

BRUNSWICK COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT

Leland Woman Gets 12-Year Prison Sentence On Cocaine Charge

A 35-year-old Leland woman was sent to prison for 12 years last week after pleading guilty in Brunswick County Superior Court to nine charges involving the sale and possession of crack cocaine.

Debra Elaine "Bootsi" Robbins, 35, of Ballard's Mobile Home Park originally pleaded not guilty, but agreed to a plea bargain arrangement as jury selection was about to begin Tuesday (May 18).

Robbins was arrested last November during an investigation by the Brunswick County Sheriff's Department in which undercover officers purchased crack cocaine from her on three occasions, court records show.

In court Tuesday, Robbins was given a 12-year active prison sentence after she pleaded guilty to three counts of cocaine trafficking.

She also pleaded guilty to three counts each of selling and delivering cocaine and possessing cocaine with the intent to sell and deliver the drug. Sentencing in those cases

was postponed until rescheduled by the district attorney's office.

Details of the plea bargaining arrangement were ordered sealed by Judge Robert H. Hobgood, who recommended that Robbins undergo treatment for chronic substance abuse through the prison's Drug and Alcohol Rehabilitation Training (DART) program.

Judge Hobgood presided over four days of superior court last week. Assistant District Attorney Lee Bollinger prosecuted cases for the state.

In other superior court action: ■Allen Earl Piner, Sr., 41, of Leland was sentenced to three years in prison after he pleaded guilty to two counts of selling and delivering marijuana and one charge each of cocaine possession and maintaining a vehicle for the purpose of keeping controlled substances. Additional sentences were postponed until scheduled by the district attorney's office. He was ordered to participate in

the DART program and to pay \$375 for his court appointed lawyer.

■George Rankin, 26, of Shallotte was sent to prison for three years after he admitted violating the terms of his probation by illegally possessing a .357 magnum pistol. On April 20, 1992, Rankin pleaded guilty to a charge of being an accessory after the fact to second-degree rape and was given a three-year suspended sentence and four years probation. The judge recommended Rankin for the DART program.

■Anthony Terrell Canty, 22, of Navassa pleaded guilty to a charge of assault with a deadly weapon with intent to kill in the May, 1992, shooting of Torrence Burns. Canty was given a three-year sentence, suspended on the condition that he not harass or molest the prosecuting witness, that he not possess or consume alcohol or possess a deadly weapon and that he consent to warrantless searches of his person and home during his three years of supervised probation.

■Lewis Clayborne Wingfield, 57, of Brunswick Village Apartments, Southport, pleaded guilty to common law robbery and was given a three-year suspended prison sentence. He was ordered not to possess or consume alcohol or illegal drugs or to carry a knife or other weapon outside his home. He is to undergo a substance abuse assessment and to enroll in an adult literacy course. Wingfield was put on five years supervised probation, with the initial six months under intensive supervision.

■Walter Lynwood Bell, 29, of Hampstead pleaded guilty to a charge of cocaine trafficking by possession of between 28 and 200 grams of the drug. Sentencing was postponed until scheduled by the district attorney.

■Gerald Patrick Grimes, 19, of Todd Street, Shallotte, pleaded guilty to one charge each of marijuana possession and maintaining a vehicle for the purpose of keeping a controlled substance. He was sentenced to two years in prison, suspended on the conditions

that he not possess or consume any illegal drugs, that he not be in any place where illegal drugs are kept, that he submit to warrantless searches and agree to tests for drug use and that he not associate with two other men involved in the case. Grimes was ordered to pay \$325 for his lawyer, \$100 to the BCSD undercover fund and \$100 restitution to the State Bureau of Investigation. He was ordered to comply with a 7 p.m. to 6 a.m. curfew for the first year of his five-year supervised probation. He was also ordered to take a tour of Central Prison in Raleigh.

■Blake Kennedy Hobbs, 18, of Village Road, Leland, pleaded no contest to a charge of misdemeanor larceny in the August, 1992, theft of six Walker fox hounds. Sentencing was postponed until rescheduled by the district attorney.

■Ronnie Harold Jones, Jr., 21, of Route 5, Leland, admitted violating the terms of his probation and had his prison sentence activated.

Thieves Break Into Trailer At Shallotte Dealership

More than \$7,300 worth of appliances, furnishings and trailer tires were stolen from a mobile home dealership on Main Street in Shallotte Friday night, according to a crime report on file at the Brunswick County Sheriff's Department Monday morning.

Deputy J.D. Davis' investigation determined that a thief or thieves broke out the front window of one of the mobile homes and removed a refrigerator, an electric range, a dishwasher, two couches, two chairs, two coffee tables, a dinette set and several other items.

The suspects also entered a storage shed and stole another range and refrigerator along with 23 tires and rims from various mobile homes on the lot, Davis reported.

The deputy also found a lug wrench believed to have been used to remove the tires. He reported that there were tire tracks around the mobile home that resemble those found on a rental truck.

Detective Gene Caison has been assigned to investigate the theft.

In other crime reports on file at the sheriff's office Monday:

■Nearly \$2,500 worth of stereo equipment was

CRIME REPORT

stolen from a pickup truck parked at a Calabash convenience store early Monday morning, according to investigating officer Deputy Robert Long. The mother of the truck's owner said her son had left it parked there after it broke down. The thief or thieves smashed through the windshield and removed a compact disc player, two amplifiers, two speakers, other equipment and 30 compact discs, the report said.

■A light blue 1984 Ford Ranger pickup truck was stolen from a home on Myrtle Head Road, Ash, Friday night, Long reported. The son of the owner, who was using the vehicle at the time, said he left it parked at about 8 p.m. and discovered the truck missing early the next morning. He said that whoever stole the truck also broke a window on the house. Long estimated the truck's value at \$2,100.

■Someone pried three locks off the door of a storage building on Lehrschall Trail, off Malmo Loop Road, Thursday night and stole an \$1,100 saddle, a generator, a grass trimmer, three drop

cords and more than \$1,200 worth of tools. The owner told Long that he and his wife went out for dinner Thursday night, then returned home and went to bed. The next morning he went out to his storage building and found that it had been burglarized.

■About \$500 worth of stereo equipment was stolen from a car that broke down and was left parked on Cedar Hill Road, Leland, Sunday morning. The owner told Dep. M. Snowden that the woman who was driving the car left it to get help after the 1982 Nissan broke down. When the owner got to the car about an hour later, he found that the side door lock had been broken and his equipment removed.

■A woman who lives on Sturgeon Drive, Leland, reported that her 26-inch bicycle was stolen from her front yard earlier this month. Long estimated its value at \$200.

■Another bicycle was reported stolen from a home on Green Hill Road, Winnabow, Saturday night. The owner told Snowden that she left the bike leaning against her mobile home and went out to dinner. The next morning she noticed it missing. There was no estimate of value listed.



STAFF PHOTO BY DOUG RUTTER

Message In A Bottle

Lynn Williams of Holden Beach found this plastic bottle washed up on the beach near her oceanfront home last week. Inside was a note with the following message: Ulysses F. Balalian, 624 Gov. A. Pascual St., San Roque, Navotas, M.M., Philippines, 6415. Attached to the note was a photo of a young man.

Ship's Propeller Causes Death Of Leatherback

BY LYNN CARLSON

Ocean Isle Beach Turtle Watch members and town workers on Tuesday laid to rest an 87-inch-long female leatherback killed when it was slashed by a ship's propeller.

"It made me sick," said Gloria Hillenburg, the town's Turtle Watch coordinator said. "It really hurts to see this kind of thing."

Hillenburg speculates the turtle's injury was by an ocean liner or other very large vessel. "This is not something that could have been done by a trawler or a small boat."

In addition to the laceration, three of the turtle's flippers had been eaten away, probably by sharks, Hillenburg said. The fourth was almost gone.

The turtle was bearing no eggs. "If she had been, we could have planted them and protected them until they hatched."

Weighing at least a ton and measuring 58 inches across, the turtle washed in near the Newport Street access about 6:30 a.m. Tuesday. "We were determined not to let it wash back out," Hillenburg said, fearing that the dead turtle would attract sharks in the surf.

She, along with Mike and Diane Suley, other Turtle Watch members, and some visitors got a strap on the turtle and called town employees who came with a backhoe and buried it on the beach.

The turtle's wounds were fresh, Hillenburg said, speculating that the mishap had taken place earlier in the morning. Early morning walkers had at first thought it to be a large sandbag when they saw it in the surf, she added.

Leatherbacks are large marine turtles which can reach lengths of more than 7.5 feet and weights of more than a ton. Unlike the loggerhead turtles which commonly nest on local beaches, leatherbacks have no shells. Their backbones are covered with tough, leathery black skin, and they are easily identified by the seven bony ridges which run the length of their backs.

Hillenburg praised local shrimp-

ers for their cooperation in helping save marine turtles whenever possible. "We have a very good rapport. They call us ship to shore about turtles, and they do run with their TEDs (turtle excluder devices) to avoid drowning turtles in their nets."

"No shrimp trawler has a propeller big enough to do cause the size laceration this turtle had," she added.

Replicas of both loggerhead and leatherback turtles are suspended in an exhibit at the Museum of Coastal Carolina at Ocean Isle Beach so that visitors can learn to identify them.

Members of the Turtle Watch programs on the Brunswick County beaches search for marine turtle eggs and protect them from natural predators and humans until they hatch and the hatchlings return to sea.

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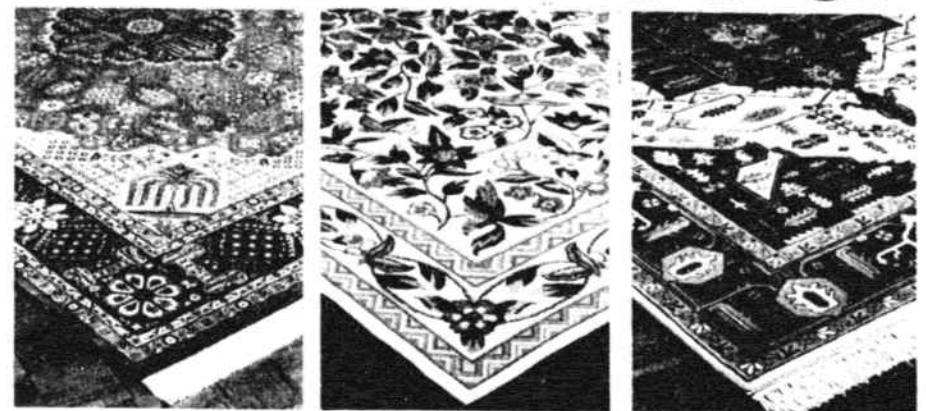
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