



Rick Staly, Sheriff

FLAGLER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

"An honor to serve, a duty to protect."

NEWS RELEASE

Date: November 4, 2020

Prepared by: Shannon Martin

Phone and Email: 386-281-9733 | martin@flaglersheriff.com

Release #: 224

Three-Year Investigation Reveals Suspect Intentionally Sank Car to File Bogus Insurance Claim

Nearly three years ago, on December 30, 2017, the Flagler County Sheriff's Office (FCSO) responded to a stolen vehicle complaint in Bunnell. The alleged victim, 28-year-old Shawn Barnes (DOB 5/28/1992), told deputies that his vehicle, a 2015 Fiat 500, had been stolen from his driveway overnight.



The Fiat 500 reported missing in December 2017 and recovered in a lake in Putnam County in October 2020.

Barnes explained that he had left the keys to the vehicle inside the car and that the doors were unlocked. Barnes also stated that he was not current with the payments on the vehicle but that he had contacted the lien holder and they had not repossessed the car. Deputies issued a 'Be on the Look Out' (BOLO) for the car. It was not located.

Earlier this year, on August 5, 2020, a witness contacted FCSO and told deputies that Barnes was responsible for the disappearance of his own vehicle.

Proudly Serving the Community Since 1917
A Four Diamond Accredited Law Enforcement Agency



1769 East Moody Blvd., Bunnell, FL 32110

386-437-4116 – Fax 386-586-4888

Mailing: P.O. Box 879, Bunnell, FL 32110

www.flaglersheriff.com

The witness stated that on December 29, 2017, Barnes and the witness were traveling together in the Fiat 500. Barnes drove the vehicle to a boat ramp in Putnam County where Barnes placed a rock on the accelerator and launched the car off a bulkhead next to the boat ramp into the canal where it sank to the bottom. Barnes explained to the witness that he was purposely sinking the vehicle so he could make a false insurance claim.

On October 21, 2020, FCSO and the Putnam County Sheriff's Office (PCSO) Dive Teams located the vehicle reported stolen by Barnes and recovered it through a joint dive team operation. Once the vehicle was removed from the water, a large rock was observed on the front driver side floorboard, the steering wheel had been tied off to a fixture, the keys were still in the ignition and the vehicle gear was still in drive. The vehicle was towed to the FCSO impound lot by Saxon's Towing.

On October 27, 2020, a source who had had additional information contacted the FCSO. The source indicated that narcotics had a major part in the decision to dump the vehicle in order to avoid making car payments.

"This is another great example of how guardianship policing works to solve crimes," Sheriff Rick Staly said. "This witness gave vital information to our investigators and we were able to locate the vehicle and put this guy behind bars where he belongs. Criminal acts like this cause all our insurance rates to go up. We'd like to again thank the Putnam County Sheriff's Office for their assistance in retrieving the vehicle."

On November 3, 2020, Shawn Barnes was arrested and transported to the Sheriff Perry Hall Inmate Detention Facility. He is charged with False and Fraudulent Insurance Claim. He was released after posting a \$3,000 bond.

###

Proudly Serving the Community Since 1917
A Four Diamond Accredited Law Enforcement Agency

