



# TARPON SPRINGS POLICE DEPARTMENT

*"Building a Better Future Through Excellence in Policing"*

**Robert P. Kochen**  
CHIEF OF POLICE

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

Date: July 19, 2018

Time: 12:30 pm.

On July 18, 2018 at approximately 1:32 am, two off-duty Tarpon Springs Police Officers observed a suspicious vehicle, a white Lexus, driving slowly without lights in the area of Castleworks Lane and Toddsmill Trace, and saw the vehicle's occupants exit and begin to check door handles of vehicles parked in driveways, entering a vehicle in the neighborhood. The burglary suspects were confronted by the officers and immediately fled the area in vehicle, while the officers alerted on-duty officers of the incident. The Lexus was subsequently located by responding Tarpon Springs Police Department Patrol Officers, who attempted to stop the Lexus. The vehicle then fled from the marked patrol car, eastbound on Klosterman Rd. The vehicle was successfully stop sticked by one of our officers at US 19 N. and Klosterman Road. The suspect vehicle continued fleeing southbound on US Highway 19 N., so a request was made to the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office for assistance from their aviation unit. The aviation unit responded and began monitoring the vehicle as it continued traveling southbound.

Approximately 50 minutes after the initial attempt to stop the vehicle by patrol officers, the Lexus vehicle came to a stop in the parking lot of a 7-Eleven convenience store, located at 5451 31<sup>st</sup> S. in St. Petersburg. The five occupants of the vehicle were then apprehended by Tarpon Springs Officers, along with deputies with the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office, without further incident. The Lexus was determined to have previously been reported as stolen from St. Petersburg. The arrested suspects included three juveniles ranging in age from 14 years old to 16 years old and two adults. The suspects all resided in either St. Petersburg or Pinellas Park and had traveled to Tarpon Springs with the purpose of committing burglaries.

Arrested Suspects:

Anthony Grayson, 08/31/1999, St. Petersburg  
Igor Lavrenenko, 01/29/2000, Pinellas Park  
Calvin Vasquez, 02/14/2004, Pinellas Park  
Charlie Gibbs, 09/24/2001, St. Petersburg  
Dequante Lightsey, 07/06/2002, St. Petersburg

This is not the first similar incident in Pinellas County, specifically in the North County area. Within the last 30 days, there have been at least two other incidents involving groups of young males from other parts of Pinellas County, notably Clearwater and St. Petersburg, who have



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attempted burglary sprees utilizing stolen vehicles. On June 23, 2018, five juveniles from Clearwater had committed vehicle burglaries in the Riverwatch Subdivision in Tarpon Springs. On that date, a vehicle description was given and, in conjunction, with the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office, the stolen vehicle was located in Palm Harbor. The vehicle had fled from deputies, who utilized stop sticks on the stolen car, and four of the juveniles were apprehended, still having custody of stolen property from the burglaries in Tarpon Springs.

On July 13, at approximately 4:15 am, Pinellas County S.O. Deputies located a stolen vehicle, which was southbound on US 19 N from Klosterman. Again, the vehicle was disabled using stop sticks, and four suspects (18 – 21 y/o) fled from the vehicle but were apprehended. The vehicle was found to have stolen items from vehicle burglaries that had occurred in Tarpon Springs and Pasco County.

Once again, the Tarpon Springs Police Department requests that its residence make vehicle burglaries difficult for these groups, by ensuring that their car doors are locked each night and valuable items are not left in the vehicle. The community should be vigilant in observing suspicious vehicles in their neighborhood and immediately reporting it to law enforcement. The Tarpon Springs Police Department will continue to work closely with the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office and all other law enforcement agencies, utilizing our resources, in preventing and identifying criminal activity and successfully arresting those committing these crimes in the North County area.

Respectfully,

*Maj. Jeffrey P. Young*  
Major Jeffrey P. Young



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