

B2 Daily Press, Wednesday, Nov. 29, 1989

Cutting wounds caused woman's death, tests show

By RONNIE CROCKER Staff Writer
ANAMERS Phelps, one of two Amelia County young people whose bodies were found in woods in New Kent County last month, died from one or more cuts or stab wounds, tests have concluded.

—Cutting wounds were the cause of death for the female, Robert Holloway, administrator for the Medical Examiner's Office in Richmond, said Tuesday. He said the exact nature of the fatal wound or wounds and what caused them, could not be determined. The manner of death was listed simply as a homicide.

Holloway said tests conducted at his office and the Smithsonian Institution were unable to determine how the other person, Daniel Lauer, was killed. Lauer's death also was listed as a homicide.

Dr. Marcella F. Pizzo, the medical examiner who performed the autopsies on Lauer and Phelps, said she did not know how many times Phelps had been cut. The woman's mother said Friday, the bodies were released for burial, that she was sure her daughter had a cut on her hand.

Phelps said she was aided in making her conclusion by forensic anthropologists at the Smithsonian Institution, but she declined to say what the latter investigation revealed.

She referred questions to the State Police, but an official there said he had not received a written report.



Phelps said Lauer was killed.



Phelps said she was aided in making her conclusion by forensic anthropologists at the Smithsonian Institution.

Heart ailment reportedly delaying Ledford's appeal

By DAVID CHERNICKY Staff Writer
NEWPORT NEWS — Maj. James D. Ledford's appeal of two charges that he lied and otherwise violated the department's misconduct standards in connection with the April shooting of his wife has been postponed indefinitely because of the officer's heart problems, police officials say.

Although Police Chief Jay A. Carey Jr. would not confirm the nature of a pending administrative hearing involving Ledford, he said the same health problems that are postponing that hearing might enable Ledford, 48, to leave the department with two-thirds of his \$65,360 annual salary before the hearing is over.

Ledford, who has declined comment, was Carey's executive assistant and one of the department's three highest-ranking officials when his 44-year-old wife, Carol A. Ledford, was shot in the abdomen at the couple's home in the Green Oaks subdivision on Aug. 12.

Ledford became the subject of criminal and police department internal investigations after the bullet from a .38-caliber revolver pierced Mrs. Ledford's liver. She spent nine days in the hospital and told police she had shot herself accidentally with her own gun, Carey said.

—After the shooting, Ledford complained of chest pain in the hospital. He has had a history of heart problems and had an operation several years ago to clear a clogged artery. Since the shooting, Ledford has continued to draw his full salary while on extended administrative leave, Carey said.

—Commonwealth's Attorney Willard M. Robinson Jr. said Sept. 19 that no charges would be brought in the case because there was no evidence to dispute Mrs. Ledford's claim that the shooting was accidental.

—According to a police official, who declined to be identified, the administrative hearing that led into the incident resulted in charges that Ledford lied to police investigators and had violated the department's standards for "unlawful or improper conduct." According to the department's disciplinary policy, unlawful or improper conduct involves "improper or negligent conduct on or off the job which adversely affects the employee's relationship to his job."



Maj. James D. Ledford has health problems.

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If Ledford files for long-term disability under Worker's Compensation and the Heart and Lung Bill, Soud said Ledford's salary would be paid out of the fourth lane in each direction, but the fifth lane in each direction was a true turn lane, proved too costly, Riggs said.

Sidewalks from NN to I-64 in plans for wider Mercury

By JOE BARNETT Staff Writer
HAMPTON — A street down Mercury Boulevard?

After the state finishes a \$9 million project to widen the road to eight lanes and do away with its service lanes, you'll be able to.

The state is planning to add sidewalks and grassy areas along the 2.5-mile stretch of the road between the Newport News line and Interstate 64. A similar project with a cost of \$8.7 million will widen the road to eight lanes from Armistead Avenue to King Street.

—Two-walked Mercury, confessed a young engineer at an informational meeting set up by the Virginia Department of Transportation at the Sheraton Inn, Coliseum Tuesday night.

—He said he's happy to see the service lanes go. "I find the road quite confusing," he said. But getting rid of the service lanes wasn't the first choice of the city's traffic engineer.

Lawrence C. Riggs Jr. said he would have preferred to keep service lanes and widen Mercury to six lanes, for a total of 10.

Road-gang work declines in Va.

PULASKI (AP) — State officials are concerned the burgeoning inmate population may become troublesome now that field units are expanding, inmate road crews are dwindling and work opportunities are lacking.

—Inmates who are in institutions with nothing to do have a tendency to think up things that cause trouble," said State Corrections Board member Archer B. Yeatts Jr. of Richmond.

—Virginia has spent an extra \$73,000 for roadside litter removal since Gov. Gerald R. Babbitt restricted the use of prisoners for highway work after an escapee murdered a woman.

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Foul play suspected in disappearance

SUFFOLK — Police suspect foul play in the disappearance of a 26-year-old city woman who was last seen Nov. 22.

Genetta Cheryl Williams of the 4800 block of Hardy Drive was reported missing after the brown Datsun 280Z, she was wearing a blue jean jacket, black jeans and a white blouse.

Noted Groups

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