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STATE, LOCAL

Experts on Constitutional law called in to help conflict panel

RICHMOND (AP) — A legislative panel studying conflict law is expected to call in two constitutional law experts to help it resolve a narrow conflict law in the least contentious constitutional provision.

The key for the two scholars was the conflict law's provision for those advisory panels in the Senate and House of Delegates. These advisory panels of distinguished citizens are called on to investigate ethics questions. The panel either clears the conduct in question or sends a recommendation for prosecution to the attorney general's office.

The existence of these panels is not in dispute. The question is whether the panels should be strictly defined. The Virginia Constitution allows legislation to prevent conflicts, but it also protects legislative speech or debate from outside prosecution.

Whiteford said he is inclined to believe the conflict statute is constitutional. It might be made stronger by having the advisory panels report to their respective chambers rather than go to the attorney general's office.

Leece, however, said the law needs to "jump through some procedural hoops" to justify outside prosecution. Where it raises the question of how a legislator voted, he said, it violates the speech or debate protection.

The subcommittee, headed by Sen. John C. Buchanan, D-Winchester, was appointed earlier this year after legislators complained they felt handicapped by the conflict law's vague language of what constituted a personal interest.

A number of lawmakers questioned whether a budget bill could be passed because that legislation includes salaries for General Assembly members.

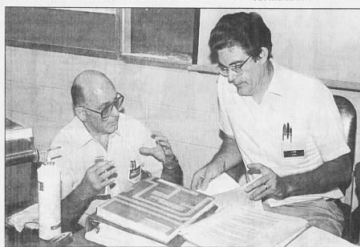
FBI doubts quick arrests in slayings

NORFOLK (AP) — Quick arrests are unlikely in the slayings of a College of William & Mary senior and another woman who were found with their throats slashed in a car off the Colonial Parkway, FBI and Tuesday.

"We're working like crazy. There's nothing new," said Waters, an FBI special agent in Norfolk. "We probably will not get a lead that will be an arrest warrant which we do not intend to wait."

Waters declined to release names of the slain women, Dowski, 21, a senior majoring in business management at William & Mary, and Catherine Marian Thomas, 27, a U.S. Naval Academy graduate who had just started a promising career as a stockbroker in Norfolk.

The two women, who were friends, were found dead in the back seat of a Buick. Thomas 21, a financial analyst with IBM Corp. in Atlanta, was FBI had the user's help.



Center. Officials from Remington Arms are visiting the center to learn how to set up apprenticeship programs in their state. (Photo by Jay Campbell)

Arkansas using WWRC as model

By CLAY CAMPBELL
FARGUESVILLE — Six Arkansas state government and industry officials are visiting Valley Vocational-Technical Center "to glean as much information as possible about the school's arrangements with area industry, according to reports of officials."

William Hartzell, a maintenance training coordinator with Remington Arms Co. of Cooke, Ark., said he and others are visiting the center to learn about multi-skilled training programs so they can set up similar courses in Arkansas.

"We're already doing some of this," Hartzell said, "but not to the degree we're satisfied with." Hartzell said his group is looking at course lists, scheduling, textbook lists and budgeting for the program.

County Planners recommend rezoning for housing tracts

By RICHARD MILLER
Staff Writer
The Augusta County Planning Commission voted 4-3 to recommend changing a 10-acre parcel of land in Va. 201 south of Staunton from an agricultural zone to one permitting residential estates.

The site was in favor of the change despite the objections of several adjacent land owners who wanted the land to remain in an agricultural zone.

The commission also recommended approval of a request by Lane D. Showler to rezone a 3.6-acre tract of land off U.S. 111 north of M. Showler from agricultural to business. Showler noted that the land has been used for business purposes in the past and said it Nov. 11.

Presidential advisory primary discussed by panel

RICHMOND (AP) — A bill that would set up a 1988 non-binding presidential primary in Virginia was discussed Tuesday by a General Assembly study panel and referred to a public hearing next month.

The suggestion was made before the Election Laws Study Committee last week by Sen. Hunter H. Andrew, D-Hampton, who introduced the bill. Andrew said such an advisory primary would be an outgrowth of legislation passed by the General Assembly earlier this year to hold party caucuses in early 1988 on presidential preference.

"We said that if other Southern states adopted the primary, several Southern states have had a proposal for a caucus or primary in March 1988. The idea is to bring a block of Southern delegates to national nominating conventions in support of our candidate."

Members of the study panel said political parties would not be required by law to establish delegate representation to the nominating conventions along the lines of the primary's results, but they probably would need to do so.

Sen. Fife Hays, secretary of the state Board of Elections, said the candidate's party committee also would need to set up a primary, even if the candidate's party does not want one. Such a primary would require a petition signed by 2,000 registered voters.

Earlier this month, U.S. District Judge Richard L. Williams upheld the results of an election in which M. J. Pagan lost by a straw of 101 votes to the Stafford County Board of Supervisors.

Homes damaged by tornadoes

NEWPORT NEWS (AP) — A powerful storm coupled with two tornadoes cut off a major highway along the region early Tuesday, damaging homes, businesses and knocking down trees and utility poles, officials said.

Harris Smith, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Richmond, said two tornadoes struck the southeastern part of the state between 7 a.m. and 8 a.m. on Tuesday.

The first tornado caused a large slide, tore three to four feet in diameter, to crash into a house owned by Bernard and Betty Tombs in Ceran, damaging half the house and killing one of the occupants, Smith said.

Tombs said the bedroom collapsed right in front of her when the roof came off. Her husband was asleep in the bedroom when the roof crashed through the ceiling, landing within feet of the bed.

The tornado continued north, knocking down trees and crushing traffic lights along U.S. 98 in South. A 100-ft. x 100-ft. second tornado passed through the Hopewell area, according to the Norfolk Weather Service. Smith said residents saw a funnel-shaped cloud over the building that houses the Hopewell News on East Haddock Road.

Hopewell News Editor Ed Wegel said the force of the tornado cracked the ceiling of the entry hallway into the building. If it had not been enclosed area, it would have done greater damage," Mr. Wegel said. "It's a miracle no one was in there at the time."

A Brunswick County family of five huddled in the corner of the kitchen as their two-story home was destroyed by the storm, Brunswick said. A back from a trucker's trailer which had been parked outside the house was taken over the roof.

About one dozen homes and barns were damaged in the county, where Brockwell estimated storm damage at \$1 million. The storm also cut off high winds, along rain and hail from Henry County across the Potomac and into Gloucester County.

A tornado funnel was reported in Iowa, but a National Weather Service official in Norfolk said there were only severe thunderstorms in that area.

District honors conservationists

Charlevoix, William Braunworth was presented the Forestry Conservation Award and Charlevoix of Charlevoix was presented the Moffitt's Creek Award.

The four men were selected for their "participation and achievements." Each was presented a plaque and two belts with the name of the individual program each was involved with.

McCasill summed up the achievements of the organization over the past year including the leading role the organization has played at Moffitt's Creek, where cooperative ventures for improved fencing, tree planting and water conservation have been organized.



McCasill (left) thanked all the members present for their participation in local control, including the reforestation of three dams in the area, and for the advances made in the Chesapeake Bay program, promoting a cleaner bay by improving water management in the local area, according to a press release, the Shenandoah Valley Council on a major thoroughway to the Potomac.

Free brochures list Christmas events in city

A wide variety of Christmas activities in Staunton is featured in the latest version of the "Christmas the Way You Remember It" brochure published by five area civic organizations.

This is the second year the brochure has been published, highlighting annual activities in the community. The season begins in November with Christmas workshops at the Staunton Fine Arts Center and ends Dec. 31 with open house for Woodrow Wilson's 100th anniversary at the Woodrow Wilson Birthplace.

The "Netherlands" holds "Christmas at the Mansion," and Woodrow Wilson's 100th anniversary Christmas home tour. Copies may be obtained at local banks, restaurants, and the Woodrow Wilson Birthplace.

For information on "Christmas the Way You Remember It," call the Shenandoah Valley Council on Arts and Culture at 853-2000.

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