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Local section B

Jailhouse boast led to charge in 10-year-old murder

By ANDY MCCORMICK Staff Writer

LANCASTER — The trial of a county man accused of murdering a United Airlines pilot and his wife began Monday — almost 10 years after the bodies were discovered near here.

Gary Logan Lanford, 30, was arrested in October and charged with the murder of Dale Wiley Rogers and his wife, Charlotte Faye Rogers, after he supposedly boasted about the crime to inmates while being held on other charges, according to Commonwealth's Attorney C. Jeffers Schmidt Jr.

Rogers' body was found in the kitchen of the couple's isolated home off Route 913 near the Corotoman River. Mrs. Rogers' body was found in the bathroom. Both had been shot in

the back of the head with a shotgun about 7 p.m. Feb. 27, 1976. The bodies were discovered the next afternoon when the couple's daughter returned home.

During opening arguments, Schmidt told jurors Lanford had been in and out of jail in the last 10 years and had boasted to other inmates about the crime, giving them vivid, detail-filled descriptions of the crime scene.

But defense attorney Dennis W. Dohal said Lanford had made up stories about the crime because he was scared of his cellmates and needed to show them he was "tough."

"If you are not tough and do not act tough, you are in big trouble in a jail," Dohal said.

Testimony is expected today from

former cellmates of Lanford, who has also been a patient at two state psychiatric hospitals, according to testimony. Dohal argued that Lanford's mental instability was shown in a bizarre letter he wrote in 1978 in which he described a vision of two clouds in the form of graves. Because of the letter's incoherence, Dohal said it was open to any interpretation and should not be allowed as evidence.

But Schmidt successfully argued that the letter, which Lanford mailed to a neighbor of the slain couple, had "multiple relevance" to the case.

Lanford wrote that "Dale and Char showed me in the clouds that I pray it is on film... I can still picture it perfectly in my mind."

It expresses him seeing a murdered

couple in the sky," said Schmidt, adding that Lanford also had painted a scene similar to that of the couple's house on the night of the murder.

Former Lancaster sheriff's investigator Cameron L. Forrester, who handled the case until he resigned in 1979, testified that 200 people had been interviewed about the crime in 1978, including Lanford, whose parents lived near the Rogers couple.

Forrester said Rogers, 49, was cooking dinner and his wife was bathing when they were shot. There were no signs of forced entry and investigators had not positively identified fingerprints found in the house or the couple's car, which was found a few miles away, he said.

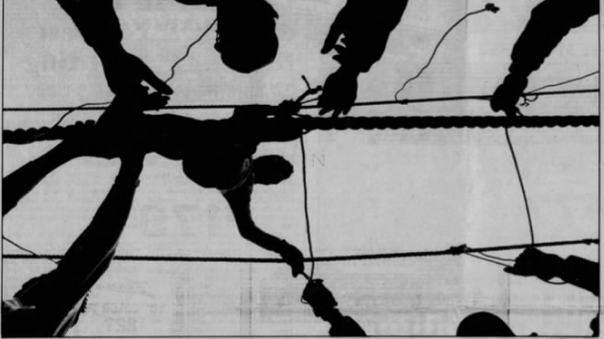
Myron Schuler, a specialist in identifying hair and fibers, said he

could not positively match a sample of Lanford's hair taken in 1965 with similar-colored hairs found on the clothes of the Rogers couple.

On the night of the shootings, Lanford was playing cards with friends, and was able to provide details about the slaying during jailhouse boasting only because investigators had mistakenly shown him pictures in a "desperate attempt to get a confession," according to Dohal.

Lanford also is charged with breaking into and entering the victims' home with intent to commit murder, rape or robbery; stealing the couple's Volkswagen; and using a gun during a crime.

The trial, presided over by Circuit Court Judge Dixon H. Potter, is expected to conclude today.



Support troop
Inlow Scouts and leaders help build a "monkey bridge" (viewed from beneath) as Andy Riddle, 16, walks across. Andy, a Boy Scout in

Troop 303 in Newport News, has done a "monkey bridge, a rope bridge hung between wooden sup-

ports, was part of a celebration Saturday at Port Arthur restaurant on Warwick Boulevard in honor of the 76th birthday of scouting.

Keep on fighting landfill disposals, citizens tell board

Emergency ordinances OK'd

By STEWART MACINNIS Staff Writer

RING AND QUEEN — The county Board of Supervisors must continue to prevent the disposal of Philadelphia's waste in a private landfill, a citizens group told the board Monday night.

"The citizens give you a vote of confidence," said Kenneth Euhank. "You've done a good job in the last 30 days. We ask you to continue to fight and don't stop 'til you stop it entirely."

The group, Concerned Citizens of King and Queen County, is opposed to the operation of a private landfill near Millers Tavern where the ash of incinerated trash from Philadelphia was being buried.

About 50 people were present at Monday's meeting, many of them expressing their support of the supervisors' efforts, which continued during the meeting.

The supervisors had won a 30-day injunction last month to halt the operation. The injunction was upheld by the Virginia Supreme Court of Appeals last week. Monday, the board adopted

two emergency ordinances after a 30-minute closed session.

One authorized the county to establish and regulate landfills. It allows only county residents to use landfills, prohibits the disposal of commercial or industrial waste without the approval of the county administrator and prohibits the disposal of hazardous materials.

The second ordinance permits the county to regulate the stockpiling of tires. It was adopted in apparent response to a fire at a tire disposal area near Walkerton.

It requires that tires be placed in piles of no more than 1,000, with earthen berms around each pile.

Owners of existing tire stockpiles must submit a fire control plan to the county within six months. Owners of facilities that open in the future must submit a fire control plan two months before the facility opens.

Both emergency ordinances took effect at 12:01 a.m. today and must be re-enacted within 60 days to be permanent. They call for fines of \$100 to \$1,000 per day for violations. ■ See Inspection, Page B4

Supervisors deny 'encroaching' charge

By BETH BURELL Staff Writer

YORK — The dispute between the Yorktown Trustees and county supervisors over the Yorktown Beach that alternately heats up and simmers is boiling over a controversial letter written by Sen. William Fears, D-Accomac.

The sentence sparking the controversy states: "The Board of Supervisors of York County and the Federal Park Service are encroaching upon certain lands in the Town of Yorktown, and are attempting to commercially develop, expand the beach and generally interfere with the operation of the Town of Yorktown to conflict with the desires of the trustees of the Town of Yorktown."

Members of the Board of Supervisors say the contents of the letter, accusing the county of commercially developing the

beach, misrepresent their position.

"Two members of the trustees allege there has been encroachment, and I just want to find out if it's true," Fears said from his Richmond legislative office. "My wording was poor. But that's what I was told."

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Both Benjamin M. Rush Jr.,

chairman of the Board of Supervisors, and Richard Maeder, director of the Colonial National Historic Park of the federal Park Service, call the wording misleading.

"I don't mind telling you I am extremely upset about it, and I think I speak for the board," said Rush, who called Fears to rely his anger. "I really wish they (Fears and the trustees) had met with us before it went this far. There's nothing of any substance to the allegations."

In fact, Rush said, supervisors added provisions to the county's zoning ordinance this year to protect Yorktown, including the beach.

"It sounds as if we're trying to develop the recreational area down there, and that's simply

Condo proposal withdrawn

By STEWART MACINNIS Staff Writer

SALLIDA — A proposal to build 40 condominiums on Sturgeon Creek in Delvistown, which was scheduled to be discussed Monday night by the Middlesex County Board of Zoning Appeals, has been withdrawn.

It is expected to be filed in a slightly different form to be heard by the Planning Commission.

Richmond developer Arthur S. McGinnis declined to say why the application for the development was withdrawn. The zoning appeals board meeting was cancelled as a result.

Another condominium project, which was planned for Wilton Creek, was turned down by the zoning appeals board Thursday, despite apparent support from the Planning Commission. Zoning Administrator Jerry L. Davis said he expects developers for that project also to file an application to be heard by the commission.

The Delvistown project is planned for a 13.9-acre tract along Route 712 and facing Sturgeon Creek. A pier and 40 boat slips are planned for the development. ■ See Zoning, Page B4

Shuttle fund enters final week

By JAY HANCOCK Staff Writer

So far \$124,477 has been contributed to the Daily Press Shuttle Fund, a special drive to help the 11 children of the crew of the space shuttle Challenger.

The biggest drive will run through Saturday.

All money, a list of local donors and the amount contributed will be sent to the Space Shuttle Children's Fund being handled by American Security Bank in Washington.

The Daily Press started the fund to allow readers to show their community ties to the space program. NASA's Langley Research Center was the site of the early days of the astronaut program in the 1950s. Langley continues to be involved with the space program.

Donations may be mailed or brought to any of the following newspaper offices:

• 7505 Warwick Blvd., Newport News 23607	• 137 N. Kings Way, Hampton 23669
• 104 Bypass Road, Williamsburg 23185	• 2306 S. Church St., Smithfield 23381
• Suffolk Plaza, North Main Street, Suffolk 23434	• 415, 420, 425, 430, 435, 440, 445, 450, 455, 460, 465, 470, 475, 480, 485, 490, 495, 500, 505, 510, 515, 520, 525, 530, 535, 540, 545, 550, 555, 560, 565, 570, 575, 580, 585, 590, 595, 600, 605, 610, 615, 620, 625, 630, 635, 640, 645, 650, 655, 660, 665, 670, 675, 680, 685, 690, 695, 700, 705, 710, 715, 720, 725, 730, 735, 740, 745, 750, 755, 760, 765, 770, 775, 780, 785, 790, 795, 800, 805, 810, 815, 820, 825, 830, 835, 840, 845, 850, 855, 860, 865, 870, 875, 880, 885, 890, 895, 900, 905, 910, 915, 920, 925, 930, 935, 940, 945, 950, 955, 960, 965, 970, 975, 980, 985, 990, 995, 1000

Overdue space experiments may get to come home early

By JAY HANCOCK Staff Writer

HAMPTON — Disruption of the space shuttle schedule caused by last month's fatal accident might result in the early retrieval of an orbiting experiment rack that has been stranded for months in space.

The Long Duration Exposure Facility, or LDEF, was supposed to be plucked out of the void and stowed in the shuttle's cargo bay in September. Managers now think there's a small chance it could be hooked on a mission in June, which NASA officials say is the earliest possible time for resumption of shuttle flights.

More likely, though, is the possibility that fetching the experiment rack will be delayed along with most other shuttle missions.

"There are a lot of scenarios being worked on right now and they run the gamut," said Bill Kinard, chief scientist for the experiments at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's Langley Research Center. "We could be retrieving LDEF next time, or it could slip six or 12 months."

"There's absolutely nothing yet to indicate what would happen," he said.

Many of the rack's 57 experiments already have suffered from previous retrieval delays.

Kinard said probably none of the current schedule uncertainties would have a significant effect on results.

"If we're talking about a retrieval plus or minus six months of September, it won't make a great deal of difference," he

said. "We have taken a great deal of degradation already, and what damage was going to occur has already occurred."

The experiments, set up to analyze the space environment and gauge its effects on various early substances, were designed to stay in orbit for a year.

But the rack has been in space now for almost two years, and officials think the extra exposure has seriously harmed about half the tests.

In some experiments, materials samples are expected to have disintegrated, leaving nothing to study. In others, batteries will have run out or measuring devices overexposed.

All other things being equal, though, the government, industry and university scientists who