

Massachusetts State Police identify victim of fatal crash that took life of 87- year old woman

The 87-year-old woman who succumbed to injuries sustained in a multi-vehicle crash on Route 3 in Pembroke yesterday has been identified as Nancy Chamberlin of Quincy.

The crash remains under investigation by Troop D of the Massachusetts State Police along with members of the State Police Collision Analysis Reconstruction Section, Crime Scene Services, and Plymouth County State Police Detective Unit. No other information is available at this time.

Earlier press release:

State Police Investigating Fatal Crash in Pembroke
July 19, 2020

At approximately 9:30 a.m. today Troopers assigned to State Police-Norwell responded to reports of a four vehicle crash on Route 3 northbound prior to Exit 12 in Pembroke. Upon their arrival they discovered the passenger of a 2017 Volkswagen SUV, an 87-year-old female from Quincy, suffering from serious injuries sustained in the crash. The operator sustained non-life-threatening injuries. Troopers performed life-saving efforts, including CPR, prior to her transport to an area hospital where she succumbed to her injuries.

A total of four people were transported to area hospitals, none with life-threatening injuries. State Police Collision Analysis Reconstruction Section, Crime Scene Services, and

Plymouth County State Police Detective Unit responded to the scene to investigate the cause of the crash. State Police were assisted on scene by Pembroke EMS and MassDOT. Route 3 northbound was completely closed at the scene of the crash for approximately two hours, causing heavy traffic delays.

Earlier today and unrelated to this crash, MassDOT dispatched a work crew to repair a road defect north of the crash. This road defect, a pothole, was completely separate and unrelated to this crash.

The exact cause and circumstances of the crash remain under investigation, no other information is available at this time. Please do not contact the barracks directly.

Onset man allegedly tries to swallow drugs before arrest in Mattapoisett

On Monday, July 20, the Mattapoisett Police Department along with Detectives from the Wareham Police Department executed an arrest warrant on 30-year-old Alberto “Berto” Velasquez from Onset, MA and a search warrant at the Hillside Motel in Mattapoisett.

Over the past several weeks, Detectives conducted surveillance of Alberto Velasquez at the Hillside Motel in Mattapoisett. During this time, police allege that Velasquez was selling heroin/fentanyl from his room at the motel. Detectives report observing multiple people arrive at the motel day and night to allegedly purchase narcotics. In addition, Detectives report making multiple controlled purchases of heroin/fentanyl from

Velasquez at the Hillside Motel.

This morning, Velasquez was observed leaving the motel as a passenger in an unknown person's vehicle. Mattapoissett Police and Wareham Police initiated a motor vehicle stop. Velasquez was the passenger of the vehicle and was allegedly refusing to obey multiple commands from Detectives to exit the vehicle. Velasquez was observed by Detectives attempting to consume what was believed to be heroin/fentanyl. Velasquez was subsequently removed from the vehicle and placed into custody.

Velasquez is charged with Possession of a Class A Substance (subsequent offense), Resisting Arrest, and Disorderly Conduct. In addition, Velasquez was also arrested on an outstanding arrest warrant from Wareham Police for Assault and Battery on a Person Over 60, Animal Cruelty, and Destruction of Property.

Velasquez was booked at the Mattapoissett Police Station and later transported to Plymouth District Court for arraignment.

Anyone with information involving illegal drugs can leave an anonymous tip with drugtips@mattapoissettpolice.com

New Bedford mother and son arrested on cocaine trafficking charges

On July 17, New Bedford police officers executed a search warrant at 108 Princeton St #1 and report seizing 55 grams of packaged cocaine and \$5,940 in cash.

26-year old Devon Dakota Thompson and his mother, 45-year old

Tara L. Antonio, both of 108 Princeton St #1 in New Bedford, are both charged with trafficking and conspiracy. Detective Lavar Gilbert investigated the case.

If you have any information on criminal activity in your neighborhood, the New Bedford Police Dept. wants to hear from you. You can leave an anonymous tip on our voicemail at (508) 991-6300 Ext. 1.

OPINION: New Bedford Firefighter weighs in on closing of Engine 8 “Mayor cares more about the dollar than he does about the lives of the people in that neighborhood”

“I have personally been to so many fires in Engine 8’s still area that I lost count. The houses in this section of the city are densely packed, really old, densely populated, and balloon frame to boot – which means a fire in the basement would carry all the way up the walls into the attic.

The citizens, the elderly, and the children in this area will absolutely be at a much higher risk with Engine 8 closed.

There have already been 2 unnecessary deaths in the city as a result of the Mayor’s rolling blackouts. In both cases the

water carrying apparatus, those closest to the fire were out of service. The victim's deaths were unnecessary as the blacked outstations we're literally right around the corner. Their proximity would have cut their response times by MINUTES.

EVERY MINUTE COUNTS at a fire!!! Every minute the fire doubles in size, and because of the age of these houses, filled with modern plastics make these homes much more susceptible to failure and more conducive to the production of toxic gasses from their burning. More than flames, it's the breathing in of those gasses that cause most of the deaths.

When your house is on fire, every SECOND counts, so every minute counts even more. Sadly, in those 2 cases, it took the rest of 'their' lives for the next closest apparatus to arrive.

So, with this said, cutting an important and busy piece like Engine 8 would be – and you can quote me on this – grossly negligent of the Mayor.

Yes, our response times are within the so-called 'NFPA's limits' but those extra minutes at a time when minutes matter the absolute most – lives and properties are more likely to suffer.

We love our job and continue to press on for the sake and safety of our citizens, but we are so tired and morale is so low because we keep taking these hits and it seems like the public doesn't see behind the mayor's motives. This is what happens when decisions are made by people who have no idea how to provide for the safety of their fellow citizens. They are only motivated by money which means he cares more about the dollar than he does about the lives of the people in that neighborhood.

Sorry so long. I just really feel like our voices need to be heard by our city. I've been doing this for 15 years, and it

literally scares me to see how the mayor is going about this so blindly. This is a HUGE risk – and when our people suffer, so do we.” -New Bedford Firefighter.

Complete Labor & Staffing is Hiring for Manufacturing, Hotel / Housekeeping and General Laborers

IMMEDIATE OPENINGS for multiple positions.

Complete Labor and Staffing is looking for the following:

Manufacturing & Production

REQUIREMENTS: Reliable transportation and a drivers license.

Starting wage: \$13 to \$16 an hour.

Housekeeping / Hotel Workers

REQUIREMENTS: Professional attire, no visible tattoos, no colored hair (highlights are OK)

Starting wage: \$15 to \$17 an hour.

General Laborers

REQUIREMENTS: Drivers license and access to a vehicle

Starting wage: \$12.75 to \$15 an hour.

Stop by their downtown New Bedford Location and ask for Katie.

If you meet the above requirements just bring yourself down to 256 Union Street, New Bedford.

They are open daily from 5am until 7pm.

If you are willing and able to work hard and have a positive

attitude, Complete Labor & Staffing will put 100% effort into finding the right assignment for you.

Their offices open at 5:00AM, and we begin the process of finding the right assignment for you that matches the skills you possess and interest that you have.

Many assignment begin daily, and many progress to week-long assignments and in often cases, full-time employment!

What is needed to apply:

Please bring two forms of valid ID (Example: Driver's License, State Id, Military Id, Passport, in conjunction with Social Security Card, Birth Certificate). You will be required to fill out an application. If you have any certifications, Example: Osha, CDL-A, Medical Card, Dot Card, Forklift Certification etc. please provide them. A resume is helpful, but not required.

Located at:

256 Union Street
New Bedford. MA
508-858-5595

Loc8nearme: loc8nearme.com/massachusetts/new-bedford/complete-labor-and-staffing/5831255/

Massachusetts House counters Senate with its own policing bill

Matt Murphy
State House News Service

House Speaker Robert DeLeo and top Democrats plans to seek a vote Wednesday on police reform legislation that makes good on the promise leaders made to Black and Latino lawmakers following the death of George Floyd, proposing a new system to license cops and enforce limits on the use of force, like chokeholds and tear gas.

The bill, which was being voted on Sunday night in committee, would also curb the use of qualified immunity, a controversial legal principle that can shield police officers from civil lawsuits in cases of misconduct.

The issue of qualified immunity has become a flashpoint in the fast-moving debate on Beacon Hill over-policing, and while House leaders will seek to limit its use in state law, they have proposed a different approach than the Senate.

The House plans to officially introduce the bill Monday, a week after the Senate passed its version of policing reform and just days after House leaders solicited and received thousands of emails offering testimony and feedback on the Senate's legislation.

The House Ways and Means Committee opened a poll of its members just before 9:30 p.m. on Sunday night, and gave them until 10 a.m. Monday to weigh in on whether to recommend the 123-page bill to the full House. With just two weeks left of formal sessions for the year, time is running out on legislators to finalize what has become a top end-of-session priority for both the Legislature and Gov. Charlie Baker.

The bill's release and the anticipated debate later in the week also comes after a weekend during which the country mourned the loss of civil rights icon John Lewis, the Congressman from Georgia who died at 80 after a battle with cancer.

Since the May killing of Floyd in Minneapolis while in police custody, political leaders have been under pressure from

demonstrators and others to address systemic racism in both law enforcement, and all aspects of society. The bill would create a new permanent Commission on the Status of African Americans to help policymakers develop solutions to discrimination and other issues facing the Black community.

The commission, as conceived in the bill, would be a resource for policymakers and a “clearinghouse” of research and information on issues impacting the Black community in Massachusetts.

In addition to making policy recommendations to the Legislature and executive branch to ensure equal access to government services for Black residents and to address discrimination, the commission would also recommend candidates of color for positions throughout state government, including for appointments to board and commissions.

“Those voices demanded we as a Legislature change how we think about public safety and that we address the causes of systemic racism. With this legislation, we will begin the task of making our public safety more equitable for the entire Commonwealth,” said Ways and Means Chairman Aaron Michlewitz in a statement Sunday night.

Licensing and Qualified Immunity

The bill also touches on the five main areas prioritized by the Black and Latin Legislative Caucus following the death of Floyd, including the creation of a new independent Massachusetts Police Standards and Training Commission.

The commission would be responsible for licensing all law enforcement in the state every three years, with the power to revoke, or decertify, a police officer for misconduct, including the use of excessive force, bias, conviction of a felony, witness intimidation or submission of false timesheets.

"The Caucus demanded police accountability and transparency, and this bill addresses each of our initial core demands," said Rep. Carlos Gonzalez, a Springfield Democrat and the chair of the Massachusetts Black and Latino Legislative Caucus.

"This will change law enforcement institutions and begin to answer the call of civil rights leaders, such as Martin Luther King and Rep. John Lewis, who dedicated their lives to addressing racial equity. In addition, it starts addressing change in honor of George Floyd whose tragic death sparked a national conversation through protest and now by Legislative action," Gonzalez said.

The seven-member commission would include appointees from the governor and attorney general, with each getting two selections. The remaining three appointments would be made jointly, but must include the chair of the Massachusetts Law Enforcement Policy Group and at least one other member selected from a list of three choices submitted by the Massachusetts Coalition of Police, the state's largest police union.

The bill stipulates that the racial and gender makeup of the commission should reflect the state's population.

The structure of the commission differs from the one proposed by the Senate, which would be a 14-member commission set up within the Executive Office of Public Safety and appointed by the governor, and would have to be reconciled if the House passes this bill unchanged.

The two branches also diverged in their approach to qualified immunity.

The police unions are strongly opposed to changing the doctrine, which they say protects officers and their families from frivolous lawsuits. However, reform advocates, including U.S. Sen. Elizabeth Warren and U.S. Rep. Ayanna Pressley, have

strongly called for curtailing or eliminating its use, which critics say has become a barrier to holding police accountable.

The Senate bill would limit the use of qualified immunity by allowing civil lawsuits to proceed if a police officer should have reasonably known their behavior violated the law, instead of requiring clear proof that a law had been broken.

In the Ways and Means bill, House leaders are proposing to tie qualified immunity for police directly to the licensing process and revoke immunity in any case that results in the decertification of a police officer.

By linking immunity and decertification, the House may also be trying to address the concerns raised by some senators during debate that the changes they were making to qualified immunity applied not just to police but all public officials, from local conservation officials to boards of public health.

The bill would also ban the use of facial recognition software or any other form of biometric surveillance by a government official or agency unless specifically authorized by law.

However, it would give the Registry of Motor Vehicles permission to use such technology in order to verify someone's identity to issue a license or permit, and to perform a search at the request of law enforcement with a warrant.

Chokeholds would be banned, under the bill, and police would be restricted from firing a weapon at a fleeing vehicle and from using tear gas, rubber pellets or dogs to control behavior unless there were no other options to protect public safety and other deescalation tactics had been tried and failed.

The execution of no-knock warrants would also be limited, and the legislation would establish a right of citizens to "bias-free policing" and create a duty to intervene for officers who

witness misconduct by other law enforcement.

“We owe a duty to the public and to the members of law enforcement to ensure that training is consistent and is available in all areas of the state,” said Rep. Claire Cronin, the House chair of the Judiciary Committee.

Like the Senate, House leaders are also proposing to put restrictions on the type of information school officials can share with law enforcement, including immigration status, religion, ethnicity, neighborhood of residence or suspected gang affiliations, unless it’s related to a specific incident.

The restrictions generated debate in the Senate from lawmakers who worried it would give safe harbor to gang members in schools, but supporters said students need to be able to attend school without fear of being judged.

The bill also establishes new training and certification requirements for school resource officers, and establishes a new commission to develop a memorandum of understanding about the role of school resource officers and how they will interact with students.

Finally, the bill incorporates some changes to the governance of the State Police sought by Gov. Baker earlier in the year that would, among other changes, allow a governor to hire the colonel of the State Police from outside the department.

Massachusetts State Police investigating fatal crash

that claims life of 83-year old woman

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New Bedford Fire Union: Closing Engine 8 puts citizens and firefighters at risks

The following statement was released by Billy Sylvia the President of the New Bedford Firefighters Union – Local 841:

“Brothers and Sisters,

Mayor Mitchell has presented his budget for fiscal year 2021 along with an address to the City Council. In his address, he has announced his decision to decommission Engine 8 and run Ladder 4 as a Quint because of fiscal constraints resulting from the Covid-19 crisis. This decision was made without our input or support. We currently have no timeline on his plan to close Engine 8 because we just learned about this decision at the beginning of his address and during our monthly Union meeting. We will be meeting with the Chief and the Deputy tomorrow morning for more information. As we understand, there currently are no plans for any layoffs to our Department or any others.

Predictably, the Mayor claims that this closure of the apparatus in the most congested section of the City will not affect the Fire Department’s effectiveness or public safety. You know from your work as a firefighter this is not true. Engine 8 is the first-due water Company to the most densely populated area in the whole City. Closing Engine 8 puts citizens as well as our own firefighters at a disadvantage and increases our safety risks. Having a single Apparatus cover the North End from Coggeshall Street to Freetown, and in between Fairhaven and Dartmouth, while also covering the immediate area around Station 8 is reckless and irresponsible.

Just as with the closure of Engine 11 earlier this year, the closure of Engine 8 puts holes in our coverage and our availability to respond to emergencies. Apparatus has been pulled to the South End of the City daily and consistently to cover holes in coverage created by the Mayor's decommissioning of Engine 11. Closing Engine 8 will worsen the situation by leaving just one apparatus responsible for covering one of the busiest and most dangerous parts of the City. The closure unnecessarily increases the amount of time to get the proper number of firefighters to the scene of a fire. This compounds the problems created by the closure of Engine 11. This combined loss of coverage and the loss of precious seconds or minutes to respond to emergencies will make a difference only for the worse, whether concerning lives saved or property protected.

This action from the Mayor does not come as a surprise for any of us in our Department as we all know he has little respect, knowledge, or concern of how we operate or what we do. We are experiencing death by a thousand cuts. The Mayor, after all, continues to state there is no need for a Fire Department our size. He compares the professional and permanent Fire Department of one of Massachusetts' oldest urban centers to surrounding rural areas such as Dartmouth, Fairhaven, and Acushnet. Anyone can see there is a huge difference in population, by tens of thousands, and in housing stock, which is much older and more densely populated housing in New Bedford. To compare our Department and operations to any town with less than a quarter of our population, with completely different geographical layout, and with smaller, disbursed housing is foolish and irresponsible.

Every single employee in our department from the top down, no matter who, is just a dollar sign in the Mayor's eyes as he looks to where and how he can cut the Fire Department at the expense of fire safety. After two fatal fires at the end of last year, the Mayor refused to accept responsibility for the

tragedies, for the reduced fire safety policies caused by prioritizing price tags. He spit in the face of everyone including our members by closing Engine 11 at the beginning of a global pandemic that was just starting to reach us. His cuts to apparatus and service put the public's safety along with our own in danger. Our safety is further jeopardized by the announcement of Engine 8's closure. Our Brothers and Sisters will continue to help and protect the public as best we can day in and day out, but if or when a tragedy occurs despite our collective best efforts, we will remind the public that the buck stops with Mayor Mitchell.

Just as the Mayor has done in the past, we can assume that he will try to mislead the people of our City on how cuts to fire safety coverage benefits them or suggest that the Department will maintain operational readiness despite losing another Engine and one of our busiest apparatus. All of you know first hand on what and who it takes to perform our jobs safely and efficiently and how these cuts directly affect our operations every day. This is why we will need every single one of you when called upon to let your voices be heard and fight back to protect our department and our safety. You can be sure that this second apparatus closure in six months is not the end with his attack against us and every other public employee. We will stand tall and strong together, to show the Mayor we will not sit quietly while he puts the lives of the public and our own at risk through his irresponsible leadership of the Fire Department.

In Solidarity,
Local 841 Leadership"

Once in a lifetime comet “Neowise” to delight South Coast stargazers

Tonight (07/18) and tomorrow night will be your last chances to see the brightest comet to appear since Comet Hale-Bopp in 1997 23 years ago. Only just recently discovered this March, the massive 3-mile wide comet Neowise will not make another appearance for 6,800 years.

Dubbed “Great Comet of 2020,” it will be easiest to spot in the northwestern part of the sky, just below the “bowl” of the Big Dipper about **an hour after** sunset. Yes, you will be able to see it with the naked eye, but if you have binoculars or a telescope you will have even better views of the once in a lifetime comet.

You will see the tail first and then the very bright coma (head) of the comet, almost as bright as a star. If you are a stargazer you and familiar with Polaris, the North Star, comet Neowise will be even brighter.

As the comet gets closer to earth it will become harder to see and after July 22nd it will slowly begin to fade and disappear from the solar system.

Massachusetts State Police arrest three women for

Trafficking Cocaine

Last night at about 8:30 p.m., Trooper Adam Couture, a recent graduate of the 85th Recruit Training Troop and his Field Training Officer Trooper Michael Leslie assigned to the State Police Shelburne Falls were on patrol on Interstate 91 North when they observed a Nissan Maxima traveling at speed greater than the posted speed limit and without lights on. Troopers activated the cruiser emergency lights and stopped the Nissan with four occupants.

As a result of an investigation and search of the passengers and vehicle troopers located approximately 130 grams of Cocaine and 6 grams of Heroin. The passengers, all residents of Brooklyn, NY, were identified as FAITH TORRES, 23; ANGELIQUE WOODSON, 33 and ANIAYA ELLIS, 22 and charged with the following offenses:

1. Trafficking Cocaine;
2. Possession to Distribute Class A Drug;
3. Conspiracy to Violate the Drug Law; and
4. Possession of an Open Container/Alcohol in Motor Vehicle.

All three subjects were transported to the Shelburne Falls Barracks where they were booked. A bail commissioner was contacted and set bail for TORRES at \$35,000.00. Bail for WOODSON and ELLIS was set at \$5,000.00. They were transferred to the Franklin House of Correction pending their arraignment in Greenfield District Court Monday.

The operator was issued a criminal summons and released from the scene.