

PASCAGOULA

Cause of death, identity unknown

Authorities are still working to determine what caused the death of a man whose body was found last week near Bayou Rosa in Pascagoula.

An autopsy Saturday revealed the body was of a middle-aged, white male with a medium build and light brown hair, said Jackson County deputy coroner Susan Cunningham. No stab wounds or gunshot wounds were discovered and authorities estimated the man had been dead from three to six months.

gnats. They're tearing people up.'

Jackson Co. seeks autopsy on body

PASCAGOULA (AP) — Jackson County authorities have called on a forensic pathologist to conduct an autopsy on a body found on the extreme southern tip of Chevron USA Inc.'s Pascagoula property.

Three men fishing in Bayou Rosa off the Mississippi Sound found the badly decomposed body at 4 p.m. Friday, said Jackson County Deputy Coroner Susan Cunningham.

The body had no identification. Cunningham said it was that of a male, but was too decomposed to determine age.

Mummified skull reconstructed for identification

From Staff, Wire Reports

PASCAGOULA — Hattiesburg anthropologist Edward Waldrip has reconstructed the skull of a man whose partially mummified body was found April 17.

Jackson County authorities and Waldrip hope the facial reconstruction will lead to the man's identity.

"The success of this depends upon the media," Waldrip said. "We will try to get it shown in newspapers and on television, certainly on the Gulf Coast. The wider the exposure, the better chance we have."

The body was found by a fisherman at the tip of Bayou Rosa, about 15 feet behind some bushes. The fisherman had gone ashore to clean fish.

The body was decomposed on one side and partially mummified on the other, said Deputy Medical Examiner Susan Cunningham.

"His age has been estimated with a wide range. We are saying 35 to 50 years old. The reason for the wide range is because his teeth are in such good shape, and there is very little wearing. He is a white male. We are sure of that.

"All we were able to do on the autopsy was eliminate gunshot and stab wounds as the cause of death. But we searched and found some reputable forensic experts to help us (continue the search for his identity)," Cunningham said.

Waldrip has narrowed the age

range of the victim, he said.

"It's a white male, average weight and height, probably 45 to 50," he said. "We initially thought we had some dental records that were going to match, but we hit a deadend on it. We thought the next best thing was to do some facial work on him."

A small amount of hair was still attached to the man's scalp, along with some around the body. This means "our wig will be very realistic," Cunningham said.

The man could have been dead up to 12 months when his body was found in April, she said.

Anthropologists use standard measurements of tissue depth to reconstruct facial features.

The coroner's office is awaiting a report from Dr. William Bass of Knoxville, Tenn., in hopes it will give authorities more precise information as to how long the man had been dead when found, Cunningham said. Bass is head of the University of Tennessee's forensic unit.

Waldrip, who operates the Southern Institute of Forensic Sciences, was scheduled to present the reconstruction to Jackson County authorities today. However, a farming accident involving his father last week caused him to postpone the presentation until Thursday.

American Senior Writer Janet Braswell contributed to this report.

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