Oldmuny Bank Heist Remains Unsolved

Bepuzzled Times Staff Writer

The brazen crook was in and out of the bank in less than five minutes. His image was captured on the bank’s security camera but because of the Halloween

Spring Flood Damage Cost $5 million

Bepuzzled Times Staff Writer

The tally for damages caused by the severe flooding last May has topped five million dollars. A total rainfall of 12.07 inches in the month of May caused widespread flooding to local rivers and creeks.

The Fortune Creek watershed was the worst hit with nine cottages severely damaged and two more being swept away by raging flood waters. Local cottage owners were evacuated from the Fortune Creek valley for ten days until the waters subsided in mid May.

Some of the recent repairs have been paid for through the national disaster fund, but the bulk of the five million dollar repair bill has been born by cottage-owners and insurance companies.

In addition to the damaged cottages, many banks along Fortune Creek were severely eroded. The bed of the creek has been altered in several locations. Pike County officials have approved a $1,000,000 credit bank re-stabilization project to be started next month.

Up the Creek

by Larry Zacher
Special to Bepuzzled Times

Local sports fisherman, Wade Rivers, made the catch of his life yesterday while fly casting in Fortune Creek. Mr. Rivers snagged a sack filled with money — almost four hundred thousand dollars in bundles of fifty and hundred dollar bills.

Rivers explains, "I hooked this section of the creek before so I know where the trout live in the bottom of a deep pool at the foot of Mad Rapids. I had a hunch there would be a big old trout settin' down there where the water is cool."

"I made a cast into the pool and just let the fly line sink seven or eight feet below the surface before I gave it a tug. As a sudden, I hooked something. It didn't really move at first but when it did, it moved slow. I thought I'd hooked a sunken log or a big sleepy fish."

Rivers reeled in his fly line, dragging his 'catch' a few feet at a time. As it surfaced from the murky water, he discovered he had snagged on an old cannon shell.

"At first I was angry because I thought someone had thrown a bag of garbage into the creek, but as I dragged it out of the water, I noticed the name 'Oldmuny Savings & Loan' stamped on the side. That's when I realized this was no bag of garbage."

Rivers used his knife to cut open the waterlogged bag and discovered it was filled with bundles of soggy currency. He called the Sheriff's Department and they investigated the find.

"The money appears to be part of the loot stolen from the Oldmuny Savings and Loan during a bank heist ten years ago," Deputy Sheriff Ray Bann reported. "There were five bags of money taken during that robbery — more than two million dollars — and the crime has never been solved."

"The Sheriff's Department started a search along Fortune Creek early this morning. Deputies have discovered a second bag of money partially buried in the creek bank beside the pool of water where Rivers found the first sack. Deputy Bann refused to comment on how much of the missing money was recovered but an unnamed source within the Sheriff's Office has reported that approximately one million dollars, half of the original amount stolen, has been found along with a collection of evidence from the decade-old robbery.

It appears the money and other pieces of evidence have been buried in the creek bank for years. Most likely, these were uncovered last May when Fortune Creek flooded its banks. The rapid spring runoff caused extensive damage to the banks in numerous locations along the creek.

As a result of yesterday's discovery, the Sheriff has reopened the investigation into the 1987 bank robbery at the Oldmuny Savings & Loan.

"Fortune Creek watershed was the worst hit..."
Heist
continued from page 1

deserted dock on the north shore of Lost Lake. There were no fingerprints other
than Goln’s found on the van.
Sheriff’s deputies investigated the site where the vehicle was found and
questioned cottage residents in the area. Mr. and Mrs. Tinnitus, an elderly retired
couple, own a cottage situated a few hundred yards from the deserted dock on
Lost Lake, reported hearing an engine start up in that direction at around
noon on the day of the robbery. Unfortunately, both Mr. and Mrs. Tinnitus suffer
from hearing problems and could not tell whether the noise was from a boat or a plane.
This is where the bank robber’s trail went cold for the Sheriff and his
deputies. They conducted a helicopter search over Lost Lake shortly after the
van was discovered but the search failed to turn up anything suspicious. A major
weather front moved into the area the following morning and the storm wiped
out any possibility of finding further evidence.

In the week following the robbery, a confidential report was leaked from the
Sheriff’s department and outlined their conclusions based on the scanty
evidence.

They believe the robber had either a boat or a float plane at Lost Lake.
He made his escape by boat, there are dozens of logging roads along the south shore of
the forty-mile long lake where he could have had a second vehicle and boat trail-
ning waiting. If the escape was by plane, it is only a short flight to the US border.
It is the consensus of the Sheriff’s deputies that the robber had inside help

“I’m the consensus... the robber had inside help”

from either an employee of Oldummy Savings & Loan or Greenbarn Armored
Car Services. It is too much of a coinci-
dence that the robbery was timed to
happen moments after the armored car
made its unscheduled delivery and left.
Sheriff’s deputies also speculated
that the robbery may have been the work of
the notorious bank robber Carey
Lute, who has been robbing financial
establishments upstate during the past
several months. There are a number of
similarities between this robbery and
Lute’s usual modus – the well-planned
and efficient timing, the disappearance
of the robber into thin air and the use of
a mask to conceal his identity.
Editor’s note: Carey Lute was cap-
tured fourteen months after this article
was written (March, 1988). Although
Lute confessed to several bank robberies
in the state, he denied any knowledge of the
Oldummy robbery.

The mystery of the Oldummy Savings & Loan robbery is back in the
headlines. I cannot think of another
topic that has captivated Pike County
residents so much as this unsolved
financial crime. Speculation has run rampant in the
decade since this heist about who the
robber was and what happened to the
stolen money.
Some folks believed that the clever
crook was living a life of leisure some-
where in the Caribbean with the two
million dollars in stolen loot. Others
theorized that he was some kind of
Robin Hood who had been doling out
the money to needy families as he moves
across the country. A third rumor is that
the robber never got any further than
Lost Lake and became just another hap-
less victim in its bottomless depths. Still
others speculate the robber is living right
here in Pike County, using a false identi-
ity and quietly spending the two million.
It seems over the years the rumors have
gotten bigger and bolder – like a good
fish story – and this incident has become
a true legend.

Now with yesterday’s discovery of
some of the stolen money, the mystery
may finally be solved. Although the
Sheriff’s department is keeping tight
lipped about what they have recovered,
we know that local fisherman, Wade
Rivers, found a large sack of the money in
Fortune Creek and more has subsequently
recovered from the creek bank just below Mud Rapids.
An unnamed source in the police
department has revealed that about half
of the missing money has been found
along with a collection of evidence –
 Allegedly left behind many years ago by
the robber.
It is true, it is fair to say that the
robber is not sunning himself in the
Caribbean nor passing out donations
to the poor. Surely, he would have had
ample opportunity over the years to
retrieve the buried loot if all had gone
well.
So now that we know the answer to
the decade old question, “What hap-
pened to the stolen bank loot?” (or at
least half of the missing money), will
we be found to be the myriad of other
questions such as, “Who was the rob-
ber?” Did he have an accomplice in
the bank and/or why has this inside part-
er never been revealed?
No doubt with the new evidence
the Sheriff’s Department has uncovered,
this mystery can now be solved. Too bad
– it’s been a great legend.

Legends of Lost Lake

You do not have to travel to the
Bermuda Triangle to find intriguing
unexplained mysteries. Pike County’s
own Lost Lake holds more than its share of
fatal secrets. During the past ten years
there have been at least five drownings and
two unsolved disappearances on this lake.

Local residents know the forty-mile
long lake has many moods. It can be
peaceful at sunset or a playful place by
day as children swim and canoes
paddle in harmony with nature.

But Lost Lake can also be a merciless
killer if you are caught out on its
waters at the height of a sudden squall.
Icy winds howl down from Glacier Pass
and with little warning, stir up ten foot
waves and treacherous undertows.

This year some unfortunate souls who
have been caught in the fatal fury of a
Lost Lake storm, the cold deep waters
show no remorse. The lake rarely gives
up its victims.

Most recently, there was the tragic
accident of Bent Borde, a windsurfer
who drowned while trying to cross Lost
Lake through storm-tossed waves. Borde,
a world-class windsurfer, had attempted
to windsurf across the lake on a
date from friends. His windsurfing board
washed up on the south shore but his
corpse was never recovered. Mysteriously,
Borde’s board had a basketball-sized piece
missing from it, seemingly to have been
bitten out. This odd occurrence has
never been explained.

A still unsolved mystery of the
infamous lake is the unusual disappearance of
Bob Troutman. Last year while on a fishing trip
with four friends, Bob was trolleying
a thirty-pound line behind the group’s
cabin cruiser in hopes of making a prize
catch. His friends later reported that
Bob hooked onto a “giant fish” that
pulled him right out of the boat and
dragger him underwater. Troutman’s body
has never been recovered.

Then there was the case of Chance
Storm, a seasoned outdoorsman
who knew his way around the wooded
lake that occasionally swarms with
class human victim. Whatever danger resides
in Lost Lake, be it a curse, a giant fish
or just plain bad luck, boaters and swim-
ers are reminded to treat this unforgiv-
ing lake with their deepest respect.

New Appointments

The Board of Directors of the
Oldummy Savings & Loan are pleased
to announce the following appointments.

Mrs. Lucinda Bank has been
appointed to the position of
Manager for the Nickel
Street branch.

Mrs. Lucinda Bank has
been employed at the Oldummy
Savings & Loan since 1985. Lucinda
held the position of teller until 1989 when she
was promoted to Loans Officer and in
1992 to Assistant Manager. Mrs. Bank
graduated from the University of
Kendall with a Masters degree in Business
Administration. In her spare time,
Lucinda can often be seen walking
the shores of Lost Lake searching for treasure
with her metal detector or relaxing at her
family cottage on Fortune Creek.

Mr. Maxwell Strong has been appointed as
Chief of Security at the Nickel Street
Branch of the Oldummy Savings & Loan.
Mr. Strong has been the Operations
Manager at Greenbarn Armored Car
Services for the past fourteen years. In
1993, Max received a police citation for
stopping a robbery attempt at a local con-
venience store while

Fishing Derby Winner

For the third year running, local
sports fisherman Gil Hooker has won the
Spookled Fishing Derby. This year Mr.
Hooker caught a 28 lb. - 6 oz. Muskie trout
on a Fireplug Special to take top honors in
the derby.

Gil Hooker spends at least five days a
week fishing the local lakes and
streams. He sold his suc-
cessful computer
software business in
California in 1987 and at the
time of age 42 retired to the
area to pursue his fishing passion full time.
Gil resides in his cottage on Fortune Creek
and can often be seen fly fishing along the
creek or trolling the waters of Lost Lake in
search of his next prize catch.
### Fishermen ‘Bearly’ Escape

**by Larry Zacher**

**Special to Bepuzzled Times**

Two local fishermen got the scare of their lives on Saturday while boating on Lost Lake. redd Hering and Bill Bass were crossing the lake in a fourteen foot aluminum boat when they spotted a black bear swimming across the lake from the north shore.

"We changed course and boated over to that big ole bear," drawled Bass. "Redd dared me to see how close I could get. We thought we were safe ‘cause the bear was swimming in deep water."

"That was our mistake," added Hering. "Bill was trying to get close enough to touch the bear on the head."

I told him he was nuts but Bass never takes a dare lightly."

As the boat brushed close to the bear, the animal surprised the two men by hooking its front paws over the side of the boat and climbing aboard.

"I wouldn’t have believed it if I hadn’t seen it with my own eyes," Bass was still astonished by the incident. "There was nothing we could do but jump overboard and get away from that bear... it was kind of hungry-lookin’.

The two men swam for shore while watching their boat drift away, the bear sitting calmly in its bow. Their boat was later recovered undamaged on the south shore of the lake. There was no sign of the 'boat-jacking' brain.
Local fishing legend, Gil Hooker, winner of the Speckledle Fishing Derby three years running has this advice to offer about the best times to fish.

"Go out when the ocean tides are changing. Don't fish if you're fishing in fresh water. I've had some of my best strikes an hour before and an hour after high tide. Same thing with low tide. That's when the fish are feeding."

Hooker has been fishing for more than forty years. He started at the age of four when his father bought him his first fishing rod and taught him to cast. Gil was hooked for life.

"Other good times to fish," Gil instructs, "are just before sunup or for those folks who can't get out of bed that early, just before sundown. I've even had a lot of luck an hour after sunset."

Hooker, a frequent guest on Channel 10's popular television program, Fish Nichol's, has more tips to offer novice fishermen.

- Fishing is generally better when the water is still or slightly rippled rather than when the wind is blowing.
- One of the best times is when there is a new hatch of flies. Match the fly to the hatching insects.
- Fish when the breeze blows from the west rather than from the north or east.
- A good time is when the barometer is steady on the rise.
- The best time of the month is when the moon is between new and full.

"And my all-time favorite time to fish," Gil chuckles his last bit of advice, "is when there are chores waiting to be done back home. The fish seem to bite real good then."

**In Memoriam**

STORM, Chance - In loving memory of a wonderful man who departed suddenly ten years ago. You filled my life with a wealth of dreams. Darling, you left behind so much - it only we could have shared it together. I have never stopped searching for what we lost. - Your friend and soulmate.

ROSLIE - In fond memory of my favorite pet, a precious pig and my best four-legged friend. A walk in the woods is not the same without my faithful little porker tagging along. Roslie, I miss your snuffle and eager squats at feeding time. I hope you are happy up there in that great pigpen in the sky.

**For Sale**


**Fish Tales**

- Capture your fishing adventures on video. Special long-angle lens will add inches to your catch. Edited voice-overs allow you to tell your incredible fishing story in your own words. Call Peter at 535-9335 to book. Group rates.

**For Sale**

- Used row boat in fair condition - only one hole in the bottom. Snooky will always get you home at the end of the day. Complete with one oar, extra largeailing can and emergency flares. Call Norm at 555-5264.

**Holy Mackarel**

- Large stuffed fish for sale. Professionally mounted and enclosed above mantle by ex-husband. Hubby left town to chase 'mermaid' so his priceless fish is up for grabs. First offer. Call 535-4309.

**Lost & Found**

- Wooden sign with name, 'Gill' on it. This sign was made by my late grand-father and has great sentimental value. It was swept down Fortune Creek during Spring flood. Reward offered. 535-4435

- 1995 green pick-up truck. Sunk through the ice on Lost Lake while ice-fishing last winter near Pickett Point. Dives have not been able to locate. Reward offered. Call 535-DUMB.

**Just for the Hallibut**

- Try an exciting fishing adventure in Alberta, Canada. Drift down the scenic Bow River with renowned fishing guide, Colby Bell. Great Fishing and good fun at an affordable price. Call Troutdoor Adventures at (403) 815-FISH today.

**LAND FOR SALE**

Pike County is offering the following lands for sale by sealed submission. These are lands on which delinquent taxes remain unpaid (For up to ten years). All offers to purchase must be equal or greater than to the total of taxes owing:

**DESCRIPTION**
Plan A, Lot 17
Plan B, Lot 42
Plan B, Lot 23
Plan F, Lot 26

**TITLE HOLDER**
Noah Cash
Ira Skwater
Chance Storn
Hugh Garible

**TAXES OWING**
$8,777.00
$11,635.00
$14,086.00
$25,488.00

Interested parties may pick up the information package from the Delinquent Taxation Recovery Department, 3rd Floor, 10 Bloomblo Drive, Speckledle.

All submissions (offers) must be received at the above location no later than 12:00 noon, Wednesday, September 17, 1997.

**Fortune Creek Logging Protest**

- Charges have been laid against eleven environmental activists arrested during a Fortune Creek Road blockade.
- The group of protesters, calling themselves Treehuggers Of America, formed a human barricade across the logging road by handcuffing themselves to heavy concrete-filled barrels. Logging equipment operators sat nearby on idling bulldozers.
- Police swooped down on the demonstrators with metal-cutting tools and arrested them as the environment activists were cut free from the barrels.
- The area has been approved for logging by the State Department of Natural Resources but environmentalists are unwilling to accept this government decision.
- Protest organizer, Forrest Stump, said, "These are the last old-growth trees left in the northern half of the State. They provide homes for hundreds of animal and bird species - some of them very rare. We will not give up our fight to save these trees."

**Treehuggers Of America barricading Fortune Creek**

- More than 50 people have been charged during the 3-month protest of the logging of old-growth pine trees around Lost Lake. Treehuggers of America have set up a camp nearby and will continue their protest.