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## Two charged in human bones reburial

BY ANA RHODES

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An inspector and a construction worker, hoping to avoid delays on a construction project, purposely reburied ancient skeletal remains unearthed while digging a trench, according to Broward sheriff's investigators.

Broward sheriff's deputies Wednesday charged David Cash, 33, of Davie, with one count of damaging an unmarked human burial, a third-degree felony, which carries a sentence of up to five years in jail and a fine of up to \$5,000 upon conviction.

Carlos Ochoa, an engineering inspector

### Remains unearthed at construction site

with Craven Thompson and Associates, was charged with one count of failing to report the destruction of an unmarked human burial, a second-degree misdemeanor. Cash also was charged with one count, which can result in a penalty of up to 60 days in jail and a fine as high as \$500.

"If a case like this can make other people understand the importance of protecting these burial sites and at the same time letting

the general public know that if these sites are disturbed it's a crime, than some good has come of this case," said Veda Coleman-Wright, Broward Sheriff's Office spokeswoman.

Work crews were laying cables for Florida Power & Light in the 1400 block of State Road 1A in Pompano Beach on April 30 when the remains were discovered.

The intersection was shut down for two days while local archaeologists and BSO crime scene investigators excavated the area.

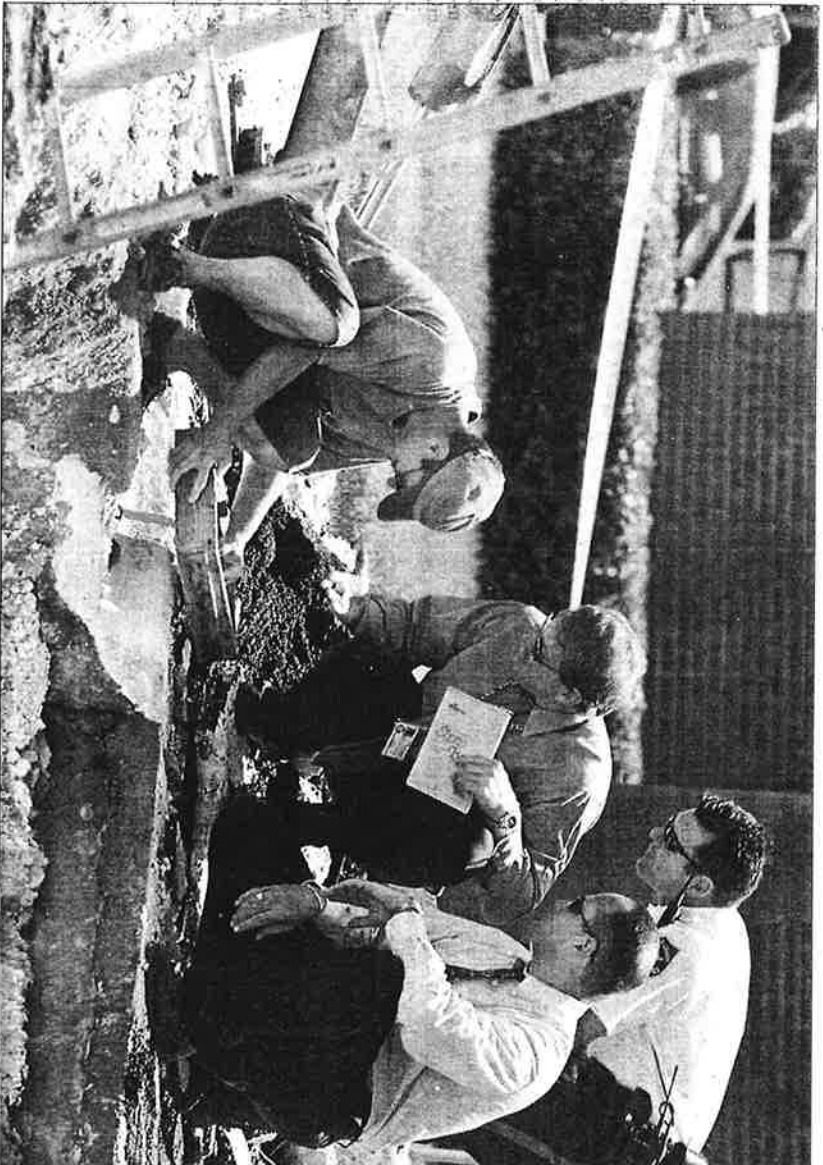
Archaeologists from the Broward County



### FELONY CHARGE:

David Cash faces five years in jail if convicted of damaging an unmarked human burial.

► PLEASE SEE BONES, 6B



PHOTOS BY MARSHA HALPER/HERALD STAFF  
**DISCOVERY:** When bones were first unearthed at a construction site on state Road A1a in Pompano Beach, conservator John Maserman, left, and Broward Sheriff's Office investigators were on the scene.

## Charges filed for burial of bones

► BONES, FROM 1B

Historical Commission later examined the remains and determined they were anywhere from 500 to 2,000 years old.

Cash, a construction crew foreman for Weekly Asphalt Co., admitted to investigators he knew the bones were human. He said he told Ochoa, his supervisor, about the burial site. He told investigators that Ochoa, of Hialeah, told him to rebury them in cement.

The next day a Pompano Beach city inspector alerted BSO about the remains.

"Ochoa instructed Cash to rebury the evidence," Coleman-Wright said. "In essence, they both agreed they did not want to report the find because it would possibly slow down the project or even shut it down."

In all, 81 bones were unearthed at the site, including skull fragments, jawbones with teeth, several bone fragments and one rib encrusted in cement.

Craven Thompson and Associates engineering firm defended Ochoa, claiming he was mostly concerned with repairing a nine-foot-deep hole in State Road A1A. The hole had caused the southbound lanes of the busy thoroughfare to shut down.



**QUESTIONING:** BSO detectives questioned David Cash on May 1. Cash is now charged with damaging an unmarked human burial.

**'He made a decision on his own that they weren't even positive human remains ... I don't think we were trying to do anything criminally negligent.'**

TOM McDONALD, Craven Thompson and Associates president

"It happened at 3 a.m.," said Tom McDonald, firm president. "I think he made a decision on his own that they weren't even positive human remains. We're embarrassed and apologetic, but I don't

think we were trying to do anything criminally negligent."

McDonald said his employees have never come across bones before. Company policy now requires anyone coming across any kind of bones to

report it immediately.

The Broward Medical Examiner's Office has the remains and will issue a report on them in the next few weeks.

A four-person committee, including a representative from the Seminole Tribe and one from the Miccosukee Tribe, will decide what to do with the remains.

One suggestion would be to bury the remains in nearby Indian Mound Park, near the site where the bones were found, said state archaeologist Jim Miller.