

Youth drowns in quarry

SHEPHERDSVILLE, Ky. (AP) — The owners try to discourage swimmers in an abandoned and flooded stone quarry, but they continue to seek out its clear water and solitude.

Phillip Leigh, who with Harold Meredith owns the property off Hebron Lane in northern Bullitt County, remembers making the trip from Jefferson County several times himself when he was younger.

The sparkling, spring-fed water is surrounded by cliffs about 40 feet high. At one edge is a place where people can climb into the water without scaling the stone walls.

"It's a challenge to swim. But you better be able to make it," Leigh said.

Jerry Mark Flowers Jr., 17, of southern Jefferson County, was not able. He drowned at the quarry Monday afternoon — the third Jefferson County resident to die there since 1972.

Leigh knows the problems of trying to keep people from swimming in the dangerous quarry.

"It's the fascination of the place — the clear water, the solitude, the rustic beauty," he said.

The two Bullitt County men have repeatedly tried to keep swimmers away, Leigh said.

"We put up 'No Trespassing' signs but as fast as we do, they're torn down," he said.

There was a barricade across the mile-long service road from Hebron Lane to the quarry, but that was

removed to give police access to chase off trespassers.

Residents of a nearby subdivision, Fox Chase, said they have shown their children the quarry to satisfy their curiosity, explained the dangers and then ordered them to stay away.

Sandy Sanders and her husband, Joey, live about 300 yards from the quarry. Mrs. Sanders said her two daughters "know what they'll get if they go down there — a spanking."

"Everyone around here has told their children about the danger," she said.

Bullitt County Police Chief Carroll Mills said that for a brief period in the early 1970s police arrested persons going onto the quarry property, but even that did not stop them from coming. He said he believes most people who swim at the quarry are from Jefferson County.

Flowers was the son of Jerry Flowers Sr. and Mrs. Vanda Hall. He was a native of Barren County, a 1979 graduate of Thomas Jefferson High School in Louisville, and a Kentucky Fried Chicken assistant manager.

He had been swimming with his brother, Jonathan Flowers, 15, and another 17-year-old, when he disappeared under the water. The two youths told police he apparently suffered a cramp and was unable to swim to safety. A funeral will be held Thursday.

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