immensely successful industry with thousands of books published and republished. Today, Jesse Ventura's *They Killed Our President* is on the New York Times bestseller list! But don't be fooled in to thinking that, "the truth is finally coming out." There are very few new ideas in over 40 years of conspiracy books.

The most popular and profitable theorists like Mark Lane (of the Jim Jones cult) and Jim Marrs (self styled alien expert) have been bestsellers since the mid 1960s. However, 35 years of "investigating" has not changed much of their arguments or produced new evidence. Any supposed cover up can't have lasted too long since Esquire magazine published its '*Primer of Assassination Theories*' as soon as December 1966, just two years after the Warren report.

From this point, the track record to the 1990s is clear: conspiracy gets published or broadcast on hugely successfully TV shows like *The Men Who Killed Kennedy* (1988); anything supporting the official Warren Commission conclusions gets ignored. Just look at the so called witnesses who got countless hours of airtime on these TV extravaganzas.

If one takes the time to track their statements to police and FBI in the week of the killing, and then compare what they say on more recent TV shows, it is easy to see them revise their tales to fit the conspiracy of the decade. Look at Julia Ann Mercer who was near the murder scene on November 22nd, who, in her 1963 FBI interviews, didn't see or recognize anyone.

By 1973, Mercer was telling others that she was sure she saw Ruby but not Oswald. By 1983, Mercer was now sure she had seen Ruby and Oswald together that morning. Mercer is a very popular witness today but the dozens if not hundreds of other witness who stick to their FBI stories never got on TV.

4. Lone nuts are more common than conspiracies.

Everybody knows the name Lee Harvey Oswald. Many also know the names of Sirhan Sirhan, who killed Robert Kennedy, and James Earl Ray, assassin of Martin Luther King. Many conspiracy authors link these three awful murders and point to a movement or group that was “taking out” reformers who were bucking the system. Oswald, Sirhan and Ray are just patsies, whose strings are being pulled by others. However, if you look beyond these three incidents, you can see that, right up to the 1980s, presidents and presidential candidates were in constant danger from would be assassins.

From 1933 to 1994, the list is depressingly long: Francisco Martin Duran, Samuel Byck, Squeaky Fromme, Sara Jane Moore, John Hinckley, Arthur Bremer, Giuseppe Zangara, Oscar Collazo and Griselio Torresola. Why do the theorists call Oswald a patsy but leave the others as lone nuts? Conspiracy researchers like UMass professor Philip Melanson write of Manchurian candidates, those brainwashed by the intelligence agencies into performing killings. If that's the case, then wouldn't at least one of the unsuccessful assassins show evidence of being a member of this deadly Manchurian group?

In truth, what all of these individuals have in common is personal frustration, a desire to promote a petty political cause or gain notoriety. They are Munchausen candidates not Manchurian candidates; living in a fantasy world, not part of a fantastic plot.

Oswald fits this mold perfectly, unsuccessful in escaping the poverty of his upbringing and failing to gain status as a political figure in his defection to the Soviet Union, his pro-Castro activities, and attempted defection to Cuba in the month before the murder of Kennedy. Taking a shot at Kennedy was his plan for immortality. While Jackie Kennedy called him just a “shitty little communist,” the conspiracy theorists continue to make his wish come true.

5. The murder of JFK did not alter American history.



In the decades after the murder, the image of a lost Kennedy Camelot was a popular one. That “things would have been different” had Kennedy lived remains a popular idea. A mini industry was built and encouraged by First Lady Jackie Kennedy and press secretary Arthur Schlesinger, promoting an outsized image of the visionary who had a mere 1,000 days to try to change America.

When the USA had to confront the issues of the 1960s, the radicalism of youth and peace movements, social and cultural tension and faction fighting over civil rights, Vietnam, and the immense national trauma of the Watergate scandal, this lost New Frontier looked better than ever. In truth, Kennedy was as flawed and fallible as any president before or after. Far from a man set on ending the tension with the Soviets, Kennedy was a staunch Cold Warrior who took the might of the Soviet Union seriously, overthrew the socialist president of Brazil, and kept a commitment to intervening in Vietnam and Laos right up to his death.

Kennedy's image as a hawk is precisely the reason he beat out the peace wing of the Democrats, represented by Adlai Stevenson and Eleanor Roosevelt, to win the nomination for president. In attempt to become more than a junior senator from Massachusetts, JFK became a partner of Joe McCarthy and supported the pursuit of "Reds" at home and abroad.

As he rose to power, JFK was far more lukewarm on civil rights than Lyndon Johnson, closely coveting the powerful southern Dixiecrats who held the line on segregation. Kennedy's role in Cuba is most telling. While conspiracy theorists feel the anti Castro CIA targeted the president for murder because he was weak on Cuban matters, Kennedy's real record shows strong anti Castro actions. In fact, in the 1960 presidential election, he beat Nixon for the top spot by looking tougher on Castro's Cuba. It is a lie that Kennedy compromised the 1960 Bay of Pigs invasion.

He was angry at CIA incompetence, not their mission. After the invasion Kennedy ramped up, not decreased, the pressure on Castro, with Kennedy's support of anti Castro paramilitaries part of the reason Castro looked for Soviet nuclear weapons. The missile crisis of 1962 sees Kennedy hold a hard line against the Soviets despite the world coming closer than ever to apocalypse and in the weeks before his death he made public statements and laid secret plans for another coup in Cuba.
