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Police Appeal To Family of Mentally Ill Man After Violent Outburst, Repeated Trespassing Incidents

Increasing concerns as St. Croix man with aggressive behavior escalates to violence; VIPD urges family support following service station incident

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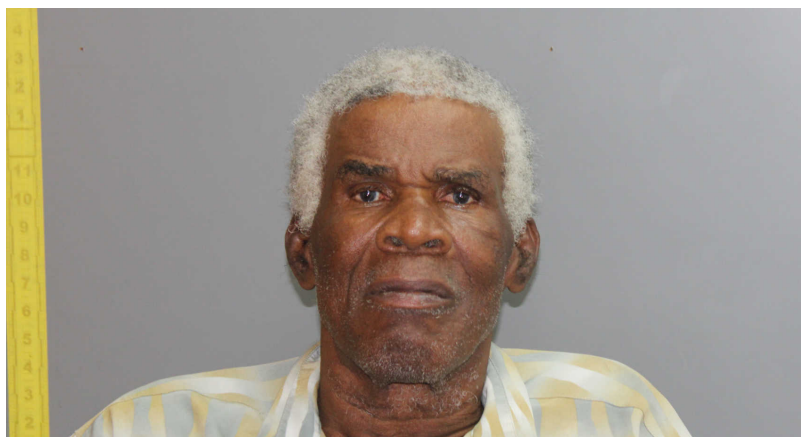
ST. CROIX — A man arrested for brandishing a knife at a service station is having difficulty controlling his behavior, police say, as the VIPD appeals to his family to hire a caregiver or otherwise provide additional support.

Officers were dispatched to the V.I. Department of Human Services offices in Frederiksted on Thursday, where they found an irate Lewis Eugene, who refused to leave the premises. Police were informed that Eugene, who uses a wheelchair, arrived on the premises and began to curse at staff members. He reportedly kept saying that he was the owner of the property, and demanding

that everybody exit the building.

Eventually, emergency medical technicians arrived on scene and provided care to Eugene. He allegedly decided to go to the hospital, and was escorted instead to his Hannah's Rest residence.?

Approximately two hours after the first incident, police were informed that Eugene was at a One Love Service Station, where he was once again demanding that people leave the establishment. When staff asked him to leave, he reportedly pulled out a knife and began to swing at the workers. Even after being confronted by police, Eugene was unwilling to surrender his weapon, attempting to bite and stab the officer who, along with a bystander, made attempts to disarm him.



?Mugshot of Lewis Eugene (Credit: The V.I. Police Department)

Eventually, officers deployed their stun weapons to subdue Eugene, and were then able to remove the black-handled kitchen knife from his possession. He was then arrested for third-degree assault, aggravated assault and battery, brandishing, exhibiting or using a deadly weapon, and disturbance of the peace.

Officers say that Eugene has been exhibiting a pattern of aggressive behavior, necessitating over a dozen calls to remove him as he loiters or trespasses on business and residential properties on a daily basis. Police say that his family has been advised on more than one occasion to either hire a caregiver, or admit him to an adult residential facility where he can receive appropriate care.

In court on Friday, Magistrate Yolan Brow Ross found probable cause for assault in the third degree, and ordered that an evaluation be done on Eugene. Bail was set at \$25,000 satisfied by an unsecured bond, pending the identification of a suitable third-party custodian.

A status conference on the matter has been scheduled for July 17.