Ary McCarthy, left, Officer Ryan McAdam and Beth Higbie with Wilbur, a hound mix they rescued. ■ Video: newsday.com/suffolk

SCPD

Dog pulled from Great South Bay

BY STEFANIE DAZIO
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A dog named Wilbur, missing for more than 12 hours, was rescued Saturday morning by two Good Samaritans — with an assist from two Suffolk County police officers — after he was found clinging to floating debris in the Great South Bay in West Sayville, authorities said.

His owner, Stan Bildzukewicz, 57, said he was elated to have the 10-year-old hound mix back home.

"He's a very loving dog. He's the most excited dog when I come home from work or if I'm even gone for 10 minutes," Bildzukewicz said in a phone interview Saturday afternoon.

Wilbur went missing around 7 p.m. Friday — he likely left through an accidentally open backyard gate — and Bildzukewicz spent three hours searching for him, fearing the worst. He barely slept all night.

He planned to try searching for Wilbur again Saturday morning but instead got a phone call that his dog had been found. Wilbur's rescuers were able to track Bildzukewicz down through his collar tag.

Good Samaritan Ary McCarthy had spotted Wilbur struggling in the water — around the block from Bildzukewicz's home — and called 911 around 8:15 a.m.

A second Good Samaritan, Beth Higbie, told News 12 Long Island the dog was clinging to something floating.

"It was shaking. It was so cold and it just couldn't get itself up," Higbie said. "And it just kept barking and barking."

Higbie told News 12 they used a rope to help bring the dog toward the West Avenue dock.

"He was too heavy for the one person at the time to get him out," Officer Ryan McAdam said in an interview at the Fifth Precinct.

As McAdam and Officer David Verrelli rushed to the bay, McCarthy and Higbie leaned over the dock to scoop up the 55-pound dog.

"They had literally just pulled him out" when the officers arrived, McAdam said.

McAdam, 27, grabbed his police-issued jacket from his vehicle and wrapped a shivering Wilbur in it.

Verrelli, 49, praised McCarthy's and Higbie's efforts to rescue Wilbur.

"Without the actions of the two women, Wilbur would have passed away from hypothermia or drowned," Verrelli said. "He was freezing and shaking."

Wilbur was taken to Grady Animal Hospital in Sayville, where veterinarians told Bildzukewicz he'd make a full recovery. Wilbur, whom Bildzukewicz adopted two years ago, came home around 3 p.m. and rejoined his owner's collies, Sadie and Blue, for a dinner of diner leftovers — an open-faced roast beef sandwich.

"He doesn't like the water," Bildzukewicz said. "I'm surprised he was in it."

2 PEOPLE INJURED IN SHOOTING AT OLD WESTBURY RESIDENCE

BY JOHN ASBURY AND STEFANIE DAZIO
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Authorities are investigating a shooting in Old Westbury that wounded two people early Saturday morning, police said.

Old Westbury police were called to a residence on Pinetree Lane at 3:16 a.m., Nassau County police said. The two victims were taken to a hospital with injuries that were not considered life-threatening.

Nassau police did not immediately have information regarding the victims' identities or conditions, or the circumstances of the shooting.

Old Westbury Police Chief Robert Glaser said one of his officers was responding to the report of shots fired when he saw a vehicle leaving the dead-end Pinetree Lane at a high speed.

After pursuing the vehicle for several minutes, Glaser said, the officer took four people into custody. The chief said it was not immediately known whether the vehicle's occupants had any connection to the shooting.

The shooting occurred at a mansion on Pinetree Lane, at the end of the narrow street dotted with multimillion-dollar homes with sprawling, gated driveways. Police remained stationed at the end of the home's driveway, which was cordoned off with yellow crime scene tape, on Saturday afternoon.

About six houses from the shooting, reporters from News 12 Long Island and radio station 1010 WINS discovered a handgun in the driveway of a home. Old Westbury police could not be reached for comment about the gun.

On the street, a half-empty bottle of Hennessy cognac sat in a front yard. The rest of the street was littered with trash, including empty cans of Red Bull and Monster energy drinks, and what appeared to be a blood-stained sweatshirt and a medical glove and dressing were on the ground nearby.

Neighbors nearby could not be reached for comment.

The investigation is ongoing.

County exec unhurt in minor car accident

BY NICOLE FULLER
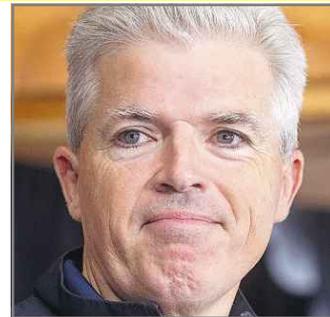*nicole.fuller@newsday.com*

Suffolk County Executive Steve Bellone T-boned a vehicle that was attempting to make an illegal U-turn Saturday morning in Babylon, police said.

No injuries were reported in the 9:15 a.m. crash on Montauk Highway, Suffolk police said, but both vehicles were towed from the scene.

Dejan Rakamaric, 38, of West Islip, was driving a 2012 Toyota east on Montauk Highway, near Route 231, when he attempted to make an illegal U-turn, Suffolk police said in an email Saturday.

Bellone, who lives in West Babylon, was also eastbound on Montauk Highway in a 2007 Ford sedan when he broadsided Rakamaric's Toyota, police said. Bellone was alone in his vehicle at the time of the crash, police said.

"It was a minor accident," said Bellone spokesman Jason Elan. "No one was injured."

Steve Bellone

RANDEE DADDONA

A Suffolk police spokeswoman said she didn't have information on the damage to the vehicles.

Alcohol and drugs were not a factor in the crash, police said. No summonses were issued for either driver, police said.

Rakamaric, who also did not have any passengers, did not respond to calls seeking comment Saturday afternoon.

Bellone, 49, a Democrat, was first elected county executive in 2011 and has said he is seeking a third term in 2019.

CLARIFICATION

Hofstra University's tuition for the 2018-19 school year is $44,640. The university also offers a voluntary four-year fixed rate of $48,100.

THIS DATE IN HISTORY

1813 British troops burned Buffalo, New York, during the War of 1812.

1853 The United States and Mexico signed a treaty under which the U.S. agreed to buy some 45,000 square miles of land from Mexico for $10 million in a deal known as the Gadsden Purchase.

1922 Vladimir Lenin proclaimed the establishment of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, which lasted nearly seven decades before dissolving in December 1991.

1936 The United Auto Workers union staged its first "sit-down" strike at the General Motors Fisher Body Plant No. 1 in Flint, Michigan. (The strike lasted until Feb. 11, 1937.)

1942 A near-riot of bobby-soxers greeted the opening of Frank Sinatra's singing engagement at the Paramount Theater in Times Square.