

PRESS RELEASE

Date: Sunday, September 30, 2012

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Bystanders Help Arrest Suspect of Fatal Traffic Collision

On Sunday, September 30th at about 2:10PM, Hemet Police Dispatch began receiving multiple 9-1-1 calls of an injury traffic collision that occurred in the intersection of State Street and Florida Avenue, in downtown Hemet. Officers responded, finding that three vehicles were involved in the collision and several bystanders attempting to give aid to a woman trapped in one of the vehicles. Witnesses told officers that the driver of the at-fault vehicle was barefoot and ran away from the scene. Officers and witnesses began to search the area for the suspect

Investigation showed that the at-fault driver was travelling eastbound on Florida Ave, when he ran the red light, simultaneously striking two vehicles that were driving north on State Street. Three people were in the two vehicles that were struck. All three were injured and transported to local hospitals. The female driver of one of the vehicles was the most seriously injured, and was transported via Mercy Air. She later succumbed to her injuries. The names of the injured and killed parties are not being released at this time.

One of the witnesses located the suspect hiding from police in the 100 block of North Juanita. The citizen phoned the police, directing officers to the hiding man. He was taken into custody without incident.

The arrested man was identified as 35 year old Hemet resident, Sergio Garcia, who was arrested for: 20001(a) VC - Felony hit and run causing injury or death, 23153(a) and 23153(b) VC - Felony drunk driving, and 191.5(a) PC - Vehicular Manslaughter while Intoxicated. He is being held on \$75,000 bail.

Lieutenant Dickson stated, "Once again, the teamwork between police and active members of the community have led to the arrest of a dangerous suspect."

Roads were closed for over three hours during the investigation.