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# Local & State

Middle Peninsula section C

## Reported threats against victim discounted

**By STEVEN WINGFIELD**  
Staff Writer

ISLE OF WIGHT — Investigators have discounted the reported death threat against the 20-year-old man, found dead Wednesday on Ragged Island with a 14-year-old girl, Sheriff B. F. Dixon said Friday.

The probe into the deaths of David Knobling of Hampton and Robin Edwards of Newport News has reached several dead ends, Dixon said. Forensic technicians returned Friday afternoon to the game preserve at the end of the James River bridge to again search for a weapon or spent cartridges near a walkway. Divers with metal detectors also searched the James without success this week.

"We don't have much. Less than nothing in fact," Dixon said. "What we had has proven out. We're just grabbing at straw."

He said agents with the State Police Bureau of Criminal In-

### Family mourns murdered man

**By CHRIS YOUNG**  
Staff Writer

NEWPORT NEWS — Karl Knobling was returning to his Briarfield Road home Friday afternoon when he saw his son's black Ford Ranger pickup sitting in the driveway.

"The thought in my mind: 'What's David doing here now?'" Karl recalled later.

But the realization came instantly. He had found his son's body washed up on the shore of the Ragged Island wildlife refuge on Wednesday.

Edwards, 14, was discovered by a beachcomber shortly before Karl found his 20-year-old son.

■ See Man, Page C2



Kathy and Karl Knobling in their home on Briarfield Road in Newport News. (Photo by SCOTT BARKLEY)

### City fights Va. Power over bids

#### NN sees threat to incinerator

**By BRUCE REID**  
Staff Writer

NEWPORT NEWS — The city has asked a state agency to prevent Virginia Power from working electricity from independent generators next month, claiming the state would harm the city's efforts to build a waste-to-energy plant.

Attorneys for the city petitioned the State Corporation Commission on Thursday to issue a temporary restraining order preventing the utility from soliciting bids for power from independent generators.

The request follows hearings this week before the commission involving a dispute over how much money Virginia Power should pay for electricity generated at Newport News' proposed waste incinerator.

SCC administrative procedures following the hearings mean a ruling is not expected before November, which is after Virginia Power plans to seek bids.

Doug Palais, an attorney for the city, said it would be unfair to allow the utility to seek the bids before a ruling.

If Virginia Power is allowed to solicit bids as planned in October, city officials say, Newport News could be prevented from obtaining energy payments to which it is entitled under state and federal regulations.

The city could lose as much as \$100 million in revenue from selling power to the utility, city officials say, and that could make the project too expensive for local taxpayers.

The city wants the commission to require Virginia Power to negotiate an energy contract involving the incinerator and set guidelines for the agreement.

"We intend to vigorously oppose this," Virginia Power spokesman Carl Bush said Friday. "This raises very serious concerns on our part about our ability to seek (generating) capacity that our customers vitally need."

The utility is relying on independent generators to meet a rising demand for electricity, he said.

Virginia Power broke off negotiations with the city in December, claiming that Newport News was asking for excessive energy payments that would be passed on to rate payers in the form of higher electricity bills. The utility wants the city to abide by general guidelines it established for buying independent power.

However, the city contends that the guidelines would not allow it to pay far payments for up to 18 megawatts of electricity generated by the waste incinerator. It also contends that Virginia Power's process of seeking bids from independent generators is illegal according to state and federal regulations.

Because millions of dollars are involved, city officials say, the outcome of the dispute could determine whether the incinerator is built.

The plant is planned to be the city's answer to a shortage of landfill space by reducing the volume of garbage. Up to 650 tons of garbage would be burned each day.



### Powwow

Chief Webster "Little Eagle" Casklow (left) of Upper Mattaponi and Chief William "Swift Eagle" Miles of the Pamunkey tribe converse on the steps of the Capitol building Friday after ceremonies to mark American Indian Day.

Honored at the ceremony were Chiefs Emeritus O. "Lone Eagle" Oliver Adkins, Charles City County; Tecumseh "Dearfoot" Cook, King William County; and Assistant Chief Emeritus Oliver L. Perry, Virginia Beach.

### Problems led to plan to shift chief

#### Council seeks 'more harmony'

**By MARK DAVIDSON**  
Staff Writer

FRAGORON — Management problems in the city Police Department were behind an effort to remove Chief John T. White from his position, city officials acknowledge.

"There are some administrative problems the city wants corrected," Councilman Gordon C. Hellet Jr. said Thursday. "We want to have, I think, more harmony in the Police Department."

Earlier this month, City Manager Robert M. Murphy asked White if he could be assistant to the city manager, a job the City Council created Aug. 8.

White declined the offer, saying he wants to remain chief. Afterward, the chief was directed to correct administrative problems in the department, council members say.

Until Thursday, officials would not say whether the manager's assistant job was created solely for White. But now, after White discussed his situation publicly, some councilmen say the majority of the council had expected to shift White to the new job in hopes of changing management in the police division.

Councilman H. Gray Forrest, who along with Hellet voted against creating the position, said the council is concerned about a lack of cooperation within the department.

"I don't think he (White) has the respect of the officers," Forrest said. "I do know morale in the Police Department is very low. Whose fault that is, I really don't know. I don't think it's only the chief's fault."

White acknowledged that morale is something he was working on, but said he does not think it is a "big problem." He said the lack of cooperation can be attributed partly to poor communication at the management level.

"Officers haven't had as much direction as they should have, perhaps from me," White said. The chief said he is formulating new policies giving the officers more guidance and attention, which he said would improve morale.

White said he would discuss details of the new management plan once he checks it with Murphy.

"I'm still here working on it right now," White said.

■ See Chief, Page C2

### Agency to test mills, effects from dioxin

**By MIKE FABRY**  
Staff Writer

The federal government will be testing and surveying every paper mill in the country that uses pulp chlorination to see what effect the mills' dioxin-laden products or discharges are having on the environment.

The tests will be done jointly by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the estimated 80 pulp and paper mills countrywide, EPA spokeswoman Priscilla Falters said Friday.

Spokesmen for two area paper mills, Chesapeake Corp. in West Point and Union Camp in Isle of Wight County, said they would begin testing their plants as soon as the advanced analysis methods were made more readily available.

These testing methods have been developed only in the past two years, said Kenneth R. Gilbreath, Chesapeake's manager of environment, safety and industrial health. Only two laboratories in the country — one in Ohio, the other in California — can do the testing.

The new methods measure levels of dioxin more than a thousand times more accurately than previous measurements. Dioxin is known to cause cancer in animals, although its effect in small doses on humans has not been determined.

The new measurements can record levels that would be comparable to one second in every 2,000 years.

A mill would have to produce about a million tons of paper products a year to accumulate one ounce of dioxin. Union Camp produces about 700,000 tons and Chesapeake's kraft products mill in West Point put out 546,000 tons in 1986.

■ See Dioxin, Page C2

### Fawn Hall suggested for spot on WAVY-TV

**By BILLY WARDEN**  
Staff Writer

From the ashes of the Iran-Contra hearings comes a staggering new question. Is Fawn Hall, Washington pen-and-ink prodigy and protégé of the discredited, coming to Norfolk's WAVY-TV 10 news to launch a career as television reporter?

"Not as far as I know," WAVY News Director Hal Levenson said Friday. "The William Morris Agency (Hall's legal representative) approached me last week to ask if WAVY would be open in principle to training Hall as a television reporter," Levenson said.

He said he would be interested because "it would be a unique experience for myself and the station to work with someone like that."

But he said the agency he would need to talk to Hall to determine her seriousness and level of commitment to being a television reporter.

As of now, Levenson noted, there are "no active discussions" to bring Hall to WAVY.

Training a reporter is not, according to Levenson, standard WAVY procedure. It would entail Hall learning the ins and outs of covering, shooting, writing and editing a story under the supervision of a senior reporter.

Levenson said he would not allow Hall on the air until her training had been completed, but he noted she "wouldn't train."

Levenson said Hall would not be sought as a ratings booster, as WAVY is already No. 1 in most of its news slots. He said William Morris had approached WAVY for several years. Hall wants to be close to her parents, who live in Richmond. WAVY is the "news leader in the market," and reporters broken in at WAVY often move up to larger markets.

He quickly dismissed charges leveled in USA Today by Christine Craft, former anchorwoman from Kansas City.

Craft cited the Hall-WAVY connection as an example of TV news' frequent reliance on "brainless beatnuts" to win ratings.