

Body Found, Search Called Off

Written by Steve Frank

Saturday, 18 February 2012 08:20

It may be that the worst fears of folks from the Low Country of South Carolina to the High Country of North Carolina have been realized, that as Mount Pleasant Police Chief Harry Sewell announced the recovery of a body from the Francis Marion National Forest around 1:30 yesterday afternoon. Official word that it might be Dara Lee Watson has not come, but the chief told the Charleston Post and Courier that the Charleston County Coroner's Office still must identify the person found. Simultaneous with the discovery, though, the search effort for Dara Lee Watson was called off. The chief told the paper that positive ID of the body could take several days. He declined questions after the announcement but said, "We continue to pray for the family." The body was found off Halfway Creek Road, among tall pines and about 150 yards from where Watson's sport utility vehicle was found badly burned on Feb. 7. Sewell said details of the discovery would not be released immediately. Watson had been officially missing a week Friday, her boss reporting his concerns, prompting police to call Watson's former fiancé, 34-year-old David Hedrick, who answered questions, then shot himself in the head Feb. 10 in the North Creek Drive home the couple shared. The paper said that Watson reportedly had called off the wedding they had planned. Watson was last seen alive in Boone, Feb. 6, when she and Hedrick left Boone for Mount Pleasant.