

Lawmen Investigating Slaying Of Bolivia Man

Brunswick County and state authorities continued a homicide investigation Tuesday night after a Bolivia man was found shot to death in his residence early Tuesday.

Durwood Belmont Johnson, 49, was found dead in his home off Green Lewis Road near Bolivia at 9:20 a.m. Tuesday, said Det. Gary Shay of the Brunswick County Sheriff's Department.

Brunswick County Assistant Coroner Cleo McCranie said Johnson died of a single gunshot wound to the back. An autopsy was scheduled for Wednesday at the Onslow County Memorial Hospital in Jacksonville, he said.

Shay said Johnson was found dead in a bed in the living room of his mobile home, located off Midway Road south of Bolivia.

McCranie said Johnson was found by his brother-in-law. He said he wasn't sure when Johnson had been killed or how long he had been dead when he was found at the residence.

It is believed the victim lived alone, Shay said. Johnson was last seen alive Sunday near his residence, according to a preliminary investigation, according to Shay.

The Sheriff's Department is investigating the case with the assistance of the State Bureau of Investigation, Shay said.

Anyone with information on Johnson's whereabouts Monday or other facts that could help the investigation is urged to contact the Brunswick County Sheriff's Department at 1-800-672-6379, Shay said.

'DIRECTORY' SIGNS PROPOSED

Sunset Bans Off-Premises Signs

BY SUSAN USHER

Action by Sunset Beach Town Council Monday night closed gaps in the town's sign ordinance that had Sunset Beach Planning Board members concerned about potential billboard blight.

After a series of public hearings on five proposed ordinances, the council voted unanimously for Al Odom's motion to adopt an ordinance outlining types of signs that will no longer be allowed within the town or its extraterritorial planning area unless specifically indicated.

The ban includes signs with flashing lights, animation or obnoxiousness, that obstruct motorists' vi-

sion or look like official highway signs, are located on objects not intended to support signs, such as trees or light poles, or that are located in a salt marsh or other saltwater tidal area.

While swinging signs such as "For Sale" realty signs are no longer allowed, Realtor Nancy Smith was assured by Planning Board members that the board would look again at that prohibition. Swinging signs were banned because they pose a potential danger in high winds, Planning Board Chairman Richard Good explained. However, Ms. Smith said most firms remove swinging real estate

signs in advance of storms to protect their investment and to protect lives and property.

Town Council members couldn't vote Monday on a proposed solution to the need by tourists for directional signs around town, because the item was not among those advertised in advance of the hearing.

At the Sept. 10 council meeting, members and the public will consider a proposal to allow off-premises informational and directional signs to be posted at sites designated by the town. Businesses and non-commercial projects would be allowed (See SUNSET, Page 2-A)

Brunswick Schools Plan Improvements

BY SUSAN USHER

Students and faculty at Shallotte Middle School will "team up" this year for success, while students at Waccamaw Elementary School will have more opportunities to become computer literate.

These are just a few of the improvements local principals say Brunswick County students can expect when the 1990-91 school year begins less than two weeks from now on Aug. 20.

For teachers, the school year begins even earlier, on Aug. 13, with some reporting even earlier for special workshops or training opportunities.

In interviews earlier this week, the principals of Union Primary, Waccamaw Elementary, West Brunswick High, Bolivia Elementary and Shallotte Middle schools briefly discussed their plans for the year.

Shallotte Middle School Principal Mark Owens said Monday that the teaming approach his staff will implement this year is similar in concept to the system now in place at South Brunswick Middle School, "but 10 times better than what they're doing."

The school's classroom and resource teachers and approximately 1,100 students will be divided into two teams at each grade level, with four teachers and 115 to 120 students per team. Students will still be assigned to students in traditional classroom settings.

As part of a team, teachers will pool their resources, interests, expertise and knowledge of students,

(See SCHOOLS, Page 3-A)



STAFF PHOTO BY BOB HORNE

Peek-A-Boo

The sun casts a thin glow of dancing light across the watery and patched colors of brilliance across the sky late Thursday, as it tries to peek out from behind the clouds after the day's rains, just before calling it a day entirely.



STAFF PHOTOS BY BOB HORNE

THE CHARRED REMAINS of Charlie Cleary's J-3 Piper Super Cub lay crumpled in the grass about 75 to 100 yards from the runway (in distance) last Thursday, after Cleary and Magnus Bertilsson died in the crash at Brunswick County Airport.

Friends Had To Deal With Plane Death Of Charlie Cleary, Magnus Bertilsson

BY BOB HORNE

One of Charlie Cleary's close friends watched him fly to his death last Thursday, while another close friend had to supervise extinguishment of the fire that burned the bodies of Cleary and Magnus Bertilsson.

Cleary's J-3 Piper Super Cub crashed at the Brunswick County Airport at Southport about 10:30 a.m. Saturday, approximately 5-7 minutes after he took off to take Bertilsson for a ride, according to Al Whitney.

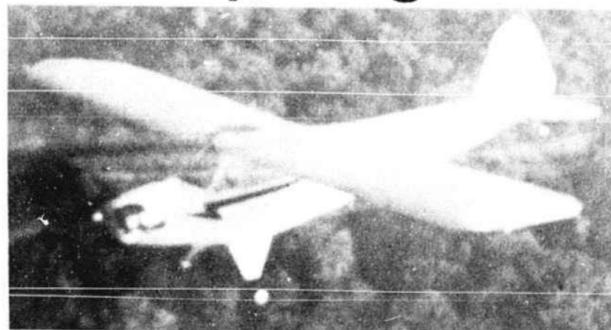
Whitney, who says he was one of Cleary's close friends, was one of "two or three" people who went out to watch Cleary, a 54-year-old retired Piedmont Airlines pilot, give Bertilsson, a 27-year-old recently graduated certified flight instructor, a ride in his plane, which reportedly was designed for aerobatics.

What Whitney watched was Cleary perform some aerobatic maneuvers, such as loops, rolls and intentional spins, maneuvers in which the aircraft dives toward earth in a spinning motion, and then spin to his and Bertilsson's deaths.

An autopsy revealed that both men were killed by the impact, not the ensuing fire, according to county Coroner Greg White.

When the plane, which was spinning straight down, neared the ground, it seemed to break the spin and begin to level out just before it struck the ground, Whitney said. It burst into flames immediately, he said.

"It looked like he was about to recover and just ran out of alti-



A J-3 PIPER SUPER CUB, similar to the one Charlie Cleary and Magnus Bertilsson died in last Thursday at Brunswick County Airport. The painting hangs in the office of airport Manager Al Whitney.

tude," Whitney said. "Being a pilot, I could tell he was in trouble." Cleary did not issue a distress call on the radio, Whitney said. "I'm sure he was busy doing everything he could to recover."

Although Whitney said Cleary appeared to run out of altitude, he also guessed that Cleary began performing the aerobatic maneuvers at an altitude of about 3,000 feet, "which is plenty high enough for such maneuvers."

The plane hit the ground near the end of Runway 5, about 75 to 100 yards off the runway. Both men were burned.

Al Essey, fire chief at Yaupon Beach, is an employee at CP&L's Brunswick nuclear plant and was taking part in a drill when he was notified that there was a crash at Brunswick County Airport.

He left the plant and went straight to the airport, only to learn

that one of the victims was his good friend, Cleary. "His wife is at my house right now," Essey said nearly three hours after the accident. "Our wives are real close."

Essey said Cleary performed such aerobatic maneuvers "very often." He also said he has flown several times with Cleary, who he said retired from Piedmont "just a year ago" when Piedmont merged with US Air and described him as "very confident, very careful and very secure in his flying."

Cleary had just overhauled the engine of his plane and had the FAA-required annual inspection just a few weeks before the crash, Essey said. "He spent a lot of time at the airport," Essey said.

Cleary, who lived at Long Beach, was in the process of building a home at Winston-Salem, where he and his family planned to move, Essey said.

Bertilsson, 27, was a native of Sweden who recently received his flight instructor rating at an international school in Conway, S.C. He was hired by Airport Enterprises, the fixed base operator at the airport, two or three weeks before the crash, Whitney said. It was his first job as a flight instructor, Whitney said. Bertilsson was in the process of moving to the area when the crash occurred, according to Whitney, who said Cleary also was certified as a flight instructor.

If Cleary had recovered from the spin near the ground, he would have had a wooded area about 100 yards in front of him that he would have had to clear.

The J-3 Piper Super Cub is an aircraft with one high wing and canvas covering or "skin" and weighs "maybe 1,000 pounds," and has "I believe a 150-horsepower engine," Whitney said. It has tandem seating, in which one of the seats is in front of the other.

The crash was the third at the airport in the past five years, Essey said. The other two planes went down in the marsh area beyond the end of the runway and there were no injuries in either one, he said.

Preston Hicks, chief of the Atlanta field office for the National Transportation Safety Board, acknowledged Monday afternoon that NTSB and FAA investigators were at the airport Thursday and Friday to conduct the "field portion" of the investigation of the crash. He said it normally takes about nine months to complete such an investigation.

Costly Solution Offered To WBHS's Problem

BY DOUG RUTTER

Shallotte officials have offered to bail out the Brunswick County Board of Education by providing sewer service to West Brunswick High School.

But the county school board would have to pay Shallotte \$121,000 for sewer service and come up with an estimated \$60,000 to extend sewer lines to the high school located west of Shallotte.

West Brunswick High School has a sewage treatment system that discharges treated effluent into a stream behind the school. However, the aging system does not meet requirements set in its discharge permit and must be improved or abandoned.

The sewage system must comply with the conditions of the permit by Dec. 15, 1991 under a consent order adopted last month by the N.C. Environmental Management Commission. If not, the county school board could be fined \$4,000.

Acting on a long-standing request for sewer service at the high school, Shallotte aldermen voted at their meeting last Wednesday to submit a proposal to the school board and "put the ball in their court," as Shallotte Mayor Jerry Jones said.

The county board would have to pay the town a \$106,000 acreage fee, \$15,000 capital reserve fee and pay all of the cost of hooking on to the town system. The acreage fee is based on 53 acres at the high school and \$2,000 per acre. The capital reserve fee is based on estimated usage of 5,000 gallons of wastewater per day and \$3 per gallon.

Brunswick County Schools Assistant Superintendent Bill Turner, when told of the proposal last week, said he probably would recommend that the school board turn down Shallotte's offer.

It would cost about \$70,000 to build an all new waste-treatment system at the high school, he said, similar to ones recently constructed at North and South Brunswick high schools.

In discussion at last week's Shallotte meeting, some town board members said they were worried that serving the high school would put the town in a bad position. They said it would take away sewage-treatment capacity that could otherwise be used for commercial development in town.

"I don't think their sewage problem belongs to the town of Shallotte," said Mayor Pro Tem Paul Wayne Reeves. "We've got enough sewage problems of our own."

Alderman Sarah Tripp asked, "Why would it be our problem and not the county's problem?"

But town officials later agreed to serve the high school if the county school board is willing to pay \$121,000 in fees. The money would be set aside in a special fund and used to expand the town's sewage treatment capacity in the future.

Alderman Wilton Harrelson said he didn't oppose serving the high school, as long as the town collects enough fees to offset any costs. The taxpayers of Shallotte shouldn't have to pay any more to help the school than the taxpayers of Supply, Ash and Ocean Isle Beach, whose children also use the school, he said.

Besides the upfront fees, the school system also would have to pay sewer rates that are twice as much as what customers inside the town pay. The school already pays about \$800 per month for water service. Town officials estimate the school would pay about \$650 per month for sewer service.

Lawsuit Seeks Dissolution Of Bellamy Trading Company

BY BOB HORNE

A family squabble has been transmitted to the courtroom, with Eloise Bellamy Gibson suing her brother William Earl Bellamy Jr. and the Bellamy Trading Company, Inc.

Mrs. Gibson asks that the court enter a decree dissolving Bellamy Trading Co., which the suit states is worth millions of dollars, that she be paid the fair value of her shares and that she be paid her salary equal to \$9,000 annually from the date of

her "retirement" as vice president of BTC.

In the suit, Mrs. Gibson claims she was illegally dismissed from any active participation in BTC, which she was managing, and William Earl Bellamy Jr. took over management so he would be in a better position to see that his son Greg would get a share of the BTC real estate business and to eventually let Greg take over management of the BTC office when William

(See LAWSUIT, Page 2-A)