

Massachusetts State Police traffic stop leads to evasion, struggle, use of taser and charges for alleged Fentanyl trafficking

“Last night, at approximately 7:30 p.m., Trooper Timothy Desmarais, who is assigned to the State Police Athol Barracks, was patrolling in the city of Gardner when he queried a registration of a 2013 Chevrolet Impala, which revealed a suspended status.

As Trooper Desmarais activated his emergency lights to stop the vehicle, it pulled into the CVS parking lot, accelerated through the parking lot, nearly striking several vehicles, making a U-turn, then continued toward the exit of CVS, nearly striking a pickup head-on, then turning into a snowbank, becoming stuck. The driver, later identified as THOMAS M. LAFRANCE, 28, of Webster, put the vehicle in reverse and forward several times, attempting to free the vehicle from the snowbank, while Trooper Desmarais was giving LAFRANCE orders to stop and open the door.

LAFRANCE eventually exited the vehicle and began a struggle with Trooper Desmarais as he was attempting to place him in custody. LAFRANCE broke free, entered his vehicle again and appeared to be either attempting to retrieve something or hide something. At this point, Trooper Desmarais deployed his taser to gain control of LAFRANCE. An off-duty corrections officer, who was nearby witnessing the incident, then assisted Trooper Desmarais in placing LAFRANCE into handcuffs.

LAFRANCE initially provided identification that was not his

own. With assistance from Templeton Police Sergeant Steve Flis, Gardner Police Officers Corey Chauvette and Ryan Cotes, they were able to positively identify LAFRANCE as his true identity.

LAFRANCE was subsequently transported to Heywood Hospital in Gardner to have the taser probes removed, then was transported to the State Police Athol Barracks for booking. During booking, a bag containing approximately 60 grams of what LAFRANCE described as "Fentanyl" was seized.

LAFRANCE was charged with the following offenses;

1. Failure to stop for police
2. Negligent operation of a motor vehicle
3. Speeding
4. Arrestee furnish false name/SSN
5. Resisting arrest
6. A&B on a police officer
7. Malicious destruction of property -\$250
8. Unlicensed operation of a motor vehicle
9. Trafficking in fentanyl

It was also learned that LAFRANCE had an active default arrest warrant for Possession of a class A drug out of Woburn District Court.

LAFRANCE was held without bail and subsequently transported to the Franklin County House of Correction, pending his arraignment Monday morning in Gardner District Court."