



Fresno County Sheriff - Coroner's Office

Margaret Mims, Sheriff - Coroner

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News Release

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Deputies Arrest Man Who Fled in Stolen Car

Fresno County Sheriff's deputies have arrested 41 year old Ruben James Zapata of Fresno. He has been booked into the Fresno County Jail. He is facing felony charges of: Auto theft, evading police, hit and run and possession of methamphetamine. He has an extensive criminal history and was arrested just last month, but was released from jail after bailing out.

Around 12:45 pm on Friday, a resident reported to the Sheriff's Office that an unknown man had been parked in front of an apartment complex the last two hours, the engine to his car was running and it looked like he may be passed out. Deputies arrived to the area of N. Glenn and E. Gettysburg Avenues and found the reported red Dodge Challenger parked with a man in the driver's seat. Deputies approached his window and once he saw them, he shifted the car into drive and sped away. Deputies returned to their patrol cars and began to pursue him. The suspect, later identified as Ruben Zapata, reached speeds up to 80 mph on Fresno city streets and was driving into oncoming traffic at times, with not regard for the safety of others. Deputies canceled their pursuit due to the dangers it posed to the public.

Zapata continued to drive recklessly and while passing through the intersection of Fresno and Dakota, he side swiped a vehicle carrying three people. Zapata never stopped and continued driving to the area of Clinton and Cedar. Zapata parked his car on E. Union Ave., got out and

began walking south on Cedar Ave. The two deputies who had first tried contacting him, saw Zapata walking on the sidewalk, stopped him and detained him.

A records check of the Dodge Challenger showed it was reported stolen last week from the Island Waterpark in Fresno. Deputies processed the car for evidence and then returned it to its owner.

One of the occupants of the vehicle Zapata struck at Fresno and Dakota suffered minor / moderate injuries and received medical treatment.

Anyone with additional information about Ruben Zapata is asked to contact the Sheriff's Office at (559) 600-3111 or Crime Stoppers at (559) 498-7867. You will remain anonymous and may be eligible for a cash reward.