

Murder Suspects Held At Horry Jail

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CONWAY (AP) — A coin shop operator was being held Saturday in connection with a wave of violence that began with a holdup at the home of a coin collector and ended with five persons dead.

Horry County Police Chief Herman Enzor said Fred Thomas Whitehead, 30, operator of the Myrtle Beach Coin Shop, was arrested Friday night on charges of conspiracy to commit murder, armed robbery and accessory to receiving stolen goods.

He was being held at the Horry County jail along with Ronald R. Woomer, 24, of Huntington, W. Va.

Woomer was charged Friday night with murder, kidnapping, assault and battery with intent to kill and criminal sexual assault.

The charges stem from a crime spree that began about 4 p.m. Thursday with the slaying of John Turner in Colleton County. The 67-year-old man was killed at his home in Cottageville and part of his valuable coin collection stolen, police said.

The rampage ended Friday morning with the arrest of Woomer after police cornered him and another man at a Myrtle Beach motel. The other suspect, Eugene E. Skaar, 40, also of Huntington, shot himself as police closed in, officers said.

During a hearing Saturday, Circuit Judge Sidney Floyd appointed Public Defender Cleveland Stevens

and former Solicitor Evans M. Bunch Jr. to represent Woomer.

Solicitor James Dunn said the charges against Woomer in Horry County stem from the abduction of two Pawleys Island women from the convenience store where they worked.

Dunn said Georgetown County Sheriff Woodrow Carter is expected to take Woomer to that county to face charges there. Additional charges in Colleton County also are being considered, Dunn said.

About two hours after Turner was killed in Cottageville, Arnie Lee Richardson, 27, and his sister-in-law, Earl Dean Wright, 35, were fatally shot near Georgetown.

An hour after that, Louise B. Sellers, 33, and Wanda Summers, 25, were abducted from their jobs at a Pawleys Island convenience store.

The two clerks were carried from the Georgetown County coastal town about 20 miles just across the Horry County line, raped and shot, authorities said.

Ms. Sellers died at the Medical University of South Carolina hospital in Charleston. Ms. Summers was listed in serious condition Saturday in the intensive care unit of a Myrtle Beach hospital.

On Wednesday, Woomer and Skaar checked into a \$10-a-day room at the Komo Mai Motel, where Woomer was eventually arrested.

Colleton County Sheriff John I. Seigler said Woomer and Skaar were in Cottageville prior to Turner's death asking directions to the man's house.

Sheriff Carter said Woomer and Skaar apparently stopped at Richardson's house for water for their car, which was running hot.