

34-year-old Brockton man, an alleged hate crime assault suspect found dangerous; held without bail

A 34-year-old Brockton man who allegedly entered onto a Taunton couple's property and violently assaulted one of them in what is alleged to be a hate crime was found dangerous by a Taunton District Court judge today and ordered held without bail for up to 120 days.

Michael Cates was arraigned last week on charges of assault and battery-causing serious bodily injury and assault and battery to intimidate (based on sexual orientation).

On June 29th the male victim was interviewed by a Taunton Police Officer after he reported being assaulted on his property. During the interview, the victim explained that he and his husband were outside their Taunton home, when the suspect drove by his house in an SUV. The suspect stopped his SUV, exited the vehicle and angrily entered onto the victim's property. The suspect then, according to the victim, yelled a homosexual slur, and punched the victim twice in the face, causing him to lose two teeth. The suspect then retreated back to his vehicle and drove off. The suspect and the victim are apparently unknown to one another.

An independent witness and the victim's husband both witnessed the assault occur.

The home had a gay pride flag flying and a rainbow sticker on its mailbox.

An initial investigation conducted by Taunton Police eventually led to the defendant as the chief suspect. After

numerous interviews were conducted and surveillance footage was reviewed, Taunton Police officially filed charges against the defendant on July 23rd, and summonsed him into court for last week's's arraignment.

The case is being prosecuted today by Assistant District Attorney Bryan Thompson.

"I am very pleased the defendant was held without bail as a danger to the victim and the community, which he clearly is. This is outrageous and malicious conduct. Targeting someone because of their sexual orientation, and violently assaulting them, will not be tolerated," District Attorney Quinn said,

Although charges have been filed in Taunton District Court, this case remains under investigation by prosecutors from the district attorney's office and Taunton Police Department officials. Investigators are in contact with Taunton Mayor Shaunna O'Connell's office regarding the ongoing investigation.

"I was glad to hear this defendant was found dangerous and will not be out on the streets. My office is closely monitoring this matter and our Taunton Police Department is continuing to work closely with District Attorney Quinn's office on this ongoing investigation. The allegations in this case are disturbing, and do not represent the values of the residents of this great city," Mayor O'Connell said.

Three Saugus police officers

stabbed attempting to detain stolen vehicle suspect

Saugus Police Chief Michael Ricciardelli reports that three Saugus police officers were stabbed this morning when investigating a report of a stolen motor vehicle.

Police responded to a residence on Tuttle Street on Thursday at approximately 7:20 a.m. to investigate a report of a stolen U-Haul rental vehicle that had not been returned.

43-year old Steven Sossong of Saugus is being charged with:

- Assault and Battery with a Dangerous Weapon, Four Counts
- Assault and Battery on a Police Officer, Four Counts
- The investigation remains ongoing and additional charges may be forthcoming.

Sossong declined to exit the residence upon police arrival. Police made entry into the home following an initial investigation, and an altercation ensued with Sossong.

Three Saugus Police Officers were stabbed by a sharp weapon upon entry, all sustaining what are believed to be non-life-threatening injuries.

All three were taken by ambulance to area hospitals, and additional Saugus Police and mutual aid partners responded to the scene. A fourth officer was also evaluated by EMS and transported to a local hospital as a precaution, but his injuries were not believed to be serious.

The injured officers were able to disarm SOSSONG and place him into custody as other officers arrived. SOSSONG was transported to an area hospital for evaluation.

Police have blocked off Tuttle Street as they continue to investigate. The incident remains under investigation by

Saugus Police. Additional information will be provided as it becomes available.

Melrose, Wakefield and State Police responded to the scene to provide support.

These are allegations. All suspects are innocent until proven guilty.

Massachusetts State Police arrest Vermont man for illegal firearm

Just after midnight, Trooper Robert Berrena assigned to the Troop B Community Action Team was on patrol in Northampton when he observed a Toyota Corolla with a Vermont registration commit motor violations.

Trooper Berrena activated his cruiser emergency lights and stopped the Corolla in the parking lot of the Speedway Gas Station. The vehicle contained two occupants. The operator was identified as TRISTIAN GALLAGHER, 22 of Lyndonville, Vt.

As a result of an investigation and search of the vehicle, a black Taurus "Curve" handgun with five .380 caliber rounds of ammunition plus an additional magazine were located. GALLAGHER was placed under arrest and transported to the Northampton Barracks where a bail commissioner set bail at \$1000.00. GALLAGHER was held until his arraignment today in Northampton District Court on the following charges:

- 1) Possession/Carrying a Firearm;
- 2) Possession of a Firearm/No LTC;

- 3) Possession of Ammunition/No FID or LTC; and
 - 4) Carrying a Loaded Firearm.
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Man released by judge after firearms conviction connected to ongoing New Bedford homicide case

A 24-year-old New Bedford gang member arrested in connection to the ongoing investigation into the July 17th fatal shooting of Keven Rocha on Margin Street in New Bedford was found dangerous and ordered held without bail by a New Bedford District Court judge last Friday, Bristol County District Attorney Thomas M. Quinn III announced..

Bruno Lopes is charged with Armed Assault in Dwelling, Carrying Firearm without a License, Carrying a Loaded Firearm without a License, Attempted Assault and Battery with a Firearm, Malicious Destruction of Property Over \$1200 and Discharging Firearm Within 500 Feet of a Building.

During the district court dangerousness hearing, Assistant District Attorney Matthew Sylvia entered the following allegations into the record:

On the evening of the homicide, the defendant and Mr. Rocha were seen on surveillance video leaving Monte's Park together and arriving on Margin Street in New Bedford. The defendant and Mr. Rocha entered the home, at which point it is alleged that Mr. Rocha pointed a gun at the occupants inside with the intent to rob. A struggle ensued, and Rocha is apparently shot

and killed with his own gun.

After initially fleeing the home on foot, the defendant is then seen on surveillance video coming back to the home about ten minutes later with another gun. The defendant is accused of shooting at the home from outside at least seven times. The gun allegedly used by the defendant to shoot into the home was located by police on the defendant's path of travel after the shooting.

At the time of this incident, the defendant was free due to a Superior Court Judge's September 2019 ruling to set aside a jury's guilty verdict connected to a May 2018 shooting. In that case, the defendant was convicted by a jury of his peers after a four-day trial in Fall River Superior Court on indictments charging him with Carrying an Illegal Firearm and Attempted Assault and Battery by Discharge of a Firearm.

On June 20, 2019, Judge Gregg Pasquale sentenced the defendant to serve the maximum two-and-a-half year jail sentence for the carrying of an illegal firearm charge. He was then sentenced to a second two-and-a-half year jail sentence, with one year to serve and the balance suspended for three years, on the attempted assault and battery by discharge of a firearm charge.

However, on September 30, 2019, Judge Pasquale allowed the defendant's motion to set aside both jury verdicts based on their contention that the defendant could not be identified as the shooter on surveillance video. The judge then entered not guilty findings on both indictments and ordered the defendant released from custody. The judge's decision is currently under appeal by this office.

New Bedford Police, Massachusetts State Police detectives assigned to the district attorney's office and Homicide Unit prosecutors continue to actively investigate the fatal shooting which occurred between 4:00-5:00 am on July 17.□

New Bedford Police responded to 17 Margin Street early that morning and discovered Mr. Rocha had been fatally shot inside of the multi-family building.

Ricardo Velez-Gonzalez, 33, of New Bedford was arrested July 21 and charged with Manslaughter in connection to the death of Mr. Rocha. He is currently being held without bail after being found dangerous by a New Bedford District Court judge in late July.

“This defendant clearly should be held as a danger to the community for his outrageous conduct of opening fire on an occupied building. He showed an utter disregard for the lives and safety for anyone in and around the building. He simply should not be out on the street. On May 24, 2019 he was convicted by a Bristol county jury of illegally possessing a firearm and firing into an occupied automobile. However, several months later in an extremely rare action, the trial judge, Gregg Pasquale, vacated the jury verdict and entered a finding of not guilty. He put the defendant back on the street and we have appealed that decision. In addition, the defendant was arrested in the City of Providence, Rhode Island on June 2, 2020 during a public disturbance,” District Attorney Quinn said.

Onset Fentanyl dealer arrested in New Bedford sentenced to state prison

A 28-year-old Onset Fentanyl dealer arrested in New Bedford while already out on bail for committing the same crime in Plymouth County was sentenced to serve three years in state

prison on Monday, Bristol County District Attorney Thomas M. Quinn III announced.

Kayla Boutilier pleaded guilty in Fall River Superior Court to an indictment charging her with possession with intent to distribute fentanyl.

On September 19, 2019, Massachusetts State Police pulled over a vehicle the defendant was a passenger in because the car had an expired inspection sticker and no license plates lights.

When the state trooper approached the vehicle, he observed hypodermic needles on the rear floorboard of the car. At that point, the Trooper asked the driver and the defendant to exit the vehicle. While the defendant was in the area of the hood of the car, she dropped a 16 gram bag of Fentanyl. Police also found a cut straw with a white powder stuck inside of it, in her jacket pocket.

□

At the time of this incident, the defendant was already out on bail from an April 2019 arrest in Plymouth County on charges of possession with intent to distribute Fentanyl and illegal possession of ammunition.

“This case is yet another example of a defendant committing a serious crime while out on bail for the same offense,” District Attorney Quinn said.

Massachusetts State Police K9 “Kantor” tracks suspect

involved in striking police officer with vehicle

Shortly before midnight last night, members of the Lawrence Police Department requested State Police K9 and Air Wing assistance in locating occupants who fled from a vehicle after a pursuit.

The pursuit began with the operator of the vehicle striking a Police Officer, causing serious bodily injury. Massachusetts State Trooper Brian Soares and K9 Kantor responded to the scene along with Sergeant David Nims, Trooper Brandyn Henson, and other Troopers assigned to State Police Andover.

Upon their arrival, they were briefed of the situation and the last known whereabouts of the three suspects. Trooper Soares began a track of the suspects with the assistance of two Troopers and a Lawrence Police Officer. The track led them through wooded areas, fields, and a river. After approximately 1.5 miles K9 Kantor began to demonstrate a proximity alert and led Trooper Soares along a path behind a baseball field.

The Troopers followed the lead of K9 Kantor to an area where they observed a person face down in an effort to conceal himself in the woodline. Trooper Soares gave commands to the man to show his hands and come out of the woods or face K9 apprehension. The suspect complied and was taken into custody.

Additional Lawrence Police Officers traveled to their location and assumed custody of the suspect, later identified as ELISAMUEL FERNANDEZ PAGAN, 32, of Lawrence. A search continued for other suspects, however, none were immediately located.

The situation remains under investigation.

New Bedford Police respond to gunfire for second straight day

New Bedford police officers responded to multiple shots fired at 12:39 pm on Monday in the area of Union and Cottage Streets. No reports of injuries or property damage.

The New Bedford Police Department confirmed a shooting Sunday night in the area of Ruth and Roosevelt streets.

Police officers responded and discovered evidence of shots fired. Shortly after, St. Luke's reported a shooting victim had arrived and was being treated for a gunshot wound to the leg and does not appear life-threatening. Police officers are actively investigating the incident.

Wareham Police respond to 6-year old child and dog left unattended in a vehicle

On Thursday, July 30, at about 3:00 p.m. Wareham Police responded to the Ocean State Job Lot for a report of a child left unattended in a vehicle for over 30 minutes. An adult guardian was finally located in the store, came outside, and was confronted by angry bystanders.

After an on-scene investigation, it was determined a six-year-old child was with a female, who identified herself as a friend of the child's grandmother. The woman left the child in the car with a dog for an extended period with the AC running.

The Department of Children and Families (DCF) responded, and will continue the investigation. Officer Aaron Pacheco is summoning Catherine Nesbit (58), of Kennebunkport, Maine, to court for one count of reckless endangerment of a child. In addition she received a citation for leaving an unattended motor vehicle running. The child was not physically injured in the incident.

Chief John Walcek said, "I would like to thank the citizens who stepped up to assist the vulnerable child in this particular incident."

Man shot in the south end of New Bedford Sunday night

The New Bedford Police Department confirmed a shooting Sunday night in the area of Ruth and Roosevelt streets.

Police officers responded and discovered evidence of shots fired. Shortly after, St. Luke's reported a shooting victim had arrived and was being treated for a gunshot wound to the leg and does not appear life-threatening.

Police officers are actively investigating the incident.

Brockton man held without bail after alleged hate crime on gay couple

A 34-year-old Brockton man who allegedly entered onto a Taunton couple's property and violently assaulted one of them in what is alleged to be a hate crime was arraigned today and ordered held without bail pending the results of an upcoming dangerousness hearing in Taunton District Court.

Michael Cates was arraigned on charges of assault and battery causing serious bodily injury and assault and battery to intimidate (based on sexual orientation). A dangerousness hearing, which will determine whether the defendant will be held without bail for up to 120 days, is scheduled for August 6th.

On June 29th the male victim was interviewed by a Taunton Police Officer after he reported being assaulted on his property. During the interview, the victim explained that he and his husband were outside their Taunton home when the suspect drove by his house in an SUV. The suspect stopped his SUV, exited the vehicle, and angrily entered onto the victim's property. The suspect then, according to the victim, yelled a homosexual slur, and punched the victim twice in the face, causing him to lose two teeth. The suspect then retreated back to his vehicle and drove off. The suspect and the victim are apparently unknown to one another.

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