



SHERIFF PATROL
BRUNSWICK COUNTY LAWMEN John Marlow, Lindeav Walton and James Stanley stand outside the United Carolina Bank branch in Calabash following the robbery.

Gunman Robs UCB Calabash Branch

BY DOUG RUTTER
Law enforcement officers were still on the lookout Tuesday afternoon for a man who robbed the United Carolina Bank branch in Calabash Monday—the third armed robbery of a financial institution in the town since June.

The UCB branch was just about to close for the day Monday at 5 p.m. when a man carrying an automatic handgun entered the bank on N.C. 179 and demanded money, said Brunswick County Chief Deputy John Marlow.

UCB County Executive Al Laughinghouse refused to reveal the amount stolen and declined to discuss security at the branch.

The robber was described as a white male, approximately 5 feet, 6 inches tall and between 40 and 45 years of age. He was wearing dark sunglasses, a white or beige hat with a round rim, and a long-sleeve sweatshirt that might have been

gray. He was carrying a beige camera bag with dark brown trim.

Marlow said four tellers were the only people in the bank at the time of the robbery. There were no injuries, he said, but the robber made the tellers lie down on the floor after he robbed the bank.

Lawmen weren't sure which direction the man headed following the crime or whether he was traveling on foot or by another means.

Following the crime, Marlow said roadblocks were set up at four major intersections leading out of Calabash. As a county officer searched for the robber from an airplane, other lawmen searched the area around Calabash River.

"We didn't know which direction he headed," said Marlow. "We were just looking everywhere."

Assistance was provided by lawmen from Horry County, S.C., as well as the N.C. Highway Patrol. Marlow said an FBI agent and UCB

security officials arrived on the scene within an hour of the bank robbery.

Since bank robbery is a federal offense, the case is being investigated by the FBI. The agent handling the case could not be reached for comment Tuesday.

This was the third armed robbery of a financial institution in as many months in Calabash, which has no police force of its own, relying on the Brunswick County Sheriff's Department for law enforcement services.

The Security Savings & Loan branch in Calabash was robbed on June 20 and again on July 18, prompting officials with the firm to boost security. A Charlotte man was indicted in July in connection with the June robbery.

UCB's Calabash branch was last robbed on Dec. 15, 1987, when a white male carrying what turned out (See ROBBERY, Page 2-A)

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THE BRUNSWICK BEACON

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Gun Leads Lawmen To Suspect In Winnabow Shooting Deaths

BY RAHN ADAMS
Within days after the alleged murder weapon surfaced at a South Carolina pawn shop, authorities arrested a South Carolina man in connection with the October 1988 murders of a Brunswick County family.

Michael Anthony Taylor, 23, of Route 2, Belton, S.C., was taken into custody Sunday around noon by South Carolina authorities and was charged with three counts of first-degree murder, according to Brunswick County Sheriff John Carr Davis.

Taylor is accused of the Oct. 12, 1988, shooting deaths of Marion E. "Cowboy" Meetze, 48; the man's wife, Ginger R. Meetze, 32; and her daughter from a previous marriage, Michelle D. Arnold, 10.

The family lived on N.C. 87 in the Winnabow community, approximately four miles north of U.S. 17 toward Maco. They moved to this area from Gray Court, S.C., in March 1988.

Davis said Taylor knew the victims in Anderson County, S.C., and that the suspect bought a gun shop there from Meetze before the family moved to Brunswick County. "I think it (the murders) was over a business deal, the best we can determine," the sheriff said.

He said Monday that other arrests may be made in the case, since authorities believe more than one

individual was responsible for the shootings.

Following his arrest Sunday, Taylor waived extradition and was transported Monday from Anderson County to the Brunswick County Jail, where he is being held without bond.

The victims' bodies were found Oct. 14, 1988, by one of Meetze's co-workers from the B.F. Goodrich Plant in Wilmington after Meetze did not show up for work that day. The house had been set on fire in an apparent attempt to destroy evidence. The fire burned itself out before reaching rooms containing the bodies.

Autopsy reports indicated that the mother and child died of multiple gunshot wounds; the man was shot once in the back. Davis told the *Beacon* last November that robbery apparently was not a prime motive in the killings, even though several weapons were missing from the residence.

The sheriff said a special SBI task force, which is working unsolved murder cases in Brunswick County now, was not involved in the investigation leading to Taylor's arrest.

"We tied one of the murder weapons to this fellow (Taylor)," Davis said, later adding, "It just took us this long to do the legwork on the case. The weapon was the primary thing we'd been looking for since the murders."

Davis would not identify the type of firearm, although he indicated that it was an odd-caliber weapon. Three local detectives and an SBI agent recovered the weapon Friday from a pawn shop in South Carolina, he said. The officers had been in South Carolina since last Wednesday.

Shallotte Rescue Unit Struggling To Continue Day Operations

BY DOUG RUTTER
"We're gonna go down fighting if we go."

That's the battle cry of Phillip Stout, acting chief of the Shallotte Volunteer Rescue Squad, as he and other members struggle to keep the outfit operating during the day.

For the past few weeks, he said a small core of members has been working to keep the squad's doors open during the day—from 6 a.m. until 6 p.m. A lack of members who are available between those hours is the biggest problem the squad faces, Stout said.

Recent rumors that the rescue squad has discontinued daytime operations are false, according to Stout. Although other local squads have been handling a number of calls in Shallotte's district, he said the Shallotte squad has not shut down.

"We can't afford to close that building during the day," he said. "We need that service in this town."

A five-year veteran of the rescue squad, Stout took over as acting chief Saturday night when former chief Joey Hoagland resigned.

Hoagland said Monday he resigned because he feels the rescue squad should cease daytime operations until it has more manpower. He said he believes the squad may be opening itself up for a lawsuit by continuing to take calls during the day.

"I saw no other option but to shut down during the day," said Hoagland. "I'm not angry with the members." (See MORE MEMBERS, Page 2-A)



TRIPLE MURDER SUSPECT Michael Anthony Taylor (left) of Belton, S.C., appears before Brunswick County Magistrate Floyd Sellers late Monday afternoon, after local lawmen transported Taylor to Bolivia from Anderson County, S.C.

Calabash Set For Fall Election

BY DOUG RUTTER
Twenty people—including 17 residents of Carolina Shores—hope to be among the eight elected to seats this fall in the enlarged Town of Calabash.

An emergency filing period for the Nov. 7 election ended Friday.

As many expected, the mayoral race will pit the two men who led their respective communities through the recent merger—Doug Simmons of Calabash and Bob Cook of Carolina Shores.

Simmons presently serves as mayor of Calabash and will continue at least through November. Cook is president of the Carolina Shores Property Owners Association.

Both men headed efforts that resulted in consolidation of the two areas. On Aug. 22, residents of both communities voted to merge into one municipality. Consolidation took effect Aug. 31.

In November, voters in both districts will elect a seven-member board of commissioners to replace the current five-person town council. The new board will take over in December.

On the new commission, there will be two residents from Calabash proper (District I) and five representatives from Carolina Shores

(District II). The mayor will be elected from either district.

In the race for town commissioner, 16 Carolina Shores residents have filed for office, while two town council incumbents were the only ones to file from Calabash.

Calabash Town Councilmen Ed Rice and Keith Hardee are the only two candidates from District I. Unless there is a write-in candidate, they will claim the two slots set aside for that district.

Hardee was elected to his first term on the town council in 1987 as a write-in candidate. Rice was appointed to the board earlier this year to fill a vacancy.

Those running for town commissioner from Carolina Shores are Paul Swanson, John Myers, Phyllis Manning, Thomas Brendford, James Deehan, William Durr Jr., S. Wesley Reynolds, Darrell Peters, George Anderson, Alfred Smith, Edward Schaack, Robert Johnson, Jon Sanborn, Stuart Thorn, James Nay and George Taubel. Voters will elect five of the district's 16 commissioner candidates in November.

The fall election will be held so that staggered four-year terms are set up for town commissioners. The three candidates from Carolina Shores and one candidate from Calabash receiving the most votes will be elected for four years. The other three winning candidates—two from Carolina Shores and one from Calabash—will each serve two years.

In 1991, three seats on the commission will be up for election. Winners of those slots will then serve four years, setting up the staggered terms. The mayor will be elected every four years.

Navassa Now Has Full Slate

Following last month's referendum, an emergency filing period for the enlarged Town of Calabash was held Aug. 25 through Sept. 8.

The same filing period was held for the Town of Navassa. Due to the earlier withdrawal by one of its candidates for town council, the town was without a full slate of officers for the fall election.

Jimmy Lewis, Leon Bowman and Roosevelt Toomer are running for the two town council seats up for grabs this year. Navassa Mayor Louis "Bobby" Brown faces no opposition in his bid for re-election.

Writer, TV Host Tony Brown To Speak At Ground Breaking

Television journalist and columnist Tony Brown will deliver the keynote address Sunday, Sept. 24, when Brunswick Community College breaks ground for a 1,500-seat community auditorium on its main campus near Supply. The program concludes the college's week-long 10th anniversary celebration.

Brown will speak at 2 p.m.; his topic will be "Looking Toward the '90's."

In addition to his address, musical and dramatic entertainment will be provided by community performers. These will include the Brunswick County Band, the Brunswick Players, the Brunswick Cloggers, the West Brunswick High School Band, and BCC's new Visiting Artist, jazz vocalist Neena Freelon. Also scheduled to appear is United Carolina Bank's new mascot.

Ann Harrison and Carl White are co-chairmen for the event.

Long before Oprah Winfrey or Geraldo Rivera, Brown was routinely tackling such topics as racism, the fate of black colleges, drug abuse in urban American and AIDS.

For 20 years, he has championed the theme of self-determination on his public television show, "Tony Brown's Journal." The show features analysis of issues with direct community participation. It has a weekly audience of five million.

"I'm an avid believer in self-help," Brown said. "We've got to stop apologizing for being successful and wanting the best for ourselves and our communities."

In the past two decades Brown has hosted and produced more than 800 shows.

Brown also writes a syndicated column that appears in more than 100 newspapers. He was the first dean of Communications Department of Howard University in Washington, D.C.

As writer and film director, Brown recently completed filming of his first feature motion picture, a \$2 million movie with a message about drug abuse and self-respect. "The White Girl," a love story with an anti-drug theme, will be released nationwide late this year.

The Charleston, W.Va., native received his bachelor's degree in sociology and psychology and his master's degree in psychiatric social work at Wayne State University, Detroit. He has received numerous honorary doctoral degrees for his achievements in civil rights, education and journalism.



TONY BROWN

High Found Guilty Of Federal Drug Charges

BY RAHN ADAMS
A former Brunswick County man who claimed he was working undercover at the time of his arrest was convicted of federal drug charges last week in South Carolina.

Jerry Lynn High, 38, of North Myrtle Beach, S.C., and formerly of Calabash, was found guilty last Thursday by a federal district court jury of attempting to possess two kilograms of cocaine and possessing two kilograms of cocaine, according to Assistant U.S. Attorney Robert Bickerton.

The five-day trial, which began Aug. 30, was held in U.S. District Court in Charleston, S.C. Bickerton said Monday that a sentencing date had not yet been set, but that High probably will be sentenced in about

two months in Charleston.

Bickerton indicated that High could receive an active prison sentence ranging from 30 years to life on the federal convictions. If the defendant receives the minimum 30-year term, he would be required to serve at least 25 1/2 years of the sentence.

High is being held in the Charleston County Jail until his sentencing.

He was arrested Jan. 26 by the federal Drug Enforcement Administration following a four-month investigation by the Charleston DEA office and the Horry County (S.C.) Narcotics Division. He was taken into custody at a Myrtle Beach, S.C., area motel. Agents seized more than two kilograms (4.4 pounds) of cocaine.

In a Feb. 9 letter to the *Beacon*,

High claimed that he had contacted the Wilmington DEA office before he became directly involved in the drug deal that resulted in his arrest.

"On or about the first week in January...a confidential informer came to the store where I worked (to) try to get me to buy 50 to 100 kilos," High wrote. "I told (the informant) five or six times I was not interested in the deal."

High went on to say he talked with a DEA agent in Wilmington, and that the agent "told me to check into it, and when I saw some drugs or money to give him a call."

High suggested that he was targeted by the DEA due to his involvement in marijuana smuggling in the early 1980s. "The reason I'm in jail is my past record 10 years ago," he wrote. "I was trying to cor-

rect that and help to keep drugs off the street. But I (will) probably get 30 years for being involved in trying to stop drugs."

Bickerton said High made the same claim during his trial last week. "The jury obviously did not accept that fabrication—that story," the U.S. attorney added.

High is awaiting trial on cocaine trafficking charges in Brunswick County. In June, he was one of 13 suspected drug traffickers indicted by a Brunswick County investigative grand jury.

He was charged with two counts of conspiracy to traffic in more than 400 grams of cocaine and three counts of trafficking in more than 400 grams of cocaine. Each count carries a mandatory minimum prison sentence of 35 years.