

B2 Daily Press, Thursday, Oct. 26, 1989

Body

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close to an identification of the dead woman late Tuesday, when the body characteristics seemed to match those of a missing Hampton woman, Stanley said. But the missing Hampton woman had a gold tooth, while the corresponding tooth in the New Kent body was not gold.

State Police also are looking back in their own records for abandoned vehicles reported in or towed from the area. The body was found about two miles by transportation department workers moving to the right of way of the westbound lanes, just west of the Route 106 exit.

Stanley said they are trying to identify the owner of a particular car found off Route 106, about a tenth of a mile from the interstate. "Whether that's significant or not, I don't know," he said.

Meanwhile, the parents of a missing Amelia County man say they are frustrated by the delays in determining whether their son's body was one of two found a week ago in New Kent, about 65 miles east of the site of Monday's discovery.

"It's getting worse every day," Margie Lauer said from her home.

On Oct. 18, hunters found two sets of skeletal remains in a heavily wooded area of New Kent off Route 106, which intersects 144 at the first exit east of the Route 106 exit. One of the bodies was that of 19-year-old Alismaria Phelps, the woman who had left Amelia with 21-year-old David Lauer for Virginia Beach on Sept. 4.

Despite extensive description, Phelps' body was readily identified through dental records kept locally. Lauer's only dental records were in New York, and were not enough for a positive identification.

Stanley said police are having problems getting other head X-rays from another doctor in New York and a hospital in Houston. Navy records were not helpful, he said.

"Yes, it is frustrating," Stanley said. "It's not on the surface hitting our case, but we'd like to get the identity of that second body."

The medical examiner also has not determined how the two people died, Stanley said.

Lauer's car was found Sept. 5, with the key in the ignition and the gas tank three-quarters full, in a rest area about two miles from where the first two bodies were found, 4 1/2 miles from the second discovery. Stanley said there is no evidence linking the two incidents.

Stanley said police have gotten several phone calls since the latest discovery, mostly from travelers who claim to have seen cars stopped along 144 at various times over the past few weeks, but none have resulted in solid leads.



Kids against drugs

Young residents of Aqueduct Apartments in Newport News march in support of drug-free lifestyles Wednesday as part of city-wide observances of Red Ribbon Week, an anti-drug campaign sponsored by Newport News Parents for a Drug Free Youth.

Parents sue Scouts, church

By PENNY BENDER Staff Writer

NORFOLK — The parents of two boys who were sexually molested by a Cub Scout leader sued the Boy Scouts of America and a Virginia Beach church that sponsored the scout troop on Wednesday.

The parents and their sons, listed in the lawsuit only by their initials, asked for \$20 million in punitive damages and compensation for the boy's medical expenses. The suit was filed in U.S. District Court.

The man responsible for molestating the boys, Eric "Ricky" Avant, is serving a 20-year prison sentence for sexually abusing nine boys ranging in age from 9 to 13. The two boys in the lawsuit were 9 and 10 when they were molested.

Avant pleaded guilty in January to 13 counts of molestation from 1985 to 1987. All the boys were members of the scout troop. The lawsuit alleges Avant also abused other children but those actions did not result in criminal charges.

Avant was convicted in 1979 of contributing to the delinquency of a minor, which was reduced from a money charge involving an 11-year-old child, the lawsuit said. Avant received a 15-month jail sentence, suspended on condition he seek psychiatric counseling.

Avant, the lawsuit alleged, was the scoutmaster of a troop sponsored by a Mennonite church in Virginia Beach. The lawsuit asserts that the Boy Scouts and the church did not adequately screen Avant, who was hired as scoutmaster in 1982, and ignored reports that boys were being abused by the man.

Both the church and the Boy Scouts held allegations that Avant was sexually molestating children and utilizing the scout program to do so, the lawsuit alleges.

The church is not named in the lawsuit. It lists the corporation of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Utah and the presiding bishop.

As a result of the molestation, the boys became "nack, neck, lame and disabled; they have suffered great physical pain, severe mental anguish and extreme emotional distress and will so suffer for a long time in the future," the lawsuit says. The suit asks for \$15 million for each son and \$5 million for their parents.

Indictment charges 9 with drug running

By PENNY BENDER Staff Writer

NORFOLK — Nine men from Chesapeake, Portsmouth, North Carolina and Florida were charged Wednesday with running a drug ring that distributed 175 pounds of cocaine and 600 pounds of marijuana throughout Hampton Roads.

A federal grand jury issued a 60-count indictment against the nine men Oct. 19, alleging that they distributed \$1.4 million in narcotics from March 1984 through this year.

In addition to criminal charges, the nine men and their families also face losing their homes, automobiles and other personal belongings. The government has filed a forfeiture charge, asking the court to take any items tied to the distribution of drugs.

The drug enterprise is related to the Oscar Smith drug ring, which operated from 1981 through 1988 and was considered the largest drug operation in Southeast Virginia.

"Some of these defendants were associated with Oscar Smith," who is serving prison time for drug convictions in Virginia and Texas, said Assistant U.S. Attorney Laura M. Everhart. She refused to say which defendants are linked to Smith.

Although the indictment is not mentioned in the indictment, "a lot of this cocaine ended up in Newport News and Hampton," the affidavit adds.

The indictment alleges that the drug organization shipped narcotics through Florida and Texas and sold them in Virginia and North Carolina.

Landfill on board agenda

KING WILLIAM — The board of Supervisors will meet at 7:30 tonight in the county administration building for the public hearing on Chesapeake Corp.'s conditional use application for an expansion of its Mann landfill.

The board will hear a request for funding for the West Point Airport study committee.

allow signs an additional 30 square feet to display gasoline prices on signs. County regulations now allow for a total of 22 square feet for each sign.

Benjamin Taylor of Montross, president of Virginia for a Balanced Budget Fund, will be heard for funding for the West Point Airport study committee.

A joint public hearing will be held with the Planning Commission to decide whether to

China

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two communist giants are reversed, Israel commented.

"It's an irony in 1989, when the Soviet Union is engaged in assuaging experiments, the U.S. is looking at China as a kind of international outlier, having just committed mass murder in its own capital city."

However, Israel referred to articles by Kissinger and Winston Lord, a former U.S. ambassador to Beijing, that suggest different ways to resume relations — economic, social and political — with China. Kissinger opposes taking any moral stance on the events of May on the grounds that the United States should not interfere in internal Chinese affairs, Israel said.

According to Lord, the United States should maintain diplomatic ties but observe a "cooling off" period to indicate disapproval.

Israel also said the current regime was faced with serious economic problems before the pro-democracy movement. "The people in power now are skating on very thin ice," he said. By retaining ambassadors and the framework of diplomacy erected since 1972, the United States can keep channels open, he added.

A group of about 50 peppered Israel with questions about the safety of travel in China and how the Chinese perceive the United States, among other topics. He said travelers in China would be safer than in "American Charlottesville."

Describing his delight at finding an article by a Chinese scholar that praised the writings of Thomas Jefferson, Israel quoted a song that goes, "Tell me, how many times have there more like you?"

The talk was part of BCC's Charlottesville lecture series on foreign policy.

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