

U.S. Coast Guard suspends search for fisherman lost between New Bedford and Martha's Vineyard

On Friday, July 1, we announced the story about the U.S. Coast Guard searching for a person in the water and believed to be somewhere between Nomans Island, which is south of Martha's Vineyard, and New Bedford.

The missing person was on a fishing boat called the "Susan Rose" out of Point Judith, last seen around midnight Friday and heading back toward New Bedford. Those aboard noticed a 54-year-old fisherman was not on board around 1:30 a.m. It's presumed that the person went overboard.

The F/V Susan Rose is a 77-foot Stern Trawler homeported in Point Judith, Rhode Island. The search covered approx. 1,065 sqr. nautical miles with a total of 53 asset hours.

The U.S. Coast Guard and local agencies have officially suspended the search pending further developments.

Massachusetts Fire Marshall ahead of July 4th celebrations: "Leave

fireworks to the professionals!”

“More Than 900 Fires, 31 Severe Burns Attributed to Fireworks Since 2012.

Massachusetts State Fire Marshal Peter J. Ostroskey and State Police Colonel Christopher S. Mason are reminding residents to leave fireworks to the professionals this summer.

Massachusetts fire departments reported more than 900 fires related to illegal fireworks between 2012 and 2021, officials said. In addition to the 43 fire service injuries and \$2.1 million in damages attributed to these fires, Massachusetts medical facilities reported 31 severe burn injuries extending to 5% or more of the victims’ bodies that were caused by illegal fireworks.

“People are injured and property is lost to illegal fireworks every single year in Massachusetts,” State Fire Marshal Ostroskey said. “As we enter the period when most of these incidents occur, we’re reminding everyone that fireworks are illegal because they are dangerous. Many cities and towns will have professional fireworks displays this year, so play it safe and leave fireworks to the professionals.”

“The possession, use, and sale of fireworks are illegal in Massachusetts without certification and licensing,” said Colonel Mason. “Massachusetts law requires the confiscation of any illegal fireworks we encounter, even if legally purchased elsewhere. State Police and our local partners will be conducting targeted enforcement efforts to intercept illegal fireworks coming into the state and we will seize any that we find in routine traffic stops.”



Massachusetts State Police photo.

Officials emphasized that fireworks, including sparklers, are especially unsafe around children. Sparklers burn at temperatures of over 1,800° Fahrenheit – hotter than the melting point of glass and aluminum. According to a 2021 report from the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, “there were an estimated 1,600 emergency department-treated injuries associated with firecrackers and 900 with sparklers” in 2020. This accounted for almost 10% of all fireworks-related injuries that year. Of those 900 injuries from sparklers, 44% were to children under the age of 5.

Fireworks fires peaked in Massachusetts during the summer of 2020, with 120 incidents reported to the Massachusetts Fire Incident Reporting System that year. They declined by 67% to 40 incidents in 2021 as many cities and towns resumed their public fireworks displays and police departments increased enforcement. State Police seized more than 47,000 units of illegal fireworks and issued 65 criminal summonses during last year’s enforcement operations. Those operations will resume this summer, officials said.

The Department of Fire Services posts a list of permitted municipal fireworks displays and updates it each week through the summer. To view the list – and to learn more about the dangers of illegal fireworks – visit the DFS website.” Massachusetts State Police.

Leader of Violent Fentanyl Pill Trafficking Organization and His Mother Sentenced to Years in Jail

The leader of a North Shore-based drug trafficking organization (DTO) and his mother have been sentenced for their roles in a conspiracy that manufactured and flooded the streets of Massachusetts with hundreds of thousands of counterfeit prescription pills containing fentanyl made on high-volume pill press machines.

Vincent Caruso, 27, a/k/a “Fatz,” of Lynn, was sentenced by U.S. District Court Judge Denise J. Casper to 250 months (more than 20 years) in prison and five years of supervised release. On March 15, 2022, Vincent Caruso pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy to manufacture, distribute and possess with intent to distribute 400 grams or more of fentanyl, cocaine, marijuana and other controlled substances; one count of conspiracy to possess firearms in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime; possession of firearms in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime; conspiracy to interfere with commerce by robbery (Hobbs Act robbery); and one count of conspiracy to commit money laundering.

Yesterday, Vincent Caruso's mother, Laurie Caruso, 52, also of Lynn, was sentenced by U.S. District Court Judge Nathaniel Gorton to nine years in prison and four years of supervised release. On Feb. 28, 2022, Laurie Caruso pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy to manufacture, distribute and possess with intent to distribute fentanyl and other controlled substances.

"This family business has been shut down for good. Vincent Caruso was a prolific and violent drug trafficker who flooded North Shore communities with hundreds of thousands of deadly counterfeit prescription pills containing fentanyl. Caruso and his associates orchestrated numerous shootings and armed robberies using an arsenal of firearms – including machine guns – and then took to social media to brag about their incredibly destructive criminal conduct. That this all took place while he was on pretrial release is even more appalling. Caruso, along with his mother and co-conspirator Laurie Caruso, pumped poison and violence into our communities and you won't be hearing from them on Instagram for a long long time," said First Assistant United States Attorney Joshua S. Levy. "Thanks to the exceptional, coordinated efforts of our law enforcement partners, this career criminal will now spend over 20 years behind bars – out of our communities and off of social media. This office will continue its relentless pursuit of individuals who threaten public safety for the sake of profit."

"Vincent Caruso, a self-admitted Crip gang member, and his mother, Laurie Caruso ran a major drug trafficking organization that, for years, brought nothing but poison, mayhem, and violence to the North Shore of Massachusetts, and beyond. They peddled hundreds of thousands of counterfeit pills containing fentanyl, capitalizing on those struggling with addiction, while raking in an obscene amount of money," said Joseph R. Bonavolonta, Special Agent in Charge of the FBI Boston Division. "The severity of these sentences reflects the

seriousness of their criminal conduct, and the tireless efforts of our North Shore Gang Task Force to make our communities safer for everyone.”

“ATF will continue to work in conjunction with our local, state and federal law enforcement partners to identify organized violent criminals in our joint effort to protect the public,” said James M. Ferguson, Special Agent in Charge of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, Boston Division. “The sentencing of a self-admitted gang member of the Crips in federal court for possession of a machine gun and dangerous drugs should send a loud and clear message to anyone who chooses to engage in this type of criminal activity; it cannot and will not be tolerated and you will be held accountable.”

The Carusos were arrested and charged by complaint on June 30, 2021 along with co-conspirators Ernest Johnson and Nicole Benton as part of an investigation that began in 2020 in response to an increased number of shootings in communities north of Boston by street gangs whose violence was fueled by drug distribution. Vincent Caruso was later indicted by a federal grand jury on Jan. 19, 2022. Benton has pleaded guilty to her role in the DTO and is scheduled to be sentenced on Sept. 8, 2022. Ernest Johnson has also pleaded guilty and is scheduled to be sentenced on Sept. 13, 2022.

Vincent Caruso, a self-admitted Crip gang member, operated a large and sophisticated DTO with multiple subordinates that sold counterfeit prescription pills containing fentanyl to street gangs for further distribution on the North Shore. Laurie Caruso served as her son’s right-hand in the operations and was the primary distributor for his well-armed DTO.

The investigation identified Vincent Caruso’s DTO as a common supply source of counterfeit pressed fentanyl pills and other controlled substances for several street gangs responsible for the uptick in violence. Vincent Caruso’s DTO distributed

approximately 36 kilograms of fentanyl, largely in the form of pressed fentanyl pills – equating to a total of over 360,000 fentanyl pills – of which, a significant portion was manufactured directly by Vincent Caruso's DTO itself using multiple pill presses capable of generating thousands of pills per hour. In order to move these quantities, Laurie Caruso personally distributed fentanyl pills for the DTO at all hours of the day and retrieved cash owed by drug customers. A single counterfeit fentanyl pill retails at between \$10-\$20, thereby generating millions of dollars in proceeds for the DTO. In an effort to conceal the DTO's operations, Vincent and Laurie Caruso conspired to launder their illegal proceeds by conducting cash transactions through sports bets at a New Hampshire casino.

In furtherance of his drug trafficking activities, Vincent Caruso possessed and used firearms and orchestrated multiple violent offenses, including two armed robberies and a shooting involving a machinegun.

The first armed robbery took place on March 5, 2020, while Vincent Caruso on pretrial release for state fentanyl and firearm charges. He orchestrated an armed robbery and home invasion in which two individuals armed with a firearm and zip ties robbed the occupants of an apartment of approximately \$18,000 and jewelry. Vincent Caruso dropped off the robbers, waited at a nearby coffee shop and returned to pick them up after the robbery.

In May 2021 a second armed robbery took place also while Vincent Caruso on pretrial release for state fentanyl and firearm charges. For this incident, Vincent Caruso enlisted associates to rob an individual. Surveillance video shows assailants run up to the victim, including one assailant who was armed with an AR-15 style rifle. The victim escaped and ran off. Police responded and chased the assailant, who threw the AR-15 style rifle in a dumpster. The assailant ran into the highway and escaped police.

A third violent incident took place shortly after midnight on June 29, 2021, in Lynn. For this incident, Vincent Caruso provided a fully automatic handgun to an associate. The associate then used a fully automatic handgun to fire dozens of rounds at a number of victims who were gathered on a porch. Bullets hit residences, vehicles and three individuals who were hit by the gunfire and survived. This incident was captured on surveillance video.

In addition, while on state pretrial release Vincent Caruso sent dozens of photos and videos via social media that depicted him in possession of firearms and machine guns, large quantities of fentanyl that would be distributed by his organization, large amounts of cash and high-end jewelry.

Over 1.5 kilograms of pressed fentanyl pills, over 12 firearms, multiple luxury brand watches, chains, four medallions, two custom ATVs, a dirt bike and over \$177,000 in cash were recovered through various search warrants executed in this and related investigations.

First Assistant U.S. Attorney Levy, FBI SAC Bonavolonta, ATF SAC Ferguson and Colonel Christopher Mason, Superintendent of the Massachusetts State Police made the announcement today. Assistance was provided by the Essex, Middlesex and Suffolk County District Attorneys' Offices; Essex, Middlesex, Suffolk and Hancock (Maine) County Sheriffs' Departments; U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Maine; Maine Drug Enforcement Agency; and the Boston, Cambridge, Chelsea, Danvers, Everett, Lynn, Malden, Salem, Saugus, Somerville, Revere, Bolton (Maine), Bangor (Maine), Portland (Maine) and Westbrook (Maine) Police Departments. Assistant U.S. Attorney Philip A. Mallard of the Organized Crime & Gang Unit prosecuted the cases.

This effort is part of an Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Forces (OCDETF) operation. OCDETF identifies, disrupts, and dismantles the highest-level criminal organizations that

threaten the United States using a prosecutor-led, intelligence-driven, multi-agency approach. Additional information about the OCDETF Program can be found at <https://www.justice.gov/OCDETF>.

Southcoast Health nurse to retire after 50 years of service

Lois Wilding, RN, will cap off a nursing career of more than 50 years when she retires from Southcoast Health this weekend.

Known throughout the not-for-profit community health system for her classic headwear – a nursing cap earned when she graduated from Truesdale Hospital School of Nursing in 1972 – the Fall River resident will work her final shift at what is now Charlton Memorial Hospital on Saturday.



"I have had a wonderful nursing career," Wilding said. "God has given me good health to continue my passion for 50 years."

Wilding has worked on various units at Charlton Memorial, including medical/surgical and pulmonary. She has served as a nursing supervisor since 2007, first during evenings and then full-time. She has also held positions at the Sarah S. Brayton Nursing Center and in the practice of Southcoast Health Primary Care Provider Dr. Ronald Schwartz, along with stints in home care and school nursing.

"Few people in any profession can say they have dedicated their entire career to one community, and for a nurse, the achievement is even more impressive," said Dr. Ray Kruger, President and CEO of Southcoast Health. "Southcoast is fortunate to have thousands of outstanding nurses whose skill, talent and compassion place them firmly at the top of their field, and Lois has exemplified this. We will miss her, but we are grateful for her lifelong contributions and wish her all of the best."

Wilding is famous among her colleagues for sharing inspiring stories and memories that are teachable moments, and she still keeps in touch with many of her patients and their loved ones, said George Barth, RN, Southcoast Health Associate Chief Nursing Officer and Site Administrator at Charlton Memorial.

“Lois has touched the lives of many staff and patients throughout her career,” Barth said. “Her mentoring and advocacy have been a major contributor to the profession of nursing. Lois’s dedication to Southcoast Health will be remembered forever.”

New Bedford Fire Department announces retirement of three firefighters

“The New Bedford Fire Department would like to wish Lt. Peter Mello, Firefighter Joseph Costa, and Firefighter Thomas Mello Congratulations on their retirements from the Department.

Lt. Mello retires with over 26 years of service, Firefighter Costa with 33 years of service, and Firefighter Mello with 35 years of service. Their passion for firefighting and the New Bedford Fire Department will be missed.

Over the years, they passed their knowledge and experience on to countless new firefighters. Thanks so much for a job well done and we wish you and your families happiness and the best of luck in all your future endeavors.” -New Bedford Fire Department.

Massachusetts Environmental Police adding extra boat patrols to deal with BUIs on July 4th weekend

“The Massachusetts Environmental Police will be joining law enforcement agencies from across the country who will be on heightened alert this Fourth of July weekend for those in violation of boating under the influence laws.

Alcohol is the leading contributing factor in fatal boating incidents. Alcohol consumption can affect you quicker in a boating environment due to sun, wind, boat vibration, and the motion of the vessel while underway.

Massachusetts law prohibits anyone from operating a vessel while under the influence of alcohol or any controlled substance. A person is considered to be boating under the influence (BUI) if their blood or breath alcohol concentration is .08% or greater or they are under the influence of any controlled substance. Individuals convicted of BUI may face imprisonment, fines, and have their motor vehicle license and vessel registrations revoked.

Keep it simple, don't drink and boat!" -Massachusetts Environmental Police.

Massachusetts State Police assist SWAT and local police with armed, barricaded suspect

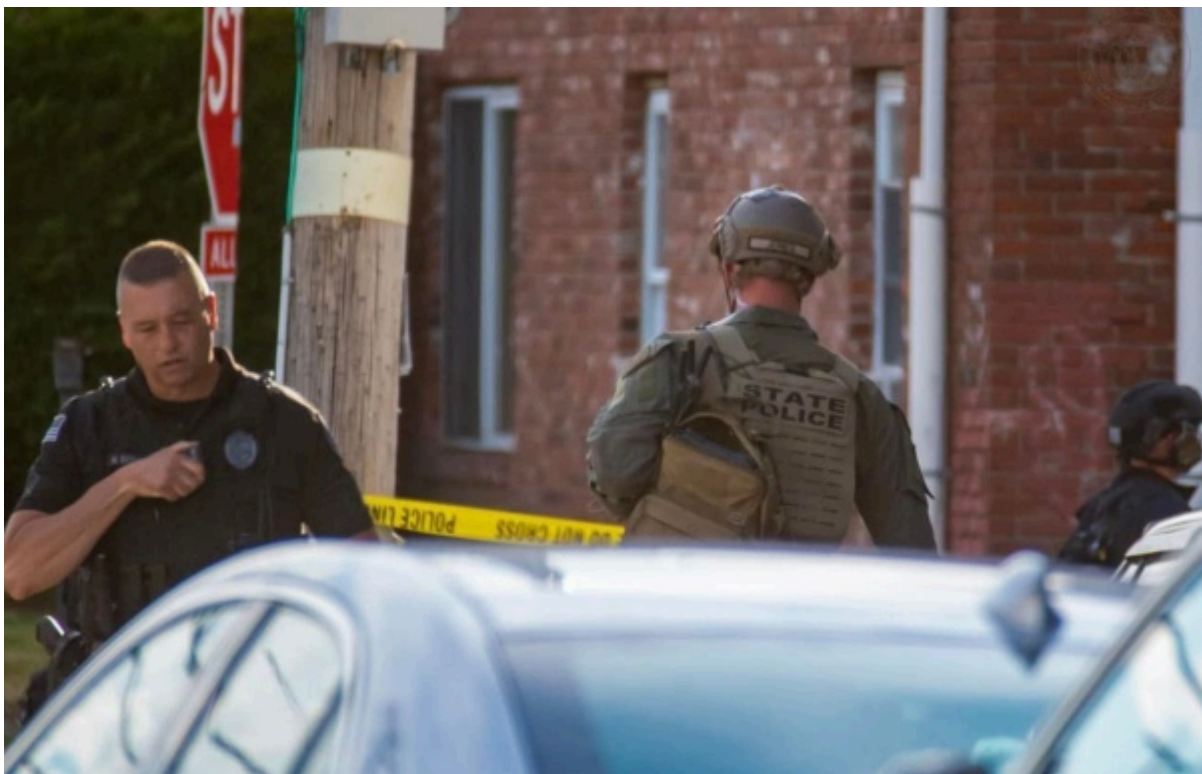
"Our members were called to assist Lowell Police and their regional SWAT Team with a call regarding a barricaded and possibly armed subject on Westford Street.

The State Police Bomb Squad, or EOD, deploys with local, regional, and federal assets regularly on these types of calls.

Many local towns would otherwise not be able to handle certain types of calls, and our members are happy to assist them and their communities. Thankfully, yesterday's standoff ended peacefully. This resolution was only possible thanks to the combined effort of our members and the other law enforcement partners on the scene." -State Police Association of Massachusetts.



State Police Association of Massachusetts photo.



State Police Association of Massachusetts photo.



State Police Association of Massachusetts photo.



State Police Association of Massachusetts photo.

Massachusetts State Police Air Wing takes New England Aquarium staff on Shark Patrol

“Massachusetts State Police Air Wing members Sergeant Gregg Spooner and Trooper Joshua Pacheco conducted an aerial shark patrol accompanied by John Chisholm of the New England Aquarium.

While scanning the waters off Cape Cod, the flight crew spotted this shark approximately 150 feet from the shoreline off Race Point Beach in Provincetown. The shark was in the water near a small group of seals that were gathered tightly together near the surf on the beach. Mr. Chisholm noted to the Air Wing members in flight, that the seals will huddle together when they sense a shark in the water for their protection.

The Massachusetts State Police will continue to conduct regular aerial patrols in areas where sharks are known to be active. When swimming on Cape Cod avoid areas where seals are present. Don't isolate yourself. Swim, paddle, kayak, and surf in groups. Follow all signage and flag warnings at beaches and instructions of the lifeguards.” Massachusetts State Police.

City of New Bedford announces

parking ban for Saturday's parade

"PARKING BAN FOR PARADE:

A parking ban will be in effect as of 7 a.m. Saturday along the route for the annual Cape Verdean Recognition Parade, which begins at 11 a.m. from Buttonwood Park and will proceed down Union Street to Acushnet Avenue, then turn right onto Acushnet and end at the Cape Verdean Veteran's Memorial Hall on Purchase Street, via Grinnell Street.

Traffic delays are expected during this time on and around the parade route so please plan accordingly and move cars parked along the route." -City of New Bedford.

Southcoast Health pledges to cut emissions to net-zero

FALL RIVER, NEW BEDFORD and WAREHAM, Mass. – Southcoast Health announced today that the not-for-profit community health system has joined the Biden Administration in a pledge to decarbonize the healthcare sector. Signing this pledge, Southcoast has committed to meeting the climate goal of reducing emissions by 50 percent by 2030 and achieving net zero emissions by 2050.

Southcoast Health officials attended a White House virtual event on June 30, 2022 with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and leaders from companies and organizations representing hospitals and health centers, as

well as pharmaceutical companies, medical device-makers, suppliers and group purchasing organizations.

“We are proud to be a part of this initiative,” said Phil Oliveira, Vice President of Support Services at Southcoast Health. “Many of our programs are already working to enhance our facilities, making them resistant to climate change and supporting health equity and increased opportunities for underserved populations in our region. Signing this pledge reaffirms our commitment to the South Coast community and the patients we serve.”

The U.S. healthcare sector accounts for approximately 8.5 percent of domestic climate-warming emissions and in September 2021, 200 medical journals named climate change the number one threat to global public health. Millions of people living in the United States already experience associated harm –with disproportionate impacts on disadvantaged and underserved communities – through more frequent and intense periods of extreme heat, wildfires, flooding, vector-borne diseases and other factors that worsen chronic health conditions.

Addressing this challenge, Southcoast Health has already started adapting more environmentally conscious materials in its operations. Most recently, the system’s Southcoast Cares Community Health and Wellness Program transitioned from a single diesel-powered Southcoast Wellness Van, to using two 2022 Kia Niro electric vehicles that will reduce the program’s carbon footprint while providing greater access to more patients and locations per day.

“Public health decisions have to be based on the realities of climate change, and we all need to do more to make that happen at the national level,” said ADM Rachel Levine, the Assistant Secretary for Health. “We’re seeing right now what extreme temperatures and more severe storms can do to human health, environmental quality and our physical infrastructure. It’s great to see so many different companies and organizations

come together to decarbonize and become partners in protecting human health from climate change. Today's announcement is just the beginning of a longer ongoing effort with partners from across the medical sector, which is exactly the kind of big response we need as a country."

The Office of Climate Change and Health Equity (OCCHE), part of HHS under the Assistant Secretary for Health, developed the health sector climate pledge in conjunction with the White House to help focus industry response to climate change. In addition to reducing their carbon footprint, signatories also commit to producing detailed plans to build climate resilience for their facilities and the communities they serve.

For more information, please see the White House fact sheet linked **here**.