



VALLEJO POLICE DEPARTMENT

Press Release

(707) 651-7147

May 8, 2008 4:41PM

Lieutenant Rick Nichelman

www.vallejopd.com

VPD CASE 08-6770

20001(c) V.C. – Felony Hit-and-Run

192 P.C. – Vehicular Manslaughter

12280(b) P.C. – Possession of Assault Weapons

12020 P.C. – Possession of Illegal Weapons

On April 18, 2008, a vehicle ran off the roadway in the area of northbound Fairgrounds Drive at Coach Street and struck two pedestrians, resulting in fatal injuries to 24 year-old Vallejo resident Dante Marchiel Russ. The subject walking with Russ, 21 year-old Ashley Lewis, also of Vallejo, sustained minor injuries.

The Vallejo Police Department's Traffic Division initiated an investigation. Initially, only minimal information was available regarding a description of the suspect vehicle – a dark-colored sedan. Later, on Thursday, May 1, 2008, Vallejo Police Department Detectives made an arrest in a burglary series in which the suspect was matched to DNA evidence obtained from cigarette butts left by suspects at the crime scene. Their subsequent investigation lead to 43 year-old Vallejo resident Joseph Padua being identified as the driver of the vehicle that fled from the scene of the fatal collision.

Further investigation by Detectives and Traffic Investigators lead to the suspect vehicle being recovered from a residence in Petaluma. A Search Warrant was obtained for S-Padua's residence, and although he was not located, several illegal weapons were taken from the home, including a .223 caliber assault rifle, a 9mm 'Uzi' assault weapon, and additional weapons.

Ultimately, with the assistance of Detectives from the Vacaville Police Department, a parole search was conducted at a residence in Vacaville on May 8, 2008. Suspect Padua was located inside the home and was arrested without incident. Padua later made admissions connecting him to the offenses. Padua was booked into Solano County Jail and is awaiting arraignment on the above charges.

Anyone with additional information is asked to contact Traffic Officer Michael Nichelini at (707) 648-4329, or Detective Joe McCarthy at (707) 648-4352.