

Trial Date Set For First Defendant In Evans Kidnapping, Killing

BY ERIC CARLSON

The trial of Bradley Tyrone King, one of two defendants charged in the kidnapping, armed robbery and murder of an Ash man last October, is scheduled to begin in Brunswick County Superior Court May 3, Assistant District Attorney Lee Bollinger said Tuesday.

King, 17, and William Earl Hill, 18, both of Shallotte, are accused of abducting Ronald Everett Evans, 20, at gunpoint in an attempt to steal his car. Investigators say the two later shot Evans to death on a remote dirt road near the Green Swamp because they feared he might identify one of them.

King and Hill will be tried separately with the second case expected to be heard by late summer. The state is seeking the death penalty in both trials, District Attorney Rex Gore said Tuesday.

The King trial is expected to last for about 2½ weeks, Gore said. However, a four-week session has been scheduled.

Jury selection is likely to take at least a week, said Bollinger, who will be one of two assistant DAs handling the King case. Additional questions will be asked of each potential juror to assure that they are willing to impose the death penalty if appropriate.

King and Hill nearly became the first defendants in the nation to be tried under a federal car-jacking law enacted by Congress last fall, Bollinger said. Federal prosecutors had agreed to take the case, but were forced to

withdraw when they realized the incident occurred 12 days before the law was ratified.

"They definitely dodged a bullet," said Bollinger. The statute imposes a mandatory life sentence against anyone who steals a driver's car at gunpoint. Federal prisoners serve far longer sentences before being eligible for parole than those convicted of similar offenses in state courts.

Meanwhile, Hill's lawyers say they will ask a judge to move their client's trial to another county because of pre-trial publicity. Shallotte attorney James Payne and William Fairley of Southport have been appointed by the court to represent Hill.

"We believe the publicity that originally came out—particularly about Mr. Hill—was so adverse that it painted him as being culpable in the case," said Payne. "We believe because of that he doesn't stand a chance of getting a jury that is not tainted against him in Brunswick County."

King's court-appointed lawyers, Michael Ramos and Stephen Yount of Shallotte, have not requested a change of venue for their trial. Ramos said Monday he is ready to proceed with the trial in Bolivia May 3.

Gore said prosecutors will oppose any motion to move either trial.

"There was not a lot of pre-trial publicity in this case," Gore said. "I believe a case should be tried in the county where the crime happened. My experience has

been that the people of Brunswick County tend to be very fair."

Bollinger said there had been some discussion of delaying the trial until the end of school to avoid fueling racial tensions at West Brunswick High School. But there has been no move to re-schedule the proceedings. Both defendants and the victim are former students at West Brunswick.

Sheriff's Department investigators and the district attorney's office agree that the murder was not racially motivated.

"We've found nothing to support that theory. It wouldn't have mattered what color he was," said Detective Tom Hunter, lead investigator on the case.

"This was not racially motivated at all," said Bollinger. "It was simple greed. They wanted to steal a guy's car."

King's lawyers have filed several pre-trial motions in his defense, including a bill of particulars, which asks that the state be required to reveal the theory under which it will prosecute the case. They have also asked for a private hearing with the judge to make a motion without prosecutors being present.

In Superior Court last week, Judge Dexter Brooks denied two motions by Payne and Fairley asking to declare the death penalty unconstitutional and requesting that capital punishment not be considered in King's case.

Neither Bollinger, Gore, Ramos nor Payne would comment on their strategy for prosecuting or defending the two cases.

The sheriff's department investigation indicated that Evans left his home in Ash at about 8 p.m. that Monday

to buy dinner for himself and his girlfriend at the Shallotte Burger King. Employees said they saw Evans make a purchase and walk out alone. But no evidence has been released to indicate Evans' activities after leaving the restaurant.

The next day, Evans' champagne-colored 1986 Honda Accord was found in a swampy area off a dirt road on the property of Bricklanding Plantation golf course. Evans was declared a missing person and an intensive search began throughout the county.

Nearly a week later, on Oct. 18, a horseback rider discovered Evans' partially decomposed body lying face down in the bushes beside a remote dirt road extending from the end of Mulberry Street, Shallotte, north to N.C. 130. He had been shot at least twice—in the leg and back—with a 9mm handgun, police said.

Hill and King were arrested on murder charges a few days later. Bollinger said both men have implicated each other in the killing.

"They both have admitted being there, but each one claims the other one did everything while they had no idea of what was going on," Bollinger said.

After questioning the two suspects, police also charged King and Hill with kidnapping and armed robbery.

The additional charges are significant because both defendants could face the death penalty even if the evidence fails to establish which one pulled the trigger, Gore said during the investigation. By law, a person convicted of committing a felony that results in the death of the victim can also be guilty of murder no matter who did the killing.

Towns Discuss Possibility Of Regional Sewer Plan

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which problem should receive the greater emphasis in a regional treatment system.

"Studies show that the primary problems in the Shallotte River and the Lockwood Folly River come from elevated bacteria counts," said Ocean Isle Beach Commissioner Kendall Suh. "It doesn't take a genius to determine that most of that bacteria comes from septic tanks."

But others said sewage treatment systems encourage more development, which covers more land surface and keeps rain water from being absorbed into the soil. As a result, more contaminants are washed off roofs, roads and parking lots and into surrounding waters.

Calabash Commissioner George Anderson said golf courses also should be considered among the types of development that increase pollutant runoff.

Tombro said both wastewater and stormwater would be included in any proposal for a regional treatment plan.

Responding to questions about how a regional sewerage system

would be paid for, engineers for the Raleigh firm of Piedmont-Olsen-Hensley outlined a stormwater management plan currently under consideration in Greenville County, S.C.

Officials there are studying a proposal to charge land owners a "stormwater service fee" that increases in proportion to the amount of runoff generated by the development.

Industrial plants, which typically cover large portions of land, would pay the highest fee, said Piedmont Engineer Pete Yakimowich. Farmers and owners of undeveloped land would pay the least. The impact-based fee would be a fairer way to charge for the stormwater management system, he said.

Philip E. Smith, another Piedmont engineer, cautioned that stricter federal environmental laws will require more and more counties and municipalities to develop waste and storm water treatment plans.

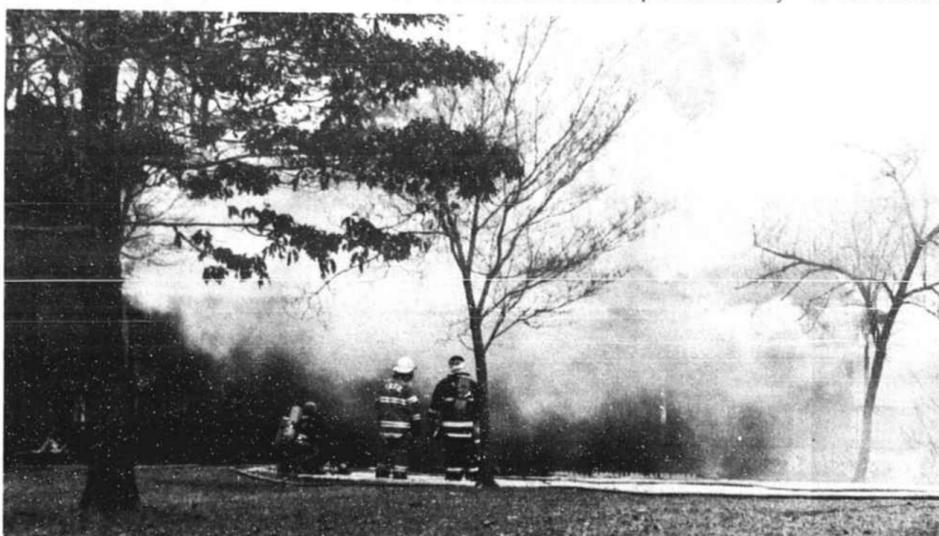
Ocean Isle Beach Mayor Betty Williamson took the opportunity at the Tuesday night meeting to dispute an assertion made by Tombro and Billups in a March 23 letter to the Calabash commissioners in which they claimed to have been "in recent contact with the mayor and utilities director at Ocean Isle Beach" to discuss using the town's treatment plant to serve Calabash and Sunset.

"The town of Ocean Isle Beach has not entered into discussions at any time with regards to the potential use of the Ocean Isle Beach sewer system," Williamson said.

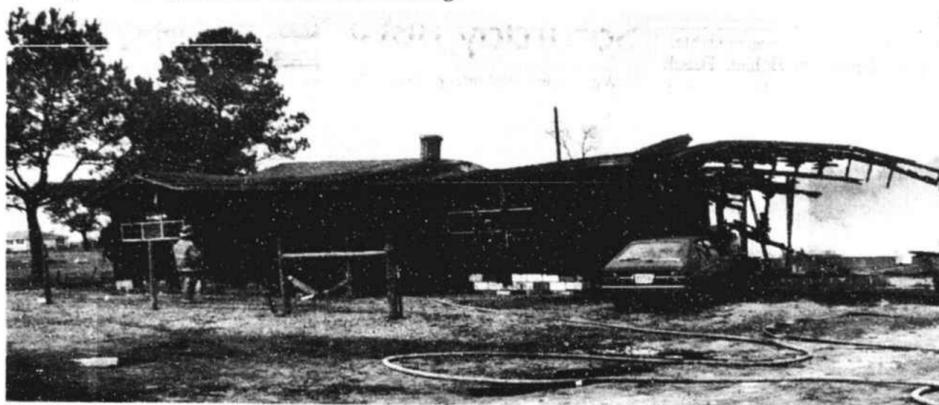
To which Billups responded, "As I conveyed to you at a meeting yesterday morning, we have decided that is not an option we can pursue at this time."

None of the town boards formally endorsed the idea of sending the letter to Gov. Hunt Tuesday. But neither did they express any strong opposition to the idea. Several members and mayors said they would raise the issue at their next town meeting.

"The way I see it, you don't know how you look until you have your picture taken," said Shallotte Alderman Roney Cheers. "I see nothing wrong with sending a letter to the governor to find out."



TWO LOCAL HOMES were destroyed by fire last weekend. In photo above, a grease fire is being blamed for the loss of an Ocean Pines home. Below, an exploding refrigerator is believed to have started the fire which gutted this Grissetown dwelling.



'Green-ness' Of Golf Is Debated

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posium, sponsored by the N.C. Cooperative Extension Service and the pro-environment N.C. Coastal Federation.

Walters considers golf a clean industry that comes under more regulations than most people think. The average homeowner can purchase chemicals in stores that can't be used on golf courses.

Golf courses are currently limited to about 50 kinds of pesticides and herbicides. Walters said he had 5,000 chemicals to choose from 10 years ago. "I think the industry is attempting to be very responsible."

Nancy Sadlon, an environmental specialist for the U.S. Golf Association, said golf is changing for the better. More and more developers are planting buffer zones along ponds and leaving wetlands alone.

Golf courses take up 3.2 million acres in the United States, but only 37 percent of the land is used for tees, fairways and greens. Sadlon said more than 60 percent is open meadows, grass areas, streams, marsh or wetlands.

"In some cases the natural habitat does not provide what has been created or needs to be created on the golf course," she said.

Besides promoting golf, Sadlon said the USGA is conducting research on turf grass, looking for varieties that thrive without a lot of water and chemicals.

Doug Rader, senior scientist for the N.C. Environmental Defense Fund, said the state needs more comprehensive water quality standards to control the chemicals used on its 500 golf courses.

Rader recommended developers be required to submit plans before construction outlining how they plan to protect the environment. "In the long run, it is going to be in all our interests to do it right."

Measure Would Allow Either District To Split Calabash

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"Representative Hill and I will be interested to see what comes to the House. Then we'll read it and determine how we should act," Redwine said. "The Senate may do a lot of things. (The bill) may not pass."

The eight-page bill—half of which is devoted to descriptions of the communities' boundary lines—

begins by removing Carolina Shores from Calabash effective at the end of June, then outlines a new Calabash governing board. The two remaining District 1 commissioners would appoint three others to serve until the 1993 town election.

In 1993, four members would be elected, with the two receiving the highest number of votes receiving

four-year terms, and the other two serving two-year terms. In 1995, three members would be elected for three-year terms, and in 1997, two would be elected for four-year terms.

The measure would become effective if a majority of voters in either district vote "FOR removal of Carolina Shores Village from the Town of Calabash" in a referendum to be scheduled by the Brunswick County Board of Elections. Otherwise, the sections of the bill separating the town "have no force and effect."

If the bill is approved as written, and a split is approved in the referendum, and Carolina Shores voters favor incorporation, a five-member "village council" and mayor would be chosen at large in a nonpartisan election.

The bill calls for staggered terms, with the three highest vote-getters serving four-year terms and the two others serving two-year terms. A mayor would be elected every two years.

Until the 1993 Carolina Shores

Fires Claim Homes At Ocean Pines, Grissetown

An unattended pan of hot oil began a fire which destroyed an Ocean Pines home near Oxpen Road early Friday, despite the efforts of firefighters from five departments to save it.

The house, owned by Holden Beach contractor Martin Feldt and rented to Shallotte Burger King manager Kathy McNeill and her three children, was a total loss, according to Tri-Beach Volunteer Fire Chief Doug Todd.

McNeill and her two daughters were home at the time but managed to get out of the house unharmed; her young son had already left for school, the chief added.

Firefighters stayed on the scene until 10:45 quelling hot spots which continued to flare up under the house's lap siding long after the primary blaze was under control.

Brunswick County Emergency Management Coordinator Cecil Logan arranged Red Cross aid for McNeill and her children, aged 15, 11 and 10. They were provided motel lodging through the weekend and were given vouchers for clothing and food. "They lost everything," Logan said. "What wasn't burned was ruined by smoke and water."

Todd had praise for firefighters from Civietown, Supply, Shallotte, Calabash and Shallotte Point whose equipment and/or personnel helped extinguish the blaze, and for Coastline Volunteer Rescue Squad which stood by, though no firefighters required medical assistance. Two Forestry Service staffers also reported.

"Everybody did an excellent job," Todd said. "They were really worn out."

A second blaze late Saturday destroyed a home on U.S. 17 near Grissetown after its refrigerator exploded, according to published reports.

No one was home at the U.S. 17 residence when the incident occurred about 11 a.m. Saturday. Five volunteer fire departments responded quickly, but the home had been nearly engulfed by fire when they arrived.

Chief Jerry Prince of the Calabash Volunteer Fire Department could not be reached for additional details.

More Rain, Mild Temps In Forecast

More rain and above-average temperatures are in the forecast for the coming week across the South Brunswick Islands.

Shallotte Point meteorologist Jackson Canady said Tuesday that he expects temperatures to average from the lower 50s at night up to the lower 70s during the daytime, with at least three-quarters inch of rainfall to add to the 1.34 inches he recorded from March 23-29.

During that same period he reported an average daily temperature of 61 degrees, about 3 degrees above average. That was the result of an average daily high of 68 degrees combined with a nightly average low of 53 degrees. The maximum high for the period was 75 degrees, recorded March 29. The minimum low of 49 degrees occurred both March 28 and 29.

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Happy What?
Oh yeah, Birthday.
Is that today?
Oh yeah, I guess so.
You mean not everyone celebrates
April Fool's Day like me?
Oh well, guess there's no fool like an old fool!
Happy Birthday Brenda Moore!
from the Beacon staff

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