

\$250,000 Award Is Ordered Here In Death Of Man

The Granville County man found guilty last year of murdering a Warren County resident has been ordered to pay over \$250,000 to the decedent's estate.

Mark Williams, of 124 Granville Street in Oxford, last week was ordered by Judge E. Lynn Johnson, presiding judge in the Sept. 20 civil session of Warren County Superior Court, to pay a \$256,949.04 settlement to the estate of Willie Burnette, Sr.

Burnette, 63, was a resident of Rt. 1, Manson. An innocent bystander, he was killed on June 21, 1988, during a drug-related shoot-out at 126 Crescent Drive in Oxford. Eight weapons were confiscated by the Oxford Police Department.

On Oct. 5 of last year, Williams pled guilty to first-degree murder in Granville County Superior Court and was sentenced to life imprisonment.

Williams was also sued for wrongful death last October by the estate of Willie Burnette, Sr.

According to court documents, the summons was served by the Granville County Sheriff. When Williams did not respond to a summons issued by the Warren County Clerk of Superior Court, a default judgment was requested last year by the estate. Neither Williams nor his attorney was present for last week's judgment and award of damages.

Senator Frank Ballance was the attorney representing the estate.

Nightspot Cutting Probed By Lawmen

A Warren County man last weekend was brought by private vehicle to the Warren County Sheriff's Department to file a complaint, after sustaining cuts at an area nightspot.

His alleged assailant took out a similar warrant on Monday of this week.

Joseph Jones, 24, of Rt. 4, Warrenton, on Sept. 23 told sheriff's personnel that he had been stabbed by Vernon A. "Bullie" Alston, 24, of Rt. 3, Warrenton. According to Jones, the incident occurred at the Starlight Club located on Dr. Martin L. King, Jr. Blvd. (SR 1001).

The victim sustained cuts on the left side of his chest, his lower abdomen and his left shoulder blade.

Jones was transported by the Warren County Emergency Medical Service (EMS) to Maria Parham Hospital, where he was treated and released.

A warrant was drawn charging Alston with assault with a deadly weapon/inflicting serious injury. Alston was arrested and brought before the magistrate on Monday.

The suspect was released on a \$500 unsecured bond and given a court date of Oct. 11.

Before leaving the magistrate's office, Alston took out a warrant charging Jones with assault with a deadly weapon by stabbing.

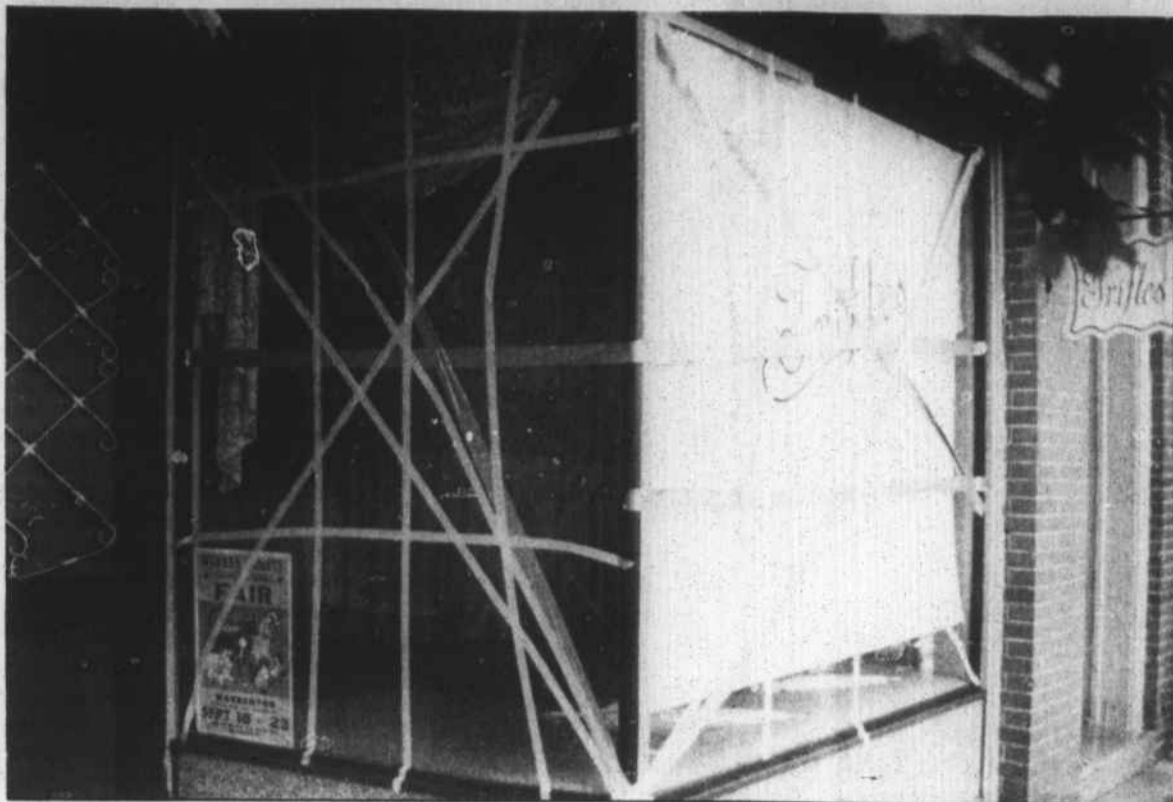
Alston said that he had sought medical treatment after having been stabbed by Jones. No additional information was available at press time.

Stolen Vehicle Found

A Warren County man, formerly of Baltimore, Md., was arrested on Friday of last week for possession of a stolen vehicle and traffic violations after being stopped by Trooper R. A. Ennis of the N. C. Highway Patrol.

Trooper Ennis reported that he stopped a 1983 Toyota being driven by Timothy Wayne Lang, 23, of Warrenton, for running a stop sign at an intersection on U. S. 1 at Manson.

After Lang failed to produce registration for the vehicle, Ennis (Continued on page 8)



A number of merchants in downtown Warrenton taped up their windows and moved their merchandise to the back of their stores in preparation for Hurricane Hugo, as did the owner of Trifles.

Although the storm bypassed Warren County, the surrounding area received rain and light winds as a result of the system passing through the state. (Staff Photo by Diane Davis)

Strategic Planners Focus On Survey

Encouraging, Discouraging Facts Are Found In Environmental Scan

Members of Warren County's Strategic Planning Executive Committee gathered Thursday evening of last week for a marathon session to review the findings of the environmental scan prepared as the first step of the multi-phase project.

Strategic planning—a type of long-range planning—avoids determining "what ought to be" and focuses on "the do-able." It is a means of managing change and using available resources to ensure the best possible future.

Warren's \$68,000 strategic planning effort is still in its earliest stages. A comprehensive environmental scan—which compares Warren County to Brunswick, Edgecombe, Lee and Northampton counties, as well as the state and nation—has been prepared by Shane Cochrane of the Council of Governments (COG). An overview of that document was presented last week by Jerry Keir.

Many of the findings of the scan were not encouraging:

- Although North Carolina will continue its growth rate, which is five-percent higher than the national rate, Warren County will have only moderate growth between now and the year 2000, and the county's population will have a larger percentage of senior adults due in part to in-migration.
- Tobacco and textiles—two of Warren County's "old line" industries—will decline nationally due to health concerns for the former and importing trends for the second.
- Although the median family income for 1989 has been estimated at \$20,400, Warren County's rate of 31.6 percent represents one of the highest levels of poverty rates in the state.
- Warren County's 4.4 percent rate of substandard housing in 1980 was five times greater than the state rate of 0.7 percent. In July of last year, 75 persons were classified as "homeless."
- The average teacher supplement last year was \$200, while supplements of up to \$2,987 were paid to teachers in other North Carolina counties.
- Average SAT scores for Warren County's students have been over 100 points lower than the national average and some 60 points below the state average.
- While significant increases in the number of persons employed have taken place over the last decade, Warren County has consistently maintained a higher level of unemployment than the state, and 1987 data from the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) rank Warren's as the lowest average salary levels of all counties in the state.

Positive findings included:

- While the decline in textiles and manufacturing will affect those locales in which one large employer is the basis for a stable economy, Warren County's economy may be protected by its relatively large number of small businesses.
- The development and marketing of Lake Gaston as a retirement community could be used to strengthen Warren's economic condition.
- Due to a high level of state and federal contributions to the school system, Warren County ranked 27th out of 140 systems in per-pupil expenditures. (Excluding community services, adult basic education, capital outlay, transfers and refunds, however, the expenditure of only 26.7 percent of its local resources in 1985-86 ranked Warren 81st out of 140 school systems.)
- The public school facilities will be upgraded following the

passage in May of last year of a \$11.35 million bond referendum.

- The small, but growing tourist industry may be expanded by promotion of Warrenton's historic business district and the number of buildings listed in the National Register of Historic Places.
- The rate of violent crime in Warren County in 1987 and 1988 was very low.

According to Keir, the committee's next step will be the identification of three or four main issues to be studied by task forces. The task forces will analyze the data, develop goals and strategies for correction or enhancement.

The committee agreed that input from citizens will be sought. After objectives and strategies have been formulated, implementation plans will be developed, monitored and updated.

The committee will meet 5:30-7 p.m. on the second and fourth Wednesdays of the month.

Private Security Guards Ordered Following Incident At Nightclub

Reports of gunshots at an area nightclub last weekend have caused a Warren County business owner to take a stand by hiring private security guards to protect her establishment and enhance the service provided by local law enforcement officers.

Mrs. Candies C. Rudd, Club 43 manager, said Monday that security guards will be on duty during business hours and other efforts would be made to ensure public safety.

"We simply will not tolerate the actions of a few individuals who find sport in endangering the

lives of our clientele," Mrs. Rudd said.

According to Mrs. Rudd, the change in policy is a result of a report of gunshots early Sunday morning at Club 43.

Chief Deputy B. D. Bolton said Monday that sheriff's personnel, as well as officers from the North Carolina Highway Patrol responded to the call received Sunday at 2:12 a.m. Arriving officers found a rowdy crowd of about 200 persons outside of the club, but no shooting victims. (Continued on page 8)

Services Of Health Department Are Shifted To Old Market Site

A number of services offered at the Warren County Health Department have moved into new quarters, according to Dennis Retzlaff, director.

The Adult Health, Home Health and Environmental Health services, which were formerly housed in the west wing of the Warren Medical Facility, moved into a temporary location at the former Best Bet building located on Ridgeway Street.

All those persons who use these services are asked to report for appointments at the new location beside the Golden Skillet, Retzlaff said.

The Exerstyle program has been put on hold indefinitely, until the heating and cooling system in the new location is in working condition, he said.

"We'll be in (the new building) for at least a year," Retzlaff said, "or until renovations to the Warren Medical Facility are complete."

The completion date for the renovation project has been set for Sept. 1990.

Persons may contact any of the health services personnel by dialing 257-1538.

Hurricane Fallout Had Effect Here; Help Is Dispatched

By THURLETTA M. BROWN
News Editor

Had Hurricane Hugo really unleashed its fury on Warren County last week, plans were in place to ensure the safety of area residents.

Emergency Management Coordinator Gary Robenolt said Monday that plans had been made to open Warren County High School as an emergency shelter. The outcome of a meeting with the superintendent of schools, the director of social services and the health director had been the decision to make the high school available to residents of mobile homes or other "non-sturdy" structures.

Robenolt said a social services employee was slated to man the reception area and a nurse would have been provided by the health department. "The gymnasium, cafeteria and other areas with large roof expanses would have been avoided since these areas would be likely to go first in high-wind situations," he said. According to Robenolt, the interior hallways of Warren County High School would accommodate an estimated 500-600 persons.

First priority would have gone to residents of mobile homes and other non-sturdy structures, Robenolt said. Notification of the open shelter would have been announced on WTVD and WRAL television stations, he said.

"Of course, in a real emergency situation, the county's law enforcement officers and firefighters would have been dispatched with loud speakers to encourage residents to move into the shelters," Robenolt said.

Priority was slated for residents of mobile homes or non-sturdy structures because residents in "fixed homes" would likely not have problems. "In a severe tornado situation, however, continuous-care shelters would have been opened in the Lion's Den and other large facilities," Robenolt said.

The emergency management coordinator monitored Hugo's progress all day Thursday from his office and residence. He returned to the sheriff's office at 10:30 p.m., remaining until 4 a.m. on Friday. "By then it was clear where Hugo was going and that the storm would not affect Warren County," Robenolt said.

Robenolt described winds in Warren County as "30 mph, if

that." He said winds from a recent summer storm had involved gusts of 60-70 mph.

"But it is better to be safe than sorry," Robenolt said, urging Warren County residents to stay tuned to major television or radio stations in the event of a hurricane. "And if told to evacuate, they should do so without delay," he added. When shelters are opened, residents should bring their own bedding, food and medications. "They should also take care of any pets before evacuating because no animals will be allowed."

In addition to the plans made for the emergency shelter, area transportation and utility person-

(Continued on page 8)

\$10,000, Two Pistols Found

Approximately \$10,000 in cash, two .22-calibre derringer pistols and a small quantity of marijuana were confiscated on Friday afternoon of last week following a routine traffic pull by troopers of the N. C. Highway Patrol.

Trooper R. A. Ennis reported that the driver of a Lincoln Town Car, Randy Mason, 33, of Durham, was stopped for speeding 76 in a 65 mph zone on Interstate 85 near the Ridgeway exit. When he asked Mason for his license, Ennis reported that he appeared "more nervous than usual" for a driver being stopped for a speeding violation.

Ennis then radioed for assistance from Trooper W. M. Martin, who had stopped another speeding driver who appeared to be traveling with the Lincoln.

The two troopers asked Mason if they could search his car, where they found \$10,000 in 20- and 100-dollar bills and a small bag of marijuana. They also searched Mason and found two .22-calibre derringer pistols in his pants pockets.

The vehicle was impounded, and the weapons, cash and marijuana were confiscated. Mason was placed in the Warren County Jail under a \$500 bond after being charged for speeding by Trooper Martin and for simple possession of marijuana by Trooper Ennis.



Mrs. Vivian Paynter, nurse director at the Warren County Health Department, stocks up supplies on the shelves inside what was formerly the cooler of the Best Bet convenience store. The Adult Health, Home Health and Environmental Health services of the health department relocated last week to the Best Bet building on Ridgeway Street from their former location inside the Warren Medical Facility. Those services will be offered at the new location until renovations at the Warren Medical Facility are completed next year. (Staff Photo by Diane Davis)