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Local & State

Middle Peninsula

section B

Father appeals for help to find son's killer

By NEIL CORNISH
Staff Writer

With police unable to turn up any leads in the murder last September of his son and a young girl, Karl Knobling is going directly to the community for help.

Knobling, along with family and friends, has put up about 100 reward posters in more than 100 area businesses in Newport News, Hampton, and Isle of Wight County since Friday. In addition, he said the Southland Corp. has agreed to distribute posters in its 7-Eleven stores.

"I don't care if I have to go to wherever to put them up," said Knobling, standing outside the South of the James grocery

store in Carrollton. "Leads are slow, and I'm hoping that this helps."

Police have been baffled thus far in solving the shooting deaths of 20-year-old David Knobling and 14-year-old Robin Edwards. The two were shot in the head Sept. 20 at the Staggs Island wildlife refuge. The bodies were found Sept. 23.

The investigation was hindered at the time by rain, which washed away any footprints that may have been recovered. A \$5,000 reward is being offered for information leading to the arrest of the killer.

"I feel their leads are really good," Knobling said.

"They lost so much in the length of time it took for them to find the body."

At the same time, he said he understood the problems facing police. "I know it's hard to come up with something when there's nothing there," he said.

Knobling said Monday he was starting a non-profit reward fund in conjunction with his current reward to increase the incentive for someone to come forward. "We want to make it more appealing for someone to talk," he said.

The public has been supportive so far, Knobling said, as many people have asked him what they can do to help. "It's 7-Eleven a guy was going to do

state \$5 right there," he said.

Knobling's wife, Kathy, said a local printing company was making the posters at cost, about 20 cents.

The couple got the idea to hang posters after watching a broadcast of The Oprah Winfrey Show dealing with families who were victims of seemingly unsolvable crimes, she said. "The show's guests said it was important to never let the case rest."

Robert Elam, one of the many family friends helping Knobling distribute posters, said business hours have been very responsive. He said that in addition to the store, friends are placing posters in their car windows "to make sure everyone sees it."



Knobling has one of the posters in his pickup truck.



Staff photo by JOHN WOODS
Chris Reid, 13 (left), and friend Chris Eakin, 14, talk after school Monday at Bayside Junior High.

Radio racial reports draw static

By BILLY WARDEN
and DON LOFF
Staff Writers

VIRGINIA REACH — A radio station that broadcast reports of impending racial violence at a Virginia Beach school last week apparently did nothing to jeopardize its federal license but its controversial handling of the affair continues to be criticized.

On Friday morning WNVZ-FM broadcast a claim from a listener that

it was "Klith Whitey Day" at Bayside Junior High School. For much of the next two hours the station's morning show announcer broadcast comments from listeners who identified themselves as students and parents from Bayside. Most complained about fighting, gangs and racial polarization at the school. The majority of the claims went unverified by the WNVZ announcer.

Popular with teen-agers, the "Morning Zoo" show broadcast re-

sulted in mass absenteeism and police cars sent to Bayside Friday afternoon to keep disorderly.

Although finding students was still a problem for school officials at Bayside on Monday, finding allies was not.

Mark Thomas dedicated his WREB-FM afternoon talk show, "Conversation," to a discussion of responsibility in broadcasting. He began with a quote from Adolf

Hitler: "I am not a pacifist, I am a realist."

Students who are excluded as a result of this procedure may be able to obtain homebound instruction.

However, School Superintendent James W. Goeth noted it's not always easy finding teachers willing to instruct students in their homes, even without the threat of AIDS.

The decision regarding an employee's status will be based on whether the employee is physically able to work and whether the employee is likely to expose others to the disease.

If it is decided the employee should not be present in school, he or she will

Middlesex schools adopt AIDS policy

Panel to advise on pupil exclusions

By MATHEW PAUST
Staff Writer

SALUDA — The Middlesex County School Board adopted a policy Monday night to deal with students and staff infected with AIDS.

Following a model used throughout the state, the policy provides for the creation of a standing committee composed of physicians and school administrators.

Students found to be infected are to be excluded from school until a decision is made by the school superintendent, based on a recommendation from the committee.

Employees with AIDS will be placed on sick leave pending a decision following the same procedure.

The superintendent's decision in any case may be appealed to the School Board.

be placed on sick leave. When sick leave is exhausted, the employee will be placed on disability retirement.

Cases of both students and employees found to have AIDS will be reviewed monthly, whether they remain in school or at home.

The AIDS policy was adopted early in what promised to be a marathon board meeting.

The longest segment of the meeting was scheduled for Goeth to explain the complicated new state formula for funding schools that has been proposed for approval by the General Assembly.

Goeth and other Middle Peninsula superintendents have estimated that although the state proposes to increase funding to schools, new policies required by the state will cost local districts more than the increased funding.

The board had scheduled a vote on one measure that would increase local school revenue slightly; a proposal to charter tuition to non-resident students who attend county schools.

The proposed tuition policy provides for the fee to be set annually.

Limitations on non-resident enrollment would be determined by class sizes according to state requirements.

These standards include:

- Kindergarten through third grade — 22 students per certified teacher.
- Fourth grade through seventh grade — 20 students per certified teacher.
- Eighth grade through 12th grade — 23 students, based on a full-time equivalent English teacher.

Parents fear for murder suspects' safety

By BOB EVANS
Staff Writer

WILLIAMSBURG — Two teenage boys charged with the Friday robbery and murder of a West Point store clerk were taken to separate detention centers Monday after their parents said they feared for the youths' safety.

The boys, a 15-year-old from New Kent County and a 16-year-old from King and Queen County, were brought to court here Monday for a detention hearing required by law for youths charged with crimes. The youths were apprehended Saturday afternoon.

Monday's hearings were closed to the public and reporters at the request of King William Commonwealth's Attorney Boyd Sears, who is expected to

prosecute the case.

Juvenile and Domestic Relations Judge Samuel Powell said after the hearing that the parents of both youths "indicated they were greatly concerned for their children's safety if they were to go home."

The parents apparently fear retribution from angry citizens of West Point, where 63-year-old Frank P. Wyatt was killed in the Port Richmond Hardware store. Wyatt, a well-known figure in West Point, had been a clerk at the store for over 40 years.

Powell set a hearing for March 23 in King William to determine whether to transfer the case from juvenile court and ask a Circuit Court grand jury to

prosecute the case.

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Pre-arrest travels of 2 youths traced

By MATHEW PAUST
Staff Writer

URBANA — The two youths charged with killing a West Point hardware store employee may have held up here before their arrest Saturday.

Middlesex County Sheriff Lewis Jones III said Monday he learned that a local youth received a call from a friend who asked for a ride out of town.

"The friend asked why, he said because he had 'killed' somebody," Jones said.

Jones thinks the caller was one of two youths who acted suspiciously Saturday morning at a local store.

Bobby Dickerson, owner of Green Front Grocery and Deli, said the two acted tired and nervous when they entered the store about 9 p.m.

"One was dressed in a black leather jacket, boots and jeans. The other one was shorter and sort of heavy set. He had a red face and red eyes. Looked bad," said Dickerson.

The youths bought a quart of milk and some potato chips and sat down to eat.

They said their car had broken down enroute from Richmond to Delafayette and that it had been towed to Urbana.

Mathews administrator Pleva pleads guilty to DUI charges

By KATHY BUTLER
Staff Writer

MATHEWS — County Administrator Frank A. Pleva pleaded guilty Monday to a charge of driving under the influence of alcohol.

Pleva's operator's license was suspended for six months, and he was assigned to the Alcohol Safety Action Program. He was given a restricted license to drive to and from ASAP and his work and on official work-related duties.

He was fined \$500, but he will have to pay only \$100 of that if he completes ASAP. He was given a 30-day jail sentence, which was suspended, also on the condition that he finish ASAP.

Pleva said the places he drives on county business might

include the landfill for inspections, meetings of various county boards and the Middle Peninsula Planning District Commission and Richmond for the General Assembly. General District Judge William T. Bareford said he would also be permitted to drive to his office on Saturdays if necessary.

Attorney Donald Bowman of Mathews said his client attended a party in the county and "simply consumed too much to drink, which he regrets."

"Officer (Larry W.) Stone was courteous and professional, and I have no problem with the way he conducted himself," Pleva said.

Pleva, 36, of Shadow, was stopped by Stone about 2:30 a.m. Jan. 24 near Poplar Grove on Route 14 after his car was weaving across the center line, according to the sheriff's department.

A breath test given later to Pleva indicated an alcohol level of 0.13. In Virginia, 0.10 is legal presumption of intoxication.



Family life
Jandra Cox, 17 (far right), and fellow students from Donohigh High address a General Assembly hearing on family life bills Monday in Richmond. See the virginian.com.