

Man Charged With Mother's Death In Second Of Two Leland Killings

BY TERRY POPE

Detectives in Leland Sunday investigating an apparent homicide responded to the second killing in that community within three days.

Murder charges were filed against a Leland man who allegedly shot his mother in the head Sunday afternoon, but a stabbing death there early Friday still has investigators searching for clues.

Henderson Matthew Davis, 36, of Route 1, was charged with murder, said Capt. Phil Perry of the Brunswick County Sheriff's Department.

Davis was living with his mother, Juanita Grady, 53, who was shot once in

the head with a handgun while at her home in the Phoenix community, said Perry.

The home is located on a dirt road off of Old Schoolhouse Road.

"I believe he had been living at her house since the July 4th weekend," said Perry.

According to court records on file at the Brunswick County Clerk of Court's office, Davis was employed by General Wood Preserving Co. at the Leland Industrial Park.

"We have a possible motive," he said. "There was some dissension there."

Monday morning, Davis was being held in the Brunswick County Jail without bond

after he was indicted on a first-degree murder charge by a Brunswick County Grand Jury. He was arrested at the scene following the 3 p.m. shooting, said Perry.

A probable cause hearing has been set for Aug. 12 in Brunswick County District Court. Attorneys Stephen Yount and James Payne have been appointed to represent Davis.

Stabbing Probed

SBI agents were called in Friday to help investigate the stabbing death of Jerry Millard Lyle, 26, of Knightdale, a town just outside of Raleigh.

Lyle was found in the parking lot of Lee's By-Rite Deli and Convenience store

on Village Road around 1:30 a.m., said Perry.

An autopsy revealed he had been stabbed 18 times, Perry said.

The victim was taken by the Leland Volunteer Rescue Squad to New Hanover Regional Medical Center in Wilmington where he underwent surgery, but died around 10 a.m. Friday.

Perry said Lyle had been living with some friends at a Leland area mobile home park for three or four months. The windows to his car, found at the scene, had been broken out, Perry added.

"We feel it possibly happened somewhere else and that the victim drove there,"

said Perry. "We have some time frames that we're working on where we can put him at different places at certain times."

Some teen-agers found Lyle lying near a pay telephone in the parking lot and called the sheriff's department.

"Right at this time," Perry said, "we have no concrete suspects."

Sheriff's detectives and two SBI agents are investigating the case. They were out until 4 a.m. Saturday and again Sunday when the department received a call regarding a second murder in the northern end of the county.

"They had to break from it and get on this one," said Perry.

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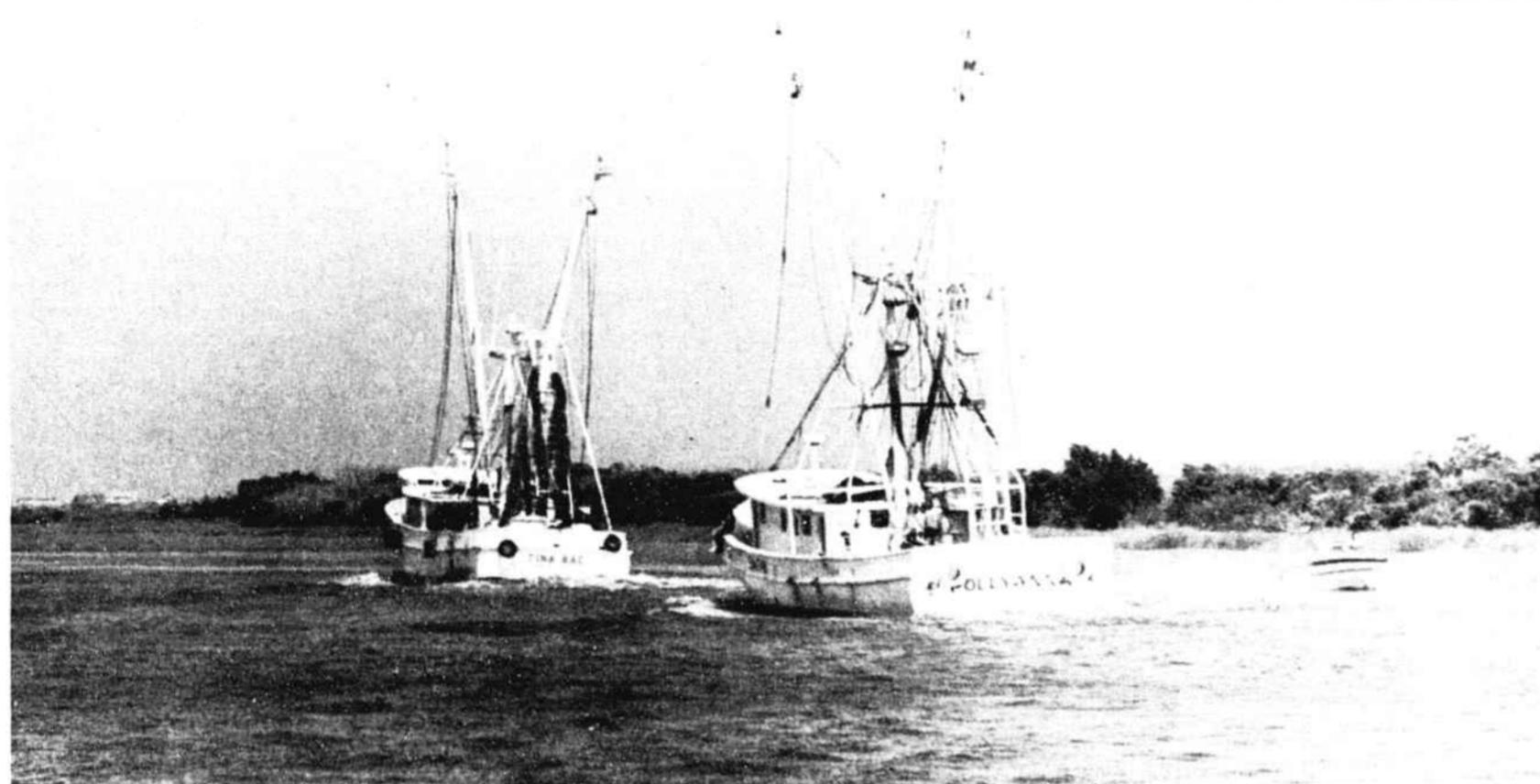
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Shrimp Boat Gets Tow

The Polyanna out of Holiday, Florida, gets a tow from a local shrimp trawler, the Tina Rae out of Shallotte Point. The tandem trawlers were photographed recently as they traveled north on the intracoastal waterway near Holden Beach.

STAFF PHOTO BY EDDIE SWEATT

Late Filing Leaves Some Towns With Long List Of Candidates

BY DOUG RUTTER

Voters will have a lot of candidates to choose from in some towns and little or no choice in others when municipal elections are held this fall.

Across Brunswick County, 114 people have filed for the 63 seats on 18 municipal, hospital and sanitary district boards that will be filled in November, according to local election officials.

Many candidates waited until the end of the filing period last Friday to announce their intentions. At Holden Beach, for instance, 11 of 14 candidates didn't file until the last three days.

Several interesting races had developed when the month-long filing period ended last week, including a few in the South Brunswick Islands.

One of the best races of the year is shaping up in Shallotte, where Mayor Sarah Tripp and four incumbent town board members face challenges.

Holden Beach voters will have 14 candidates to pick from when they go to the polls this fall. They will elect a new mayor and at least four new faces to the board of commissioners.

Two men are running for mayor, and 12 candidates are seeking election to the five available seats on the board.

At Ocean Isle Beach, seven candidates are running for three seats on the board of commissioners. Voters will elect at least two new people to the town board.

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Bob Buck, who has served the last four years as commissioner, faces Wally Ausley in the mayor's race. Mayor John Tandy will not seek re-election.

In the commission race, Gay Atkins is the only incumbent who is seeking re-election. James Shafer, who had originally filed for mayor, decided to run for commissioner instead.

In nearby Varnamtown, five candidates have filed for three seats on the town board, and Mayor Judy Galloway is unopposed in her bid for re-election.

Voters will elect at least two new faces to the town board. Alderman John David Dawson is the only incumbent town board member seeking re-election.

At Ocean Isle Beach, seven candidates are running for three seats on the board of commissioners. Voters will elect at least two new people to the town board.

Commissioner Debbie Fox, who has served on the board since 1983, is the only incumbent who filed. Virginia Gibson and Pearl Steele are not seeking re-election.

Mayor Betty Williamson, who has been mayor since July 1987, is unopposed in her bid for a third straight two-year term.

Sunset Beach Mayor Mason Barber also will be unopposed this fall. Three people, including incumbent Mary Griffith, have filed for two seats on the town council. Challengers are Cherri Cheek and Cletus Waldmiller.

Calabash voters will elect one commissioner from District 1 and two from District II this fall.

Commissioner Keith Hardee, who has served on the town board since 1987, is unopposed in his bid for re-election from District I.

In District II, Jon Sanborn has filed for re-election. Other candidates are Robert Noe, former manager (See LIST, Page 2-A)

Citing Delays, County Fires Firm Working On Water System

BY TERRY POPE

Brunswick County Commissioners Monday voted 3-2 to fire the engineering firm charged with designing the county's \$7 million water expansion project to Seaside and Shallotte Point.

Houston and Associates of Shallotte had already completed about 30 percent of the project.

"It hit me like a freight train," said County Manager David Clegg. "We've got to regroup immediately."

District 3 Commissioner Gene Pinkerton said the company has been slow in preparing plans for bids and that "many promises made were not kept."

He said residents of the communities that desperately need county water cannot afford the delays.

Commissioners Kelly Holden and Frankie Rabon voted for his motion to fire the firm and to have Clegg choose another to complete the project. Donald Shaw and Jerry Jones voted to keep the firm.

Houston and Associates has been paid around \$84,000 by the county so far, said Clegg, which amounts to approximately 30 percent of the project.

The firm was hired in January to design Phases III and III-A of the county's water expansion project, which will route a new trunk line south from Shallotte to the Seaside area and another to the Shallotte Point community.

Pinkerton said Houston and Associates was given two months longer to complete the project than other firms that submitted proposals last December.

"If we continue as we're going, this project will not even be on line in 1992," said Pinkerton.

The firm said it would have designs completed by July but pushed the deadline back to the fall, said Clegg. Indications are that now another delay is needed until February 1992.

Various reasons have been given for the delays, said Clegg.

"No way has the county impeded their progress," said Holden. "There are wells going dry in that area (Shallotte Point) every day."

A new firm can be hired without a bidding process, said Clegg. In December, 17 engineering firms responded to the county's advertisement seeking a firm with experience in designing water systems.

Of those, five were chosen for interviews. In a 3-2 vote in January,

Pinkerton and Rabon voted against hiring Houston and Associates.

They voted to hire Ken Dresser and Associates of Wrightsville Beach. Other firms under consideration were Peirson and Whitman of Raleigh, The Wooten Company of Raleigh and McKim and Creed of Wilmington.

Both Jones and Shaw said they wanted representatives from Houston and Associates to come before the board to explain the delays.

"I'm not happy with the service," said Jones, "but I don't want to delay it any further."

Another firm can pick up where Houston and Associates have reached in the designs, said Clegg.

Phase III of the water expansion project will carry a main line down U.S. 17 to Grissettstown and down N.C. 904 to Seaside. Growth in the Calabash and Sunset Beach area requires that another main trunk line be installed to help the main line now on N.C. 179.

Phase III-A would route water lines from N.C. 179 to the Shallotte Point community, an area plagued by harsh water.

The projects will be financed through revenue bonds. A public hearing has been set for Aug. 19, 6:30 p.m., in the commissioners' chambers to receive comment on the county's plan to seek the \$7 million in bonds.

Water line assessments will help pay back the bonds.

Jay Houston of Houston and Associates was unavailable for comment Tuesday. Alan Lewis, an engineer there, said Houston had some meetings scheduled.

In other business Monday, the board:

■ Heard from Thurman Gause and Betty Smith, two residents who said the county did not warn them that funds from their checking accounts were being attached to pay for back taxes and water assessments. They said the county should have sent a letter telling them funds were being taken from their accounts.

Commissioners voted in February to begin garnishing wages and attaching checking accounts to collect more than \$2.9 million owed the county since 1980.

■ Delayed a vote on the county's new subdivision ordinance until two sections, dealing with minimum road standards and releases from recordation of lots, can be clarified by the county engineer.

(See COUNTY, Page 2-A)

Redistricting Plan Will Go Before County Voters

BY TERRY POPE

Residents will vote in November on a plan to redraw the county's electoral district lines based on the 1990 U.S. Census.

County officials had thought a referendum wasn't needed, but County Manager David Clegg told commissioners Monday that a vote is required, even if the board decides to make it a non-binding vote.

"I don't necessarily think it's a bad thing," said Clegg. "The redistricting process is something everybody's going to get an input in now."

The county's five districts must be redrawn to reflect the county's growth since the 1980 U.S. Census, from 35,777 to 50,985 residents, or about 43 percent.

Each district will contain about 10,197 residents, plus or minus 10 percent, said Clegg. When commissioners drew district lines in August 1983, each contained approximately 7,200 residents.

A 1981 state bill allowing county commissioners to redistrict without a popular vote does not apply to counties, such as Brunswick, where districts are for residence purposes only, said Clegg.

In Brunswick County, while candidates run from and represent the district in which they reside, they are elected by voters countywide. The districts are the same for both commissioners and

the Brunswick County Board of Education. Both boards elect five members, one from each district.

County Planning Director John Harvey said he will have five alternate plans ready for commissioners to review by Aug. 16. County officials believe the changes will be minor.

"This seems to be the year of the referendum," said Commission Chairman Kelly Holden.

County voters will decide in November whether to continue electing commissioners and school board members to staggered four-year terms or to two-year terms.

District 4 Commissioner Frankie Rabon suggested that people should vote on the county's new subdivision ordinance. While Holden indicated he didn't like that idea, he did say the board should consider other questions to add to the Nov. 5 ballot.

"There are a lot of other questions out there that could go to a vote," said Holden.

Commissioners can set a non-binding vote, where they would not have to abide by the outcome, or can keep holding referendums until a plan passes.

According to the 1990 U.S. Census, current district populations are:

■ District 1: Represented by Holden, 11,787 residents, or 15.5 percent too many people. It in-

cludes Waccamaw and Shallotte townships, minus Shallotte and Shallotte Point;

■ District 2: Represented by Jerry Jones, contains 10,784 residents, or 5.7 percent too many people. It includes Shallotte Point, Shallotte, Holden Beach area and Supply;

■ District 3: Represented by Gene Pinkerton, contains 9,878 residents, or 3.1 percent too few people. It includes Smithville Township, plus Sunset Harbor up to Lockwood Folly River;

■ District 4: Represented by Rabon, contains 9,410 residents, or 8.3 percent too few people. It includes Town Creek Township, plus south and west to N.C. 211, easterly to part of N.C. 87 and U.S. 74-76 to the Columbus County line;

■ District 5: Represented by Donald Shaw, contains 9,126 residents, or about 11.7 percent too few people. It includes the Northwest Township, Leland and Woodburn area to Olde Towne and south to Goodman Road.

A local bill Clegg submitted to the N.C. General Assembly (House Bill 630) would have replaced the 1981 law, but it was still pending before the Senate when legislators convened last month. It has previously passed the House.

It would have eliminated the need for a referendum and allowed commissioners to redistrict by resolution every 10 years. Clegg said it is expected to pass in 1992.

Investigators Rule Out Arson In Calabash Fire

While investigators have ruled out arson, the cause of a July 27 fire that destroyed a number of apartments in Calabash has not been determined.

The fire appears to have originated from a downstairs storage room, said Brunswick County Fire Marshal Cecil Logan. Flames first broke out about waist high, he added.

"Normally, if you have a fire that starts waist-high, you don't have an arson case," said Logan. "What caused it, I don't know."

The fire was initially investigated as an arson case.

Logan and SBI Agent Kelly Moser investigated the blaze that destroyed at least four units and damaged the remaining four at Riverview Apartments on Riverview Drive.

The two investigators reached the same conclusion, said Logan, who estimated damages between \$200,000 and \$250,000. They determined that a flammable substance was not used to start a fire there.

Firefighters from five departments battled the blaze for three hours. Some residents were still asleep when the fire started and were awakened by a passer-by and a neighbor who noticed smoke shooting through the roof around 9:30 a.m.

No one was injured in the blaze. The American Red Cross responded to help families whose belongings were destroyed, said Logan.