Investigators Seek Suspect in Fatality Hit and Run Accident

Wanted Suspect: Keith Hamm, DOB 11/14/1991, 5′11″, 303 lbs, (PSCO Booking Photo Attached)

Traffic Homicide Investigators are seeking Hamm on charges of vehicular homicide and leaving the scene of an accident resulting in death. The charges stem from the June 4th 2014 accident at the intersection of 15th Avenue South and 25th Street that resulted in the death of Tomas Melendez, 81 (see previous releases below).

Investigators believe it was Hamm that was operating the rented silver Nissan Altima that crashed into the Toyota Camry that Melendez was passenger in and then fled the area on foot.

Hamm has prior arrests for carrying a concealed firearm and home invasion robbery, and was just released from prison in February of this year.

St. Petersburg Police are asking for the public’s assistance in locating Hamm. Anyone with information should call the non-emergency number at 727-893-7780, Text-A-Tip to 727-420-8911 or leave a confidential tip at 727-892-5000.

Information released by Mike Puetz, 727-893-7550, michael.puetz@stpete.org

For Immediate Release
Jul 18, 2014

Release of June 5th, 2014

Update re. Fatality Hit and Run Crash at 15th Avenue South and 25th Street South

Date / Time of Incident: June 4th, 2014 at 2111 hours.
Brief Description of Incident: A 1997 white Toyota Camry, FL tag of 2918IE, driven by Anna Melendez (W/F, 12/28/1951, 1616 21st Street South, St. Petersburg, FL) was traveling eastbound on 15th Avenue South approaching 25th Street South. Anna Melendez’s husband, Tomas Melendez (W/M, 01/22/1933, 1616 21st Street South, St. Petersburg, FL) was riding in the front passenger seat of the Toyota Camry along with their son, Daniel Melendez (W/M, 03/22/1990, 1616 21st Street South, St. Petersburg, FL) in the backseat.

A 2014 silver Nissan Altima, FL tag of CILN37, was traveling northbound on 25th Street South toward 15th Avenue South. The Silver Nissan Altima was an Avis rental vehicle that was originally rented to a Keisha Williams (B/F, 07/02/1986, 2300 23rd Street South, St. Petersburg, FL). Keisha Williams was not driving or with the Nissan Altima at the time of the crash.

The driver of the Nissan Altima is unidentified at this time. The Nissan Altima was traveling at a high rate of speed and swerving around other vehicles on the roadway according to witnesses. The Nissan Altima then ran a stop sign for northbound traffic on 25th Street South with the front striking the right side of the Toyota Camry. The Toyota Camry flipped onto the driver side crashing into a chain link fence on the northeast corner of the intersection.

The suspect driver of the Nissan Altima then ran from the scene northbound on foot. Tomas Melendez was transported to Bayfront Hospital where he was pronounced dead at 2138 hours. Anna and Daniel Melendez were also transported to Bayfront Hospital for treatment and have since been released.

The suspect driver is described as a black male, 20 - 30 years of age, with a beard.

Release Prepared by: Officer Matthew Carter / Traffic Homicide Investigator (Van3)

For more information, please contact the St. Petersburg Police Public Information Office at 727-893-7550 during normal business hours; weekdays from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m

Release of June 4th, 2014

Hit and Run Fatality Accident
We are current on the scene of a fatality hit and run accident at 15 Avenue south and 25th Street. Officers working nearby heard the crash and responded to the scene at approximately 9:11 p.m.

Once on the scene they found two vehicles involved, one of which was occupied by three people. The driver of that car, an 81 year old male, was pronounced deceased on the scene by paramedics. The other two occupants of the car were transported to the hospital, but based on preliminary information their injuries do not appear life threatening at this time.

The driver of the other car, and apparently the only occupant, abandon the car after the crash and fled on foot before officers arrived on the scene. That person has not yet been located.

A traffic homicide investigator is responding to the scene and will issue an updated press release later in the next several hours.

Information provided by Mike Puetz, michael.puetz@stpete.org, 727-420-6448