

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Elderly St. Croix Man Beaten Unconscious, Carjacked At Grove Place Park

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ST. CROIX -- An elderly St. Croix man who went missing at 11 Monday morning from the D. Hamilton Jackson Park in Grove Place was found beaten unconscious in the park and taken to the Juan F. Luis Hospital on Monday afternoon.

According to the man's pastor, Anthony Benjamin of Calvary Baptist Church in Upper Love, Augustus Bannis, 70, left his Upper Love home at around 11 a.m. Monday to gather almonds from a tree at the Grove Place park, a customary pastime for him.

Bannis did not take his wallet and cellphone during the short five-minute drive to the park from his home, Pastor Benjamin shared with The Consortium.

Around 2 p.m. when the man's wife did not hear from him, she alerted relatives. At round 4 p.m., she informed the church secretary that her husband had not returned from Grove Place earlier in the day. Church members called the hospital to inquire if Bannis had been admitted. Hospital personnel did not release any information to the family and instructed them to call 911. Church members also searched the Grove Place neighborhood where Bannis had gone, but did not find any signs of the man or his car.

After Bannis' family members filed a police report late Monday night, police put out an APB for the victim at around 9:30 p.m. Within minutes of the APB being issued, Pastor Benjamin received a call on his cellphone that Bannis had been carjacked and brought badly beaten to the Juan Luis Hospital earlier in the day.

At the hospital on Monday night, family members were notified that Bannis was found at the park at around 12 p.m. severely beaten and was transported to the hospital by ambulance.

Sources close to the victim's family say Bannis remains unconscious with severe head and face injuries. His turquoise older model Chevy Cavalier has not been recovered.

Anyone with information regarding this incident should call 911.

Feature Image: Carjacking victim Augustus Bannis with his wife.

Image Credit: Provided by family.