New Bedford police officers credited with help lost elderly couple reunite with family

Two New Bedford Police officers are credited with reuniting an elderly couple Monday, April 9 with their family in Connecticut after the couple was located driving in the city, apparently unclear of their location.

Officers Samuel Algarin-Mojica and Curtis St. Germain were responding to a medical call at the 500-block of North Front St. at about 8:18 p.m. when they observed a vehicle driven by an elderly male trying to squeeze between an emergency vehicle and a parked car. When Officer Algarin-Mojica approached the vehicle, the driver and his wife, who were both 77, appeared uncertain of their location.

The driver was on the phone with a young man who urged them to reach out for help. Officer Algarin-Mojica spoke to the young man, who identified himself as the couple's 16-year-old grandson and told the officer that his grandparents lived in Dayville, Conn., about 60 miles from New Bedford.

The grandson told Officer Algarin-Mojica that the family was very worried about the couple, who had been missing for about three hours. He was very relieved that they were safe.

Once he understood the situation, Officer Algarin-Mojica calmly asked the driver to switch to the back seat. "I told them who I was and that I was going to get them home," he said

Officers Algarin-Mojica drove the couple in their vehicle to station 3 in the north end, where they were checked out by medical personnel. and determined to be in stable health. The

grandson and his mother arrived in New Bedford about an hour later to pick up the couple and drive them safely home.

Personnel at the station made conversation with the couple to keep them relaxed until their grandson and his mother could arrive to get them.

“When their family finally arrived they immediately hugged and I saw how relieved they were,” Officer Algarin-Mojica said. “Their daughter told me how lucky they were that we came across them, they had no idea where they were. They were all very grateful and asked if we could take a picture with them to remember this day.”

Their daughter, Suzanne Gosselin, praised the officers. “We are very thankful,” she said. “The officers were very professional, very kind. You have some very nice officers in New Bedford. People in New Bedford should be very proud of their department. It was very much a relief to us to know they were in good hands.”

She said she also appreciated assistance from officers who directed her to the station when she was a little lost in the city, searching for station 3.

For Officer Algarin-Mojica, the incident made an emotional impact.

“I looked at them and treated them as if they were my grandparents,” Officer Algarin-Mojica said. “I have grandparents of the same age and I couldn’t imagine what I would feel if they ever get lost like that.”

Police Chief Joseph Cordeiro is very proud of the officers’ actions.

“I am very appreciative of Officers Algarin-Mojica and St. Germain’s keen sense of observation and intuitiveness that led to assisting this couple and family during a critical time.”