



North Carolina Shark Attacks Project

Note: The following article describes a shark attack that occurred October 8th, 1989, near Carolina Beach in New Hanover County. The article appeared in the *Wilmington Morning Star*, October 17th, 1989.

Expert identifies body as Nunnally

By Alison Feldman
Staff Writer

A body found by boaters Sunday afternoon has been identified as Doug Nunnally, who was a teacher at New Hanover High School.

Nunnally had been missing since Oct. 8 when he took his boat out from a slip on Banks Channel, apparently to go diving. He was last seen alive wearing a black wetsuit, part of which was still on him when he was found.



Nunnally

Two men who were out fishing Sunday spotted the body about six miles east of Carolina Beach Inlet and tied a line to it until the Coast Guard arrived.

Robert Thompson, associate chief medical examiner in Chapel Hill, said he could not tell how long Nunnally had been in the water before

dying, or what caused his death. However, he said it appeared the 49-year-old had been attacked by a shark at some point.

Shark attacks on humans are not very common in North Carolina. Since 1900, there have been 10 recorded shark attacks in the state, said Frank Schwartz, a professor at the Institute of Marine Science in Morehead City. Three of them resulted in death.

Nunnally's body was identified by surgical scars on his spine, Thompson said. Though he was sure it was Nunnally, Thompson was waiting Monday afternoon for some X-rays from Cape Fear Memorial Hospital to further corroborate the evidence.

He could not use more conventional means of identification because of the condition of the body, he said.

Nunnally had been diving for about 20 years, and friends are still puzzling over why he went out Oct.

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8 by himself.

After finding no suspicious circumstances about Nunnally's death, the county Sheriff's Department is closing the case, said Detective Larry Hines.

Nunnally taught vocational skills to handicapped and disadvantaged students at New Hanover for 10 years and worked for the school system for 15 years. He was also student activities director at the high school, which meant supervising fund raising for all clubs.

Co-workers described him Monday as an intelligent, talented person who was so active in school that he was often the last one to go home. His work extended from the classroom to the basement, they said.

"He was around here all the time," said head custodian Cornelius Donaldson. "He was a good fellow. He never turned you down no

matter what it was."

Donaldson said Nunnally had helped him on several occasions with electrical work and other odd jobs that the custodian did not have time to complete right away.

"I think all of us had a little spark for Nunnally," he said. "It's a real loss."

English teacher Marilyn King said teachers had grieved throughout the week, but after seven days of anxiety over the unknown, many were relieved that the disappearance had finally been solved.

Nunnally's motorboat was found Oct. 10, drifting near Frying Pan Shoals. Because the anchor line was longer than the depth of water it was in, Coast Guard officials speculated that Nunnally's disappearance may have started when he dived in the water to tie his anchor to a shipwreck.

New Hanover principal Robert Moore said the school has tentative plans to use money it has collected for search efforts to create a graduation award for one of Nunnally's

handicapped students. Faculty, staff and students have contributed about \$500, he said, but the person whom they were going to pay for his search efforts said he would rather see the money go for some type of memorial.

The school also plans to dedicate its homecoming celebration to Nunnally, he said.

Nunnally's wife, Maryann, is principal of the New Learning Center, New Hanover County's alternative school.

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