

Publication: HERALD-NEWS

Publication date: 08/19/2002

By:

## Fishermen died by drowning

**CHANNAHON -- Will County Coroner Patrick O'Neil's office ruled the deaths of three fishermen whose bodies were found Saturday afternoon in the Des Plaines River as drownings after autopsies were performed Sunday. Rescue workers pulled the bodies of William Weavers and Otis Brown, both 59 and from Chicago, and John M. Gaters, 58, of Dolton from the river a half-mile upstream from Interstate 55 shortly before 5:30 p.m.**

**The fishermen launched a small, silver boat from the marina at 6 a.m., according to eyewitness Melvin Minor of Joliet.**

**An hour later a barge tender saw the boat riding low in the water, and then at 11 a.m. he spotted the capsized vessel drifting in the water.**

**Emergency personnel from Channahon, Minooka, Braidwood, Coal City, Troy and Wilmington fire departments, as well as Illinois Department of Natural Resource's Conservation Police and Will County sheriff's police joined in the search for the missing men.**

**Weavers, Brown and Gaters were not wearing life vests at the time, and authorities do not think they had any in the boat.**

**Windy weather, choppy water and an overloaded boat probably caused the accident, said Sgt. Mark Simon, of the Illinois Department of Natural Resource's Conservation Police.**

**Gaters' son-in-law said the men were all experienced fishermen.**

**The coroner's office will conduct an inquest at a later date once police reports are completed.**

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