

Tornado destroys two mobile homes

HICKORY PLAINS, Ark. (AP) — Two mobile homes were destroyed and power lines were downed when a tornado and severe thunderstorms roared through Prairie County.

No injuries were reported from Thursday evening's twister.

"We were luckier than we thought," LeAnne Davidson, staff duty officer for the Office of Emergency Services in Little Rock.

She said there were reports of

downed power lines and trees south of Piggott in Clay County. She said there were also reports of downed power lines and trees in Corning.

The two mobile homes, which were parked near one another, were in the tiny Johnson Chapel community between Des Arc and Hickory Plains.

Lavon Mitchell, 50, who occupied one of the trailers along with his brother, Darnell, 67, escaped the tornado by taking

shelter in an old school bus parked in back of their mobile home. The tornado sent the bus "rocking back and forth," Darnell Mitchell said.

Bob Evans, who runs a store in Johnson Chapel, said Lavon Mitchell was at work when the twister hit.

The second trailer, where Ricky Lowe and his family lived, was also destroyed. About 100 searchers from the sheriff's department and surrounding com-

munities' police and fire departments, descended on the site to look for any survivors.

Arthur Heber of Heber Springs was leaving Stuttgart for home when he drove through the storm. He saw people working at the site where the mobile homes were destroyed and stopped to join the searchers.

Lowe and his family were in Augusta during the storm.

Sheriff Dale Madden said one of his deputies, Troy Stallings, wat-

Attorneys say no change of venue needed in Paragould murders

PARAGOULD, Ark. (AP) — A couple accused of conspiracy to commit capital murder in the death of a doctor's wife will be able to get a fair trial in Greene County, the couple's attorneys said.

Carolyn Edwards, 39, and Donald Edwards, 58, are charged in the death of Jonnie Allenbaugh Jones, 63, wife of Dr. Bryant W. Jones, 62.

The Joneses were found dead in their home Dec. 13, each shot once in the back.

Edwards is being represented by Phillip Wells of Jonesboro. Mrs. Edwards is being represented by David Goodson, Greene County public defender.

Both attorneys say their clients don't need a change of venue, but reserved the right to change that opinion.

Circuit Judge David Burnett said any change of venue motion

must be entered 60 days prior to the Sept. 18 trial date.

Mrs. Edwards and her husband are accused of plotting with Jones to kill his wife. Police say they have no explanation for why Jones was killed.

Jones and his wife moved from Florida to Paragould in 1981. A spokesman for the Florida Professional Regulations Department has said Jones left Florida after a seven-count indictment was issued against him accusing him of trading prescription drugs for sexual favors. His narcotics prescriptions were monitored during his first few years in Arkansas, according to Dr. Joe Verser, secretary of the Arkansas Medical Board. Sharon Edwards, 40, no relation to the couple, pleaded guilty last month to conspiracy charges in the deaths. Ms. Edwards, Jones' former secretary, is to be sentenced in Sep-

tember.

Also Wednesday, Burnett ordered Goodson to hold onto a statement written by Carolyn Edwards, which was meant to be released at the time of her death. Burnett wants the statement held until a ruling is issued in a May 9 preliminary hearing on whether to release the letter to prosecutors.

Goodson contends that disclosing the content to prosecutors would violate lawyer-client privileges.

Deputy Prosecutor Randy Philhours said Burnett should make the statement available to prosecutors because defense attorneys have seen the handwritten statement.

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