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Local

Obituaries / Business C

Rabies epidemic spreads through Peninsula

By NANCY COOK
Staff Writer

A rabies epidemic that began at Virginia's western border 12 years ago has now spread at least as far as Newport News, with a rabid raccoon confirmed at Fort Eustis on Wednesday.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, Virginia had 360 animal rabies cases last year, ranking fourth nationwide behind Pennsylvania, Texas and

California.

"We're in the midst of a raccoon rabies outbreak. In addition to that, there is a portion of southwest Virginia that has an ongoing skunk outbreak," said Suzanne Jenkins, assistant state epidemiologist. "But in that the last rabies that happens everywhere, and I'm not surprised we're in the top.

"It spreads to at least six or eight new counties in Virginia

each year."

The epidemic has been creeping down the Peninsula since June 1988. Since then, there have been 35 animal rabies cases confirmed in James City County, York County and Williamsburg, and Paul Sandfort, sanitarian with the Peninsula Health Department. The cases included 25 raccoons, four skunks, five foms and one kitten.

The latest case was reported to the department Wednesday. Rabies was confirmed in a raccoon killed by a dog on Fort Eustis last week. The dog was given a booster shot for rabies and is now under observation for 90 days.

The Fort Eustis case was the first that far south on the Peninsula. "But at the rate it's been spreading, it's been more than

Top 5 states reporting animal rabies cases in 1988

1. Pennsylvania.....	643
2. Texas.....	454
3. California.....	402
4. Virginia.....	366
5. Maryland.....	339
6. Michigan.....	338

Source: Centers for Disease Control

Loggers help save the bay



Department of Forestry worker Mike Foreman surveys a Gloucester County logging site. Loggers are voluntarily protecting the environment to avoid regulations.

Lumber industry works to keep water clean

By MARK FELSENBAL
Staff Writer

GLouceSTER — As the Ashley brothers' truck pulls away from their logging site near Belts, 40 tons of truck and timber bump along a narrow dirt road.

Though the road is deeply rutted, Mike and Sonny Ashley, who run an independent logging business out of their home in King and Queen, have spent \$2,000 to maintain it with gravel and wooden mats. They are not required to

but do so as part of a statewide program recommended by the state Department of Forestry to protect the environment.

The voluntary practices are designed to protect water quality by stemming soil erosion on logging sites. By following the forestry recommendations, the logging industry escapes regulation under the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act.

Voluntary compliance achieves the same objectives at less cost, said James Garner, the state forester.

New logging businesses of all sizes are maintaining roads, putting bridges over culverts, and refraining from cutting most timber within 50 feet of streams. The goal is to prevent soil from running off the land and ending up in rivers and the bay.

A booklet put out by the Virginia Department of Forestry lists nine "best management practices" or BMPs. Loggers are advised to build zigzag roads rather than go straight up a hillside, to limit pesticide use and to leave buffer

zones between roads and next to streams, for example.

As it stands, foresters can issue a citation, like a parking ticket, only for debris left in stream beds. Foresters inspect logging sites several times and evaluate management practices and will warn woodsmen if they have not met standards.

To loggers like the Ashleys, following some of these BMPs costs money by eating into profits or causing them to

lose time.

■ Please see Deputies, C3

Sheriff finds ally in study

By RONNIE CROCKER
Staff Writer

YORK — Sheriff P.S. Williams says he hopes a new study indicating sheriff's departments statewide are understaffed will save the way for his plans to have at least two deputies on the road at all times in each of the county's three patrol districts.

The sheriff requested six additional deputies last year from the state Compensation Board, the agency that funds all officers established by the Virginia Constitution. The board refused the request. Williams, who says he had gotten accustomed to doing with less, was not surprised.

"At times, I think we're left out," he said this week.

The York County Sheriff's Department is the only one on the Peninsula that not only handles law enforcement, but also provides court security, operates a jail and serves all civil processes. The Board of Supervisors agreed last year to fund two officers with local tax revenue.

Williams said that with increases in drug-related and other crimes, he primarily needs more law-enforcement deputies. The department operates in five 10-hour shifts that overlap during times of peak activity, such as late afternoons on weekdays and late night on weekends.

For patrol purposes, the county is divided into three sections: the Tabb, Gratton and Williamsburg districts. Ideally, Williams said, he needs two deputies on the road in each of these districts. Currently, however, he says he is lucky to have five deputies in the entire

county.

■ Please see Deputies, C3

Cause of pair's death still mystery, parents say

By CHARLES CLARY
and RONNIE CROCKER
Staff Writers

The state medical examiner released the remains of Annamaria Phelps and Daniel Lauer to relatives Friday with no conclusion as to the cause of death, relatives said.

Jewel Phelps, Annamaria's mother, said the State Police learned there was a cut on Phelps' hand, but more specific details on the cause of death

were not available. Mrs. Phelps and Margie Lauer, Daniel's mother, were told the deaths were homicides.

The remains were released with the stipulation that they not be cremated, so the bodies could be examined later if needed, Margie Lauer said. Tom Stanley, head of the Richmond office of the state Bureau of Criminal Investigation, which is investigating the Lauer-Phelps case, could not be reached for

comment.

The skeletal remains of Daniel Lauer, 21, and Annamaria Phelps, 16, were discovered Oct. 19 in a heavily wooded area of New Kent County, about two miles from the Interstate 64 rest area where Lauer's car was found abandoned Sept. 5. Autopsies performed since the discovery yielded no conclusions about the cause of death.

The pair were on their way

home in Amelia County, southwest of Richmond, to Virginia Beach, where they shared an apartment with Lauer's brother, Clinton, 17.

The release of Phelps' remains brought a feeling of relief to the woman's mother.

"It'll be over for her," she said. "They've done enough with her."

Funeral arrangements for Phelps are being handled by Hillman His Funeral home in

Amelia. A funeral will be held at 11 a.m. Monday at Trinity Memorial Gardens on Route 600 in Prince Edward County.

Funeral arrangements for Lauer are pending until Margie Lauer exhausts efforts to have her son's remains cremated.

Lauer said the prohibition of cremation is a source of aggravation for herself and her husband, since steps had been taken to cremate their son's remains.



Newport News wants to sell Ferguson High School in Christopher Newport College for \$12 million.

School chief says Ferguson being offered too cheaply

By SEAN SOMERVILLE
Staff Writer

NEWPORT NEWS — City and school officials agree that Christopher Newport College should buy Ferguson High School, but disagree about the \$12 million price tag listed in the school capital-improvement plan.

If Ferguson weren't available, School Superintendent Donald S. Bruno said, CNC would spend far more than \$12 million for a similar 30-acre property. "I think the city should ask for more," he said.

City Manager Edgar Maroney said he thought \$12 million was a fair price because demand for the property is low and the city has a vested interest in seeing CNC expand.

CNC President Anthony R. Santoro declined to comment on the price, saying it is a matter that the city and state must hammer out.

Ferguson's acreage would make CNC's campus almost 50 percent larger. Its building would give the college 198,000 square feet of space for offices and classes, something Santoro

calls "instant building."

At \$12 million, the property would be cheaper and provide more space than CNC had hoped to add in the early 1990s.

CNC said the state last summer for \$13.3 million between 1990 and 1992 to pay for three new buildings with about 144,000 square feet.

Those include a \$6.2 million building with 59,700 square feet for classrooms and offices, a \$6.5 million building with 81,000 square feet for physical education and classes, something Santoro

■ Please see Price, C3

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