

Massachusetts State Troopers Arrest Man for Trafficking Cocaine; Firearms Offenses

Just before midnight yesterday Trooper Patrick Dolan, assigned to the State Police Barracks in Springfield, was patrolling Route 91 Southbound in Longmeadow when he observed a black Acura sedan traveling at approximately 90 miles per hour. The posted speed limit at this location is 65 mph. Trooper Dolan caught up to the vehicle and also noticed the registration was revoked. He activated his emergency lights and stopped the vehicle at the 0.8 mile marker.

Upon stopping the vehicle Trooper Dolan approached it and identified the operator as HANER NUNEZ, 21 of Springfield. After informing NUNEZ why he was stopped Trooper Dolan asked him and a passenger to exit the vehicle as it was going to be towed due to the revoked registration.

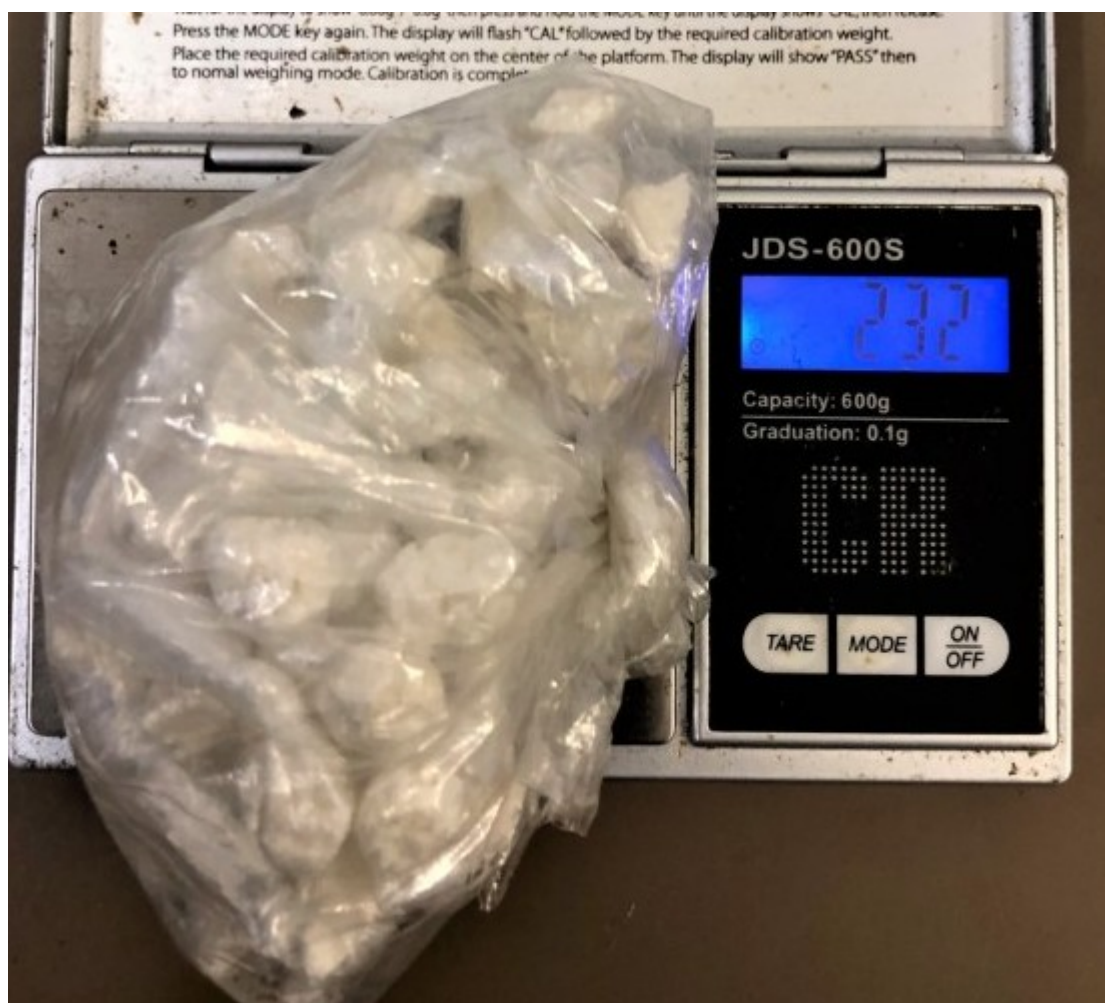
During the tow inventory, Trooper Dolan located a Bersa Thunder .380 pistol fully loaded with a round in the chamber. NUNEZ does not possess a license to carry firearms and an electronic inquiry revealed the firearm was stolen. Trooper Dolan also located a large plastic containing individual wrapped baggies of a substance believed to be Crack Cocaine and multiple wax packets of a substance believed to be Heroin. Trooper Dane Jobst then arrived on scene to assist Trooper Dolan in placing NUNEZ under arrest.

A search of NUNEZ's person revealed he was carrying over \$1,900 in cash along with two cell phones. It was determined on scene the passenger was unaware of the illegal items and was released from the scene.

NUNEZ was transported to SP-Springfield where he was booked. A bail clerk was contacted and placed a bail amount of \$50,000

on NUNEZ. The total amount of narcotics seized was 23 grams of Crack Cocaine and 40 small packets of Heroin. NUNEZ was later transported to the Hampden County House of Correction pending his arraignment at Springfield District Court this morning on the following charges:

1. Possession of a Firearm;
2. Carrying a Loaded Firearm;
3. Possession of a Firearm while in Commission of a Felony;
4. Trafficking in Cocaine;
5. Possession of a Class A Drug with Intent to Distribute;
6. Possession of Ammunition without an FID Card;
7. Operating a Motor Vehicle with a Revoked Registration;
8. Receiving Stolen Property; and
9. Speeding.



Undocumented immigrant driver's license bill gets approval from Massachusetts transportation committee

By Michael P. Norton of **State House News Service**

The Transportation Committee has given a favorable recommendation to legislation that would enable undocumented immigrants to access standard driver's licenses in Massachusetts.

Bill sponsor Representative Christine Barber of Somerville joined activists in Nurses Hall late Wednesday to celebrate the vote. "Si se puede," activists, who have been rallying for the bill all week, chanted.

Barber told the News Service the bill has been reported favorably to the Senate. The committee said it recommended a redrafted version of a bill (S 2061) filed by Senator Brendan Crighton with Barber's bill attached. Barber said she was "thrilled" about the vote and said she did not believe the bill had previously received a favorable vote in committee.

"Folks have been amazing to work with," Barber said, citing efforts by a coalition to advance the bill and the support of law enforcement for the legislation. Last year, Senate President Karen Spilka, speaking to the bill's merits, said, "I believe that for public safety reasons, even just if you look at it alone, we should pass it ... There's like 14 other states that have done this and the sky hasn't fallen."

Stigma Free SouthCoast: Manny DeBrito

Most area people know Manny DeBrito from his wildly successful non-profit program A's before J's or his position with the City of New Bedford as the Election Commission Chair. "I want to use my platform and use my voice in the hopes to inspire just one person. You never know what someone is going through or has gone through at any point. Be empathetic."

Manny knows what it is like to be at the lowest of lows, having others judging your misfortune and almost giving up. He was kind and brave enough to share his story with us.

It is easy to look at someone and see where they are at right now, the apparent "good life", happiness, success – but to really know a person you have to know their journey, their struggle and what it takes to maintain their current state. Such is the case with Manny DeBrito. 20 years ago Manny was an outgoing, 25-year-old guy working finance in Boston and enjoying life. Manny suddenly got very sick and doctors had no answers. They tried treating him for multiple diagnoses but nothing was working. The sickness was debilitating – Manny missed so much work that he ended up losing his job. With no job, he could not afford his apartment or car and was forced to move in with his parents and get on transitional assistance that provided him an EBT card. With no one able to pinpoint what was wrong Manny began hearing things like, "it's just in your head" or "you look healthy so you must be healthy" while also feeling the weight of judgment every time he was out in public. Manny also had, at the time, a 2-year-old son who he was unable to spend the time and do the things he was

accustomed to do because of the sickness. After over a year of this, Manny was finally diagnosed with Lyme disease. The disease, mixed with the hard-hitting medication, continued to wreak havoc on Manny. He was living in his parent's basement with no job, no money, unable to spend time with his son, missing out on life and feeling as if he was a burden those family and friends trying to help him out. Manny couldn't see any light at the end of the tunnel, was extremely depressed and had hit his absolute rock bottom. He was 27 years old.

Manny and his family felt like a change in scenery might be the answer so he packed up what little he had and moved out west to stay with family there. "I quickly realized all I had done was transplant my problems and felt I was now just a burden to a different group of family. I was still not feeling right, couldn't find any work out there so after about a month I decided to head back home." Shortly after his return to New Bedford, many joined a group of his friends on a bus trip for a friend's birthday party. Little did he know that on this bus trip he would meet his future wife, Athena. "Not only was I completely physically attracted to this person, but I loved spending time with her. I had absolutely nothing to offer her at this time – I was sick, broke, no job and had a young son – but she saw something in me. She believed in me. My father says to this day that she was my gift from God."

Slowly, things started to get better for Manny. He found a doctor in Harwich who was treating him and helping him through his disease, started working again and was spending more time with Athena. "Even after recovery, it was difficult because I am physically feeling better but it is the mental work that takes even more time and the part that no one sees." "The stigma that is attached to taking medication to help with mental health is daunting, but I do it and look at me. I am doing what I love and what I was put on this earth to do. It takes work every day. It doesn't affect my heart. I am so blessed I have been given a second opportunity. I owe it to

the people that have supported me and to the great city that I live in. Embrace your weakness and the frailty and know that there is a light at the end of the tunnel.”

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Stigma free Southcoast is a collaborative initiative highlighting the everyday people of the Southcoast who are working to remove the stigmas associated with mental health, mental illnesses, depression, suicide, postpartum and addiction, to name a few. Our goal and mission is to share our stories and personal battles with the end result of moving closer to removing the stigma. We are your everyday people- the teachers, the businessmen and women, the parent at the sporting event, your neighbor. These are everyday struggles that know no color, race, sex, socioeconomic status- the stigmas are real and they are daunting. Let's work together to help make a #stigmaFreeSouthcoast.

Wareham Police release opioid data for month of January

During the month of January 2020, Wareham Police Officers responded to 11 overdose calls. Three of these incidents would result in fatalities, and in eight cases the person was treated medically. On three of these calls, life-saving Narcan was used by the responding officers.

The following officers utilized Narcan to revive critical patients thereby having a direct hand in saving their lives.

- Sergeant Kevin Reilly and Officer Christopher Corner administered Narcan and utilized CPR to revive an individual overdosing.
- Officer Nate Aronson successfully revived a victim on another call with Narcan.
- Officer Eric Machado used Narcan to revive a victim.

In one incident Officers Aronson and Joseph Cardoza pulled an overdose victim from a car after cutting the seatbelt and performed CPR until the arrival of Wareham EMS. Despite the efforts to save this person's life, they were pronounced deceased later at Tobey Hospital.

If anyone knows of someone who is in danger of being an overdose victim, please contact the Wareham Police Department, Detective Division. The call will remain confidential, and the detectives will arrange for the person to get help and services. They can be reached at (508)295-1206.

Acting Chief John Walcek said, "Our officers are on the frontlines of battling the opioid crisis, and I am proud of the work they are doing."

**Lifestream Inc. is hiring!
They offer walk-in interviews**

every Tuesday and Friday in New Bedford

If you're looking for work or even a new career you should consider stopping by Lifestream this Friday afternoon to see what Lifestream Inc. has to offer.

They conduct walk-in interviews on Tuesdays from 9-11 am and Fridays from 1-3pm at our 13 Welby Rd., New Bedford office. Please stop in, learn more about them, and fill out an application. They have full and part-time direct care, LPN and management positions available! Bring a resume and a good attitude.

At LifeStream, Inc. we firmly believe that our employees drive our success as an organization. If you are someone looking to make a difference in the lives of individuals with disabilities, we would love to have you on our team!

LifeStream, Inc. offers extremely generous benefits to our employees, including: health, dental, vision, free short and long-term disability insurance and life insurance, discounted gym memberships, 401k retirement savings plans, flexible spending accounts and tuition reimbursement and remission plans! Shift differentials are offered, dependent on the location, as well. We also offer our employees the opportunity to participate in seasonal farm share programs and company-sponsored activities and recognition events.

If you can't make it to the event this week and you still would like to apply for a job, please visit our website at <http://www.lifestreaminc.com/careers/> where you can see a full list of our current job openings. Schedules vary by location.



Friends of Jack Foundation Partners with Hasbro Children's Hospital in Providence

The Friends of Jack Foundation has proudly partnered with Hasbro Children's Hospital to bring the Foundation's Superhero Program to Providence, R.I.

Jill Fearons, Executive Director of the Friends of Jack, expressed her excitement to begin a relationship with Hasbro. "Since the moment we began working with representatives of Hasbro, we knew that this was the next place that we wanted to bring our Superhero Program. Hasbro is the hub of pediatric healthcare for the entire state of Rhode Island, and is truly revolutionizing the way that children are treated in a clinical setting. We couldn't think of a better partner with whom to establish our first program outside of Massachusetts."

The Superhero Program was created by the Foundation to help children in various stressful settings by providing comfort with stuffed animals and empowerment with a superhero cape and mask.

The Superhero Program is currently offered by Saint Anne's Hospital, Boston Children's Hospital's North Dartmouth satellite, Southcoast Health's three hospitals – St. Luke's, Charlton Memorial and Tobey, Child and Family Services, the Women's Center, the Bristol County Sheriff's Office and Department of Corrections, and a number of local police, fire and EMS departments, including the Massachusetts State Police.

The Friends of Jack Foundation provides overlooked programs and services that enhance the physical, mental and emotion health and well-being of children on the SouthCoast. The Superhero Program is a primary service that is organized and funded entirely by the Friends of Jack Foundation, and implemented in partnership with groups within the local community.

For more information on the Friends of Jack Foundation and to get involved, visit www.friendsofjack.org or contact Jill Fearons at Jill@friendsofjack.org. Also, follow the Friends of Jack Foundation on **Facebook**, **Instagram** and **LinkedIn**.

New Bedford Public School counselors recognized during National School Counseling Week

New Bedford Public Schools is recognizing the work its school counselors do each day helping students realize their full potential and providing support to reach academic goals. National School Counseling Week, sponsored by the American School Counselor Association (ASCA), is celebrated this school week – Feb. 3–7, to focus public attention on the unique contribution of school counselors within U.S. school systems and how students are different as a result of what school counselors do. National School Counseling Week highlights the tremendous impact school counselors can have in helping students achieve school success and plan for a career.

In thanking NBPS counselors, Superintendent Thomas Anderson

noted their important role in “enhancing our focus on teaching and learning to raise student achievement.”

District counselors received certificates of appreciation, presented by Dr. Kathleen Mackenzie, NBPS Supervisor of Clinical and Behavioral Services, who noted “Social Emotional wellness is a necessary foundation for optimal learning. Counselors are key players in supporting the social and emotional wellness of our students and are critical members of every school.”

“School counselors work with all students to remove barriers to learning by addressing students’ academic concerns, postsecondary options and social/emotional skills,” said Kwok-Sze Wong, Ed.D., ASCA executive director. “School counseling programs help to increase student achievement and provide a much-needed resource for students, parents, teachers and administrators. School counselors are integral to student success.”

New Bedford Child Rapist Sentenced to Lengthy Prison Term

A 62-year-old New Bedford man who forcibly raped a teenage boy at Fort Taber two-and-a-half years ago was sentenced to serve up to 15 years in state prison yesterday, Bristol County District Attorney Thomas M. Quinn III announced.

Aristedes Lopes pleaded guilty Monday in Fall River Superior Court to indictments charging him with rape of a child and kidnapping of a child under 16.

On June 13, 2017, the victim was at Fort Taber taking photographs of military bunkers with his cell phone. The victim told police that as he was taking pictures, an unknown, older black male approached him and brandished a knife. At knife point, this defendant held the victim in the corner of a bunker and raped him. When the rape was completed, the victim stated that the suspect was startled by some female voices which were approaching. The victim was able to use his phone to take a photograph of the assailant and followed him as the suspect met up with a woman and entered a car. The victim also took a photograph of the car, including the license plate.

The victim immediately reported the rape to his family members and was brought to the hospital for a rape examination. Police were also contacted at that time. The police took the photograph of the suspect and the vehicle, and attempted to locate the suspect. On the following day, police made contact with the vehicle's owner. The owner told them that she had a male friend identified as Aristedes Lopes, who was staying with her. Mr. Lopes, who matched the appearance of the suspect in the photograph taken by the victim, was encountered by the police and arrested. He matched the suspect from the photograph taken by the victim. The owner of the vehicle also told the police that she had driven the defendant to Fort Taber on the previous day and that he went for a walk for approximately a half an hour.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Jason Mohan and the 12.5 to 15 year state prison sentence was imposed by Judge William Sullivan.

"This was a violent and premeditated sexual assault committed in a public place. The defendant was obviously looking for someone to prey on. I am pleased the defendant was held accountable without the Victim having to testify at trial," District Attorney Quinn said.

Mashpee Wampanoag tribe hearing for Taunton Casino scheduled for Wednesday

By Colin A. Young of **State House News Service**

The Mashpee Wampanoag tribe will get a hearing before a federal judge this week to appeal a 2016 ruling that 321 acres of reservation land in Mashpee and Taunton could not be held in trust for the tribe, which had broken ground on a \$1 billion casino in Taunton.

Tribal Council Chairman Cedric Cromwell said in a tribal newsletter last week that the U.S. Court of Appeals for the First Circuit will take up the tribe's appeal at 9:30 a.m. on Wednesday at the federal courthouse in Boston.

"Through this appeal, the Tribe hopes to uphold the original Record of Decision accepting the Tribe's land into trust. This appeal concerns the question of whether the Department of the Interior was [authorized to] take the Tribe's land into trust," Cromwell said in the notice.

In early 2016, the Obama administration took 321 acres of reservation land in Taunton and Mashpee into trust for the Wampanoag tribe, which was federally-recognized in 2007. The tribe planned to construct its \$1 billion First Light Resort and Casino on the land in Taunton.

After a citizen group challenged the land in trust designation, a federal judge's ruling later in 2016 nullified the Obama administration's decision and President Donald Trump's administration last year officially reversed the

Obama-era declaration. The tribe appealed the case, Littlefield et al. v. U.S. Department of the Interior, to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the First Circuit.

At issue is whether the tribe qualifies as “Indian” under the second definition included in the 1934 federal Indian Reorganization Act. That definition applies the term “Indian” for the purposes of the law to “all persons who are descendants of such members who were, on June 1, 1934, residing within the present boundaries of any Indian reservation.”

The plaintiffs challenging the land in trust decision argue that the Mashpee Wampanoag tribe cannot qualify as “Indian” under the IRA, and therefore would not qualify for land in trust status, because the tribe was not under federal jurisdiction in 1934. The tribe argues that saying its members do not qualify for protections under the IRA is ridiculous.

“Appellant is part of the Indian tribe that met with the Pilgrims at the first Thanksgiving and thereafter suffered hundreds of years of persecution and land theft. It has maintained its tribal identity, community, and culture,” lawyers for the tribe wrote in a recent brief. “A conclusion that Appellant is not ‘Indian’ is too absurd and darkly ironic even for Franz Kafka and antithetical to the IRA’s ambitious mission. Such a ruling would place yet another black mark in the long ledger of the United States’ history of failing to treat this Indian Tribe fairly and honorably.”

Cromwell said the court is not expected to make a decision at Wednesday’s hearing, which will consist of 15 minutes of arguments from each side, but “will likely do so within the next several months.”

A further ruling in the case could help break up a bit of a logjam in the state’s gaming policy. The Massachusetts Gaming Commission has been considering whether to solicit proposals

for the state's third resort casino license, which would be required to go to a project in either Bristol, Plymouth, Barnstable, Dukes or Nantucket county, and has kept a close eye on the status of the tribe's effort.

In 2016, when it appeared a tribal casino in Taunton was likely, regulators rejected a proposal for a commercial casino in Brockton. Since then, the commission has fended off repeated requests from gambling giant Rush Street Gaming to reconsider its rejected 2016 proposal.

The possibility of a tribal casino in Taunton – the \$1 billion First Light Resort and Casino the Mashpee Wampanoag tribe hopes to build would have a significant impact on the state's commercial casino industry – is a major consideration for regulators as they seek public and industry comments on what the commission should take into account if it moves forward with a southeastern Massachusetts casino bid.

One concern, as expressed by local officials and others, is that commercial casino operators might not be willing to invest the minimum \$500 million in a project that could have to compete with a nearby tribal casino. If the Gaming Commission opts to go ahead with licensing a commercial casino in Region C and the tribe is allowed to open its own casino under federal law, Massachusetts would receive no tax revenue from the tribal casino.

Though the hearing before the U.S. Court of Appeals for the First Circuit could be a meaningful step forward in the tribe's quest, it will not necessarily end the legal wrangling over the tribe's land. There's also a case in U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia – Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe v. Interior Secretary David Bernhardt – in which the tribe argues that the interior secretary failed to properly consider extensive factual evidence it submitted to make the case that it should be eligible for land in trust.

As the tribe works to secure its land in trust through the courts, U.S. Rep. William Keating, who represents Taunton and Mashpee, has pushed legislation that would use the power of Congress to reaffirm the 2015 decision by the Interior Department to take land into trust for the tribe, though Trump has opposed it.

The U.S. House of Representatives voted 275-146 in May to approve that bill, titled the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe Reservation Reaffirmation Act, and it has not moved since being referred to the U.S. Senate that same month.

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