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Newport News-Hampton, Virginia

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Senate approves welfare overhaul plan

Bill would shift power to states

The Senate passed sweeping legislation Tuesday to hand power over welfare programs to the states, including some provisions that might invite a veto from President Clinton.

gram and slash into food stamp and other federal programs that provide tens of billions of dollars a year in public aid to eligible families. It is supported by 23 Democrats and one Republican, Launch Parichon of North Carolina, who fell some elements of the bill were too liberal.

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Even if signed into law, the welfare reform package is unlikely to have any immediate effect in Virginia. A look at major provisions in the differing welfare bills passed by the House and Senate.

five years per family, and require recipients to accept work if offered after two years on welfare. The bills would cut welfare and food stamp benefits by roughly \$80 billion by

2002, compared with current law. Of that sum, food stamps and other federal nutrition programs (including school lunches) would be slashed about \$30 billion. The legislation also would deny a wide range of benefits — including welfare, disability and Medicaid — to legal immigrants, amounting to \$18 billion.

If Clinton signs a welfare reform bill, each state would be able to establish its own rules of eligibility and level of benefits. In earlier years, before the federal minimum standards were set, there were vast disparities from state to state on the amount of monthly support for poor fam-

ilies. A House-Senate committee will bring the two bills into agreement, and final approval of both houses is expected by Aug. 4, when Congress breaks for its summer recess before the presidential inauguration.

FBI looks for link in hiker deaths

Parkway slayings similar to Shenandoah case

Noting a "striking" number of similarities, FBI agents in Norfolk are probing whether the recent slaying of two female hikers in Shenandoah National Park are possibly connected to the murders of two women on the Colonial Parkway 10 years ago.

The October 1986 murders of Rebecca A. Dowski and Catherine M. Thomas became the first of four incidents FBI and state police investigators believe may involve a serial killer and that have been dubbed by the media as the Parkway Murders.

On June 1 of this year, veteran hikers Julianne Williams and Lillie Winans were found dead in a back-country campsite in the Shenandoah park.

"We are looking into it to see if they are connected," said Supervisory Agent Bo McFarland with the FBI's Norfolk office Tuesday.

Special Agent John Donahue, with the FBI office in Richmond, which is handling the Shenandoah investigation, said he knew of no specific investigation on his office's part, except that investigators have gone through the FBI database of murders to see if other similarities exist.

Other than what has already been released, Donahue would not elaborate on the specifics about the most recent murders, and McFarland declines to discuss the similarities in detail to protect the ongoing probe.

However, from what investigators have released about both double slayings, similarities include:

Thomas, a 21-year-old former college softball star and student at the College of William and Mary, and Dowski, a 27-year-old Virginia Beach stockbroker and Naval Academy graduate, were found strangled and with their throats slit.

Likewise, Julianne Williams, 24, of Burlington, Va., and Lillie Winans, 26, of Unity, Maine, were found with their throats slit.

In each case, the victims had been found at the scene. While the site had been removed from Thomas and Dowski, Williams and Winans were found still bound.

All four women were avid athletes.

The agony of victory

Spirited vault assures women gymnastic gold

All the toughness of a easy and solid gold American women's gymnastics team could be seen in the pain and joy on the face of Kerri Strug after a final vault on Tuesday that ended four decades of Russian dominance.

In what might be the defining moment of the 1996 Olympic Games, Strug — the last American athlete in the competition — dramatically sealed the first American women's team gold medal ever when she landed a costly perfect Yurchenko vault on a severely sprained ankle, sobbed the judges on one leg, then collapsed on the podium of the Georgia Dome.

As the judges posted the 9.72 score that guaranteed the gold medal over traditional powerhouses Russia and Romania, Strug was carried out of the arena on a stretcher — and into Olympic history.

"This is bigger than anybody can imagine," said Strug's coach, Bela Karolyi, who also tutored the great Nadia Comaneci and Mary Lou Retton. "That was high-performance, great athletes and great drama. That was sport."

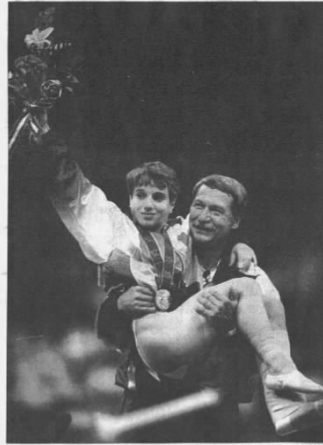
The drama was made greater because Strug sustained the injury minutes earlier on her first vault attempt. Her feet had slipped from underneath her, planting her on her seat and earning her a terrible 9.16 score.

"After the first vault, I heard a snap in my foot," Strug said. "I hurt a lot."

Yet the United States needed her to go again. Her teammate, 14-year-old Dominique Moceanu, had fallen twice on both her vault attempts, and suddenly the U.S. gold medal that seemed a sure thing just minutes earlier was in doubt.

The Russians had at least a statistical chance to steal it.

So Strug went again, had leg and all. "I knew that the gold was kind of slipping away," she said. "I said a little prayer, 'Please God, help me out here. I've done this thousands of times — just once.'"



U.S. gymnast Kerri Strug is carried from the medal stand by coach Bela Karolyi Tuesday after the women's team was awarded the team gold medal. Strug hurt her leg while landing during her vault routine.

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POOL PARTY U.S. swimmers continue domination in Atlanta by capturing six more medals Tuesday night.

TRUE GRIT The U.S. women were all magnificent, but it is Kerri Strug's courage we will remember. DAVE TEST, D1.

HOT SHOT U.S. shooter Kim Rhode takes gold in the women's double trap competition. DE.

DIG THIS Beach volleyball is reaching for the mainstream, and it took the most important step toward that aim when it debuted as Olympic event. DE.

INSECURE Head of Olympic security admits that the scurried experts "did not work" when an armed man sneaked into the main stadium before Friday's opening ceremony. DE.

Early tests on jet parts produce no clues

Salvage effort continues; more bodies recovered

Tests of chemicals on some sections of the wrecked plane came up inconclusive, although the FBI sent two pieces to its lab in Washington for further tests.

"They don't know whether it's (bomb) chemical residue or gun," one federal law enforcement official said, speaking on condition of anonymity. "They're not expecting very much out of the material currently on hand. But they're expecting to get more material."

In other developments:

Penetration analysts have found no sign on radar tapes or high-altitude photographs of a missile or anything else that might have brought down the jumbo jet.

Three more bodies were recovered, bringing the number of recovered bodies to 10.

The Navy dispatched the Norfolk-based USS Oak Hill, one of the newest amphibious ships, to the crash site to aid in the recovery.

Working over target areas mapped out by sonar equipment, scores of divers searched in the silt kicked up by their own movements Tuesday. To complicate matters, sharks had been seen in the area.

Divers believe 60 to 100 more bodies are under the debris. New York Gov. George Pataki said: "There's a very big chunk of plane on the floor and there are bodies caught within that wreckage," Pataki said.

A portable testing device at the scene initially suggested there might be chemical bomb residues on a piece of wing, but that machine is designed for only the roughest initial screening and is known to display false positives, sources said.

"Nobody would rely on it alone without the full testing," said a federal official in Washington, speaking on condition of anonymity. No traces of explosives have been confirmed in FBI lab tests of the wing fragment, other wreckage or bodies through Tuesday evening.

Two new pieces of plane debris were shipped to the FBI laboratory Tuesday, but it could take until Thursday for sophisticated tests to determine whether or not they contain bomb residue.

Besides the plane debris, material from autopsies was being sent to Washington.

Weather: Partly cloudy. High 92, low 70. Details, B10.

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