

# Long Sentenced To 21 Years For Murder And Assault

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Ginny Long had recently called her husband to say she'd asked Thomas to take her out, and how did he feel about it? "I didn't like it all, but I couldn't do anything about it," Long said he told her.

One night he tried to do something. After noting his wife's car in her drive about 11 p.m. on March 25, Long drove on past the house, then saw the Bronco he knew belonged to his rival.

At that point, Long said, he determined to confront Ginny and also let Thomas know "he should stay away from my wife." Long said Thomas was taking advantage of a situation in which his wife was having emotional problems. "I felt like he was keeping us from getting back together," he said. "I wan't angry with either one of them, but I wanted to talk to them while I still had the nerve."

Long parked his truck, then re-parked it carefully out of sight, and approached the house, carrying with him the 357 Magnum that he said he carried at all times in his vehicle. "That was to let Franky know I was serious," he explained, adding that he knew Thomas also carried a gun.

The distraught husband decided to wait till Thomas left the house to take any action. He admitted to pulling out the telephone wires on the side of the house, "so they wouldn't call the police to report a prowler, if they heard me."

Then he smoked several cigarettes, sitting at a nearby picnic table, sitting in his wife's car, to which he had a key, and walking about the yard, waiting.

"Finally, I decided he was going to stay all night, and

I would leave," Long said. "I turned around the outside mirrors on his truck, so he'd know I was there, and I got back in her car to roll the windows up. Then the garage lights came on and they came out."

Long described his hiding in the car, waiting till Thomas left, but then he heard both doors of the Bronco slam and the motor start.

"I decided to stop them before it went any further," he testified. Coming up on the driver's side of the Bronco, Long brandished his gun away from Thomas, who had rolled down his window and said, "Tom, let's talk about this."

When his wife said she was getting out, Long told her to stay in the truck, but she persisted. As she alighted from the Bronco, Long went around to her and said, "Get back in the truck." He explained to the jury, "I wanted to talk to both of them."

According to his story, Long then took his wife's left shoulder with his left hand, pushing her toward the door of the truck. The gun, he said, was held low, in his right hand.

At that moment, "As she twisted around, a gun went off," he said. "It scared me to death. I didn't know she was hit till she told me, 'I'm shot.' I said, 'You can't be!' She didn't fall right away, but when she started to go down, I helped her lie on the ground."

Then he heard Thomas backing up and said he hollered to him to stop. "I knew I needed help, but he kept going, so I shot in the air once, then lowered the gun and fired at the truck. But he drove off."

Long insisted, "I had no intention of shooting either of them at any time. I felt terrible."

He then roused Lewis and another of her tenants, Pender Burke, telling Burke, "Ginny's hurt. I shot her," and advising them to use a neighbor's phone because he had disconnected their lines. The sheriff's department and rescue squad were summoned, and until they arrived, Lewis testified, Long squatted beside his wife, whom Lewis had made comfortable with a blanket and pillow.

Long told of Det. Richard Burgess' taking him to Bolivia in a patrol car and telling him, "Your wife's going to be alright and isn't going to press charges. Franky's not going to press charges, either. Probably I'll take you back home pretty soon."

However, about three hours later, word came to Long at the sheriff's department of his wife's death. "How did you feel?" Shell asked, and Long replied, "I wanted to die."

The defendant's state of mind and his feelings toward his wife figured heavily in Shell's depiction of those crucial moments with the gun beside the Bronco.

In his closing argument, he stressed that Long never threatened either his wife nor Thomas, consistent with his character to which several witnesses had attested. "Hearing about their marriage and the kind of man he was, you know he would not commit a crime like this," Shell said.

He said there had been no proof that Long "threw his wife down and shot her" as Thomas had testified. "Thomas didn't see what happened. No one can tell you exactly what happened in that 15-minute period on March 25," he said.

Shell submitted that, if Long had intended harm to the two victims, the simplest thing would have been to ap-

proach them when they came out of the house, or shoot them through the window of the Bronco moments later.

Long's actions after the shooting were not those of a guilty man, Shell pointed out. He stayed on the scene, roused people for help, made no attempt to hide the gun, and volunteered the information that he had shot Mrs. Long and disconnected the telephones.

But Assistant District Attorney Thomas Hicks hammered at facts he said could not be denied. The pathologist's report that the bullet had entered Mrs. Long's right shoulder and traveled downward indicated Long's gun was held higher than he had testified, making accidental discharge of the gun unlikely. Also, a ballistics expert had testified that at least four pounds of pressure was required to fire the 357 magnum.

Hicks also dwelt on Long's attempts to hide in the half-hour before the shooting, concealing his car, disconnecting telephone lines, hiding in his wife's car. "Are these the actions of a man who just wants to talk?" Hicks asked. "Wouldn't it be reasonable for him to be jealous?"

On the subject of the second charge, assaulting Thomas with intent to kill, Hicks said, "If Franky Thomas hadn't ducked, he wouldn't be with us today," asserting Long could see Thomas's head silhouetted in the dark by the truck's back-up lights. The bullet had found its mark on his left shoulder, just where his head had been a second before.

In convicting Long of second degree murder, the seven-woman, five-man jury was saying he acted out of malice, but not premeditation. Another alternative was involuntary manslaughter, involving neither malice nor premeditation.

## Stops Reversed Now At Holden Beach Intersection

BY SUSAN USHER

Whoa! A four-way stop at the Holden Beach Causeway and N.C. 130 was just a temporary move, according to the N.C. Department of Transportation.

The past three weeks were intended as a transition period to help motorists adjust their habits before the stop pattern at the intersection was reversed.

The change in which traffic must stop is expected to improve traffic flow and safety at the intersection, according to state transportation and highway patrol spokespersons.

The actual reversal in stops came Friday, when two stop signs were removed and some other changes made, indicated Roger Hawkins, DOT division traffic engineer.

The intersection now has two stop signs, one on west-bound traffic on S.R. 1120 (Sabbath Home Church Road) and one for east-bound traffic on N.C. 130. Other traffic will follow standard regulations for yielding the right-of-way.

N.C. 130 traffic bound for the beach has its own right-turn lane, and must yield to minimal traffic from the Holiday Ranches entrance, a dead-end road.

Vehicles exiting the causeway enter left- or right-turn lanes. The left-turn lane traffic must yield to oncoming or right-turning traffic from Holiday Ranches.

The two new stop signs, according to Hawkins, are extra-large, "high-intensity" signs that reflect headlights and can be seen from as much as five times farther away than traditional stop signs.

On S.R. 1120 (Sabbath Home Church Road) the stop sign for west-bound traffic has been lowered from seven to five feet and moved closer to the edge of the pavement. A red-and-white bank sign in the background had made it harder for motorists to see the sign before, said Hawkins.

"So there's no reason now for anyone not to see the sign," he said. "We think that's going to eliminate a lot of concern too."

"I observed the intersection Friday and everybody seems to be doing real well."

However, Tuesday at approximately 1:15 p.m., a two-vehicle accident occurred at the intersection involving a concrete delivery truck and a pick-up truck pulling a boat. One vehicle did not stop while the other exercised its right-of-way.

Injuries were apparently minor, with none of the persons involved

transported to the hospital. Traffic officials warn that drivers should exercise caution in the intersection as motorists become familiar with the changes now in effect.

The Town of Holden Beach had first requested a traffic signal at the intersection, but a DOT study indicated traffic didn't justify a light.

After running the new four-way stop himself recently and getting complaints from other motorists, Rep. David Redwine wrote DOT Division Engineer Ted Funderburk concerning the changes at the intersection, asking DOT to consider a traffic light instead of the four-way stop.

"I am afraid that instead of helping the situation, we have only made it worse," he wrote, describing how he ran the stop sign. "I understand from other people in the area that a number of accidents have already occurred and I am afraid the situation will only grow worse this summer."

Accidents at the intersection had been a concern of the N.C. Highway Patrol before any changes were made at the intersection.

"We had been having a lot of accidents with bad injuries before anything was done," said spokesman Ruby Oakley.

Trooper B.D. Barnhardt filed a highway condition report asking that something be done to improve the intersection after a March 31 collision resulted in injuries to four persons, she said.

According to Hawkins, the traffic count done by DOT showed a majority of the traffic made 90-degree turns rather than crossing through the intersection.

"It was about five to one. Based on that, we decided to give the right-of-way to traffic being impeded the most—the traffic leaving the beach," he said.

The change has prompted complaints, he said, primarily from users of S.R. 1120 who once had the right-of-way.

During the transition period, he said, two accidents have occurred when drivers ran one of the stop signs.

Motorists were given no advance notice of the change-over, he said, though that is the usual procedure followed by the department.

"We've found out it doesn't make any difference to most of them," he explained. "It's still a big surprise."

"They don't read the paper, watch TV or listen to the radio."



THE N.C. 130 INTERSECTION at the Holden Beach causeway has two "high intensity" stop signs, their locations reversed from the original signage. Now traffic exiting the causeway has the right-of-way. However,

left-turning vehicles must yield to any opposing traffic from the Holiday Ranches entrance road. During a three-week transition period, the intersection had four stop signs.

## Calabash Gives Cold Shoulder To Incorporation

(Continued From Page 1-A)

the board on creating a land use plan for the town.

Rhett said the Brunswick County land use plan has covered Calabash in the past. "If you decide to do one for the town, I'll be glad to help you," he said.

"Some consider a zoning ordinance as a land use plan, but it's only a tool," he explained. "A land use plan is a document showing how you want to grow. This zoning update you want to do is something you can look at when you have a land use plan in place."

Rhett told the board the town's extra-territorial area would be included in the plan.

Help from his office, he said, would be in the form of finding information on grants available and possible consultants.

He gave the board printed information and an application for a planning grant. "The state pays 80 percent of planning costs, and the local government 20 percent," he said.

John Johnson, chairman of the Calabash planning board, presented four proposals from that board for approval.

The town board approved adding two alternate members to the planning board, one from the town, one from the extra-territorial area. This was suggested to provide for the absence of regular members.

A proposal that will get further study was that all planning and town board members be covered by liability insurance against lawsuits.

Thomas said the town used to carry such insurance, but it became too expensive, at a premium of more than \$1,000. It was suggested that other insurance carriers be contacted to get additional premium information.

The board tabled Johnson's proposal that a permit be required to erect permanent signs in the town. He said the planning board had studied sign ordinances adopted by Shallotte and Sunset Beach.

The proposal to require that all building plans be submitted to the building inspector before a permit could be issued was flatly denied. "That's illegal," Lewellyn said. Building Inspector Bill Dunker nodded in agreement.

"I can't refuse to issue a permit, as long as state standards are met," he said.

Johnson explained this action was proposed in an attempt to make sure buildings were aesthetically pleasing.

Christmas Fundraiser

Stevens got board approval for town sponsorship of a second Christmas fund-raiser to "feed the

hungry children."

She said she wants to recruit organizations and businesses in the area to support another boat parade, as was held last Christmas. The proceeds would benefit needy children of Brunswick County.

The board voted to send out letters to businesses and organizations, requesting attendance at a meeting at 7 p.m. Oct. 23, in Town Hall.

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## More Seasonable Weather Ahead

Jackson Canady, Shallotte Point meteorologist, reported temperatures slightly above average for the week of Oct. 7-13, but predicts cooler days to follow.

The maximum high temperature for the week was 73 degrees on the 13th, and the minimum low was 55 degrees on the 7th. The average daily high was 76 and the average nightly low was 62, resulting in a daily average temperature of 69, which

Canady said is two degrees above normal.

Precipitation for the period was 2.23 inches. Another half-inch is expected next week.

The outlook for this week is for temperatures and precipitation near normal, in the mid-50s at night, the mid-70s as daytime highs.

"Altogether, it looks like fairly nice, normal mid-October weather," Canady said.

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