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Elephant trainer dies on the job

WOODLAND, Wash. (AP) — The trampled body of renowned elephant trainer Morgan Berry was pulled away from a bull elephant Wednesday, but authorities said it may never be known whether the animal caused his trainer's death.

The elephant, Tonga, had been picking up Morgan's body and tossing it around keeping officers at bay for more than seven hours, but he may have thought he was just playing with his owner, sheriff's deputies said.

Gary Waddell, chief criminal deputy for the Cowlitz County sheriff's office, said the 67-year-old Berry, who had a history of heart trouble, may have had a heart attack while working with the elephant.

Joe Wodaege, who lives near Berry's private animal farm in southwest Washington, said he and Kenneth Berry, the victim's son, managed to pull away the badly mangled body.

A second bull elephant, Thai, which had escaped through the farm's chain link fence, was shot with a tranquilizer gun about two kilometres from the farm.

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