

Second man arrested in kidnapping case

By Eric Kopp
Okeechobee News

A second man has been arrested for his alleged connection in a March 14 incident in which a local man was forcibly removed from his home.

Ismael S. Vega, 18, N.W. 39th Circle, was arrested Friday, Oct. 2, on a warrant charging him with false imprisonment. He was booked into the Okeechobee County Jail under a bond of \$10,000.

An Okeechobee County Sheriff's Office (OCSO) detective said Vega apparently fled the state after the incident and was arrested in Okeechobee late last week on a local warrant.

Earl Thomas Brown, 21, N.W. 98th St., Okeechobee, was arrested Sept. 14 for his alleged participation in the purported abduction. Like Vega, he was charged with false imprisonment and booked into the county jail under a \$10,000 bond.

This case began March 14 when a woman awoke and saw a man on the front porch of her N.W. Fifth St. home. When she yelled,

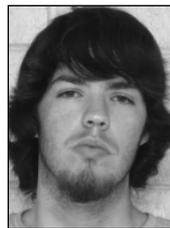
the interloper fled on a skate board in the direction of the Okeechobee County annex building. A short time later a white car was seen pulling out of the annex onto U.S. 98 N.

OCSO Detective Ted Van Deman said an X-Box video game was taken from the porch and a radar detector was taken from the woman's car.

The detective said the woman's boyfriend, who was also a victim, apparently learned the identity of the suspect. He then contacted Brown and Vega and asked them to tell the suspect—later identified as Colton Freddy Garcia—that he wanted to talk to him, the detective said.

Brown and Vega went to Garcia's home but reportedly did more than deliver the message.

"Brown and Vega took it upon themselves to forcibly remove Garcia from his home and take him to the burglary victim's



Ismael S. Vega

home," explained Detective Van Deman.

On the way to the victim's home Garcia—clad only in a pair of basketball shorts—reportedly jumped from Brown's compact truck in the 3100 block of N.W. 34th Ave. The truck was travelling at a speed of 30 to 40 mph, stated the detective.

"At this point, Garcia has no memory of what happened. I believe he was knocked unconscious," said Detective Van Deman.

He added that Garcia suffered scrapes to his body, two broken wrists and severe head trauma. However, Brown and Vega allegedly put him back in the truck and took him to the home where he was apparently identified by the woman.

At some point Garcia, despite his injuries, ran from the home.

OCSO deputies Matt Hurst and Matt Crawford later saw Garcia, 19, running in the 400 block of U.S. 98 N. while they were responding to a kidnapping call. Ironically, the kidnapped person was Garcia.

Detective Van Deman said when Garcia saw the two deputies he ran into some nearby woods, where he was later caught and

placed in handcuffs by the deputies.

When the deputies got Garcia into some light they saw his injuries and immediately called an ambulance, which then took the man to Raulerson Hospital. Garcia was later transferred to Lawnwood Regional Medical Center in Fort Pierce.

According to the detective, Brown then fled to South Carolina and Vega went to North Carolina.

Brown surrendered to the detective on Sept. 14. Brown was also arrested on warrants charging him with violating his probation. He had previously been arrested on charges of possession of marijuana, carrying a concealed firearm and possession of drug paraphernalia. He is being held without bond on those charges.

On June 23, Detective Van Deman arrested Garcia on a felony charge of burglary and a misdemeanor charge of petit theft. Those charges were dropped by the state.

Garcia's family has incurred medical expenses of more than \$20,000, said the detective.

Report: Pot-eating man charged with tampering

By Eric Kopp
Okeechobee News

An Okeechobee man was arrested on a felony charge of tampering with evidence when he reportedly tried to dispose of some suspected marijuana by eating it.

Colton Freddy Garcia, 19, N.W. Sixth St., was also arrested Wednesday, Oct. 7, on misdemeanor charges of possession of marijuana under 20 grams and possession of drug paraphernalia. He was booked into the Okeechobee County Jail under a bond of \$3,000.

Arrested with Garcia was Brandon M. Perez, 19, S.W. American St., Indiantown. He was arrested on misdemeanor charges of possession of marijuana under 20 grams and possession of drug paraphernalia. His bond was set at \$1,000.

An arrest report by a detective with the Okeechobee Narcotics Task Force states a vehicle was stopped in the 300 block of U.S. 98 N. for doing 55 mph in a 45 mph zone. Perez was later identified as the driver, and Garcia was a passenger in the vehicle.

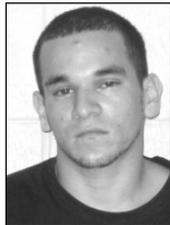
The report states that a task force detective approached the passenger side of the vehicle and saw a green leafy substance on Garcia's shorts. The detective also saw that Garcia was eating something and when he opened his mouth the detective reportedly saw a green leafy substance on the man's tongue and around his mouth.

Garcia was told to spit the substance out, and it was then retrieved by the detective.

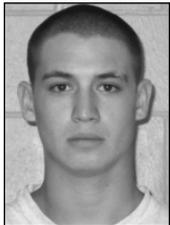
According to the report, the substances found on Garcia's shorts and in his mouth were field tested. That test indicated a positive result for the presence of marijuana, stated the detective.

A glass pipe was allegedly found inside the vehicle, and a field test on the substance inside the pipe reportedly indicated a positive result for the presence of marijuana.

The arrest report does not indicate if Perez was issued a traffic citation for speeding.



Colton Freddy Garcia



Brandon M. Perez

Motorist arrested on drug charge

By Eric Kopp
Okeechobee News

An Okeechobee man was arrested on a felony drug charge after being stopped for reportedly doing 40 mph in a 30 mph zone.

David Glenn Chipman, 51, S.E. 40th Ave., was arrested Tuesday, Oct. 6, by the Okeechobee Narcotics Task Force on a felony charge of possession of cocaine. He was booked into the Okeechobee County Jail under a bond of \$5,000.

An arrest report by a task force detective indicates that Chipman was stopped in the 1100 block of S.E. 40th Ave. by Deputy Justin Akins of the Okeechobee County Sheriff's Office (OCSO).

OCSO K-9 Rex was brought to the scene and during a free air sniff around the exterior of the red 1998 Ford Explorer the K-9 allegedly indicated a positive alert to the driver's side door.

The vehicle was then searched and, according to the report, a suspicious substance was found on the driver's side floor board. Two more pieces of a similar substance were found on the driver's side running board and another small piece, similar to the other substances, was found in the passenger seat, continued the report.

All of the substances were field tested and indicated a positive result for the presence of cocaine, the detective's report stated. The report went on to add that the substances were believed to be crack cocaine.

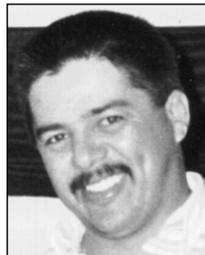
Chipman was also issued a traffic citation for speeding.



David Glenn Chipman

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Sergio Torres



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