



PHOTO BY KEN CEDNO/ KRT CAMPUS

A white sheet, lower left, shields the body of a woman who was shot in the head in the parking lot of a Home Depot on Monday night in Falls Church, Va. Officials have connected the killing to the string of murders in the Washington, D.C., area attributed to a sniper.

Sniper

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responsible for the Washington-area shootings.

Investigators who combed the area outside the Ponderosa finished their search Sunday but said little about what, if anything, they had found.

Some witnesses said they heard a shot coming from a wooded area near the restaurant, but nobody reported seeing the shooter.

If the shooting is linked to the sniper attacks, it would be the first weekend attack and the farthest the sniper has traveled - about 85 miles south of Washington.

The longest previous distance from the Washington area was Spotsylvania County, about 50 miles south of Washington. It would also break the longest lull between shootings, about five days.

Former FBI profiler Clinton Van Zandt said Saturday's shooting, if related, could show the killer's approach is changing in response to law enforcement tactics. For instance, reports last week that military surveillance planes would be used in the Washington suburbs probably prompted the sniper to move farther away, he said.

And since much had been

made about the weekend lulls, "I think he reacted to that," Van Zandt said.

The most recent confirmed sniper attack was the Monday night slaying of FBI analyst Linda Franklin outside a Home Depot store in Falls Church, Va.

Residents were on edge in Ashland, a town of about 6,500. At the Virginia Center Commons mall, about seven miles from the shooting, a normally busy food court sat half-empty Sunday. Shopper Nancy Elrod said she almost had been too afraid to come.

"We certainly felt sorry about all the people up north who were nervous and now it's down here and we're nervous too," said Elrod, 45.

Police said the victim of Saturday's shooting, whose name was not released, and his wife were traveling and stopped in Ashland for gas and food. His wife told authorities the shot sounded like a car backfiring and said her husband took about three steps before collapsing.

The victim underwent surgery for three hours Saturday night at Medical College of Virginia Hospitals in Richmond, Lopley said.

Doctors had to remove part of the man's stomach, half of his pancreas and his spleen, said Dr. Rao Ivatury, the hospital's director of trauma and critical care. The man was conscious but unable to talk because he was on a

ventilator.

"The prognosis is still guarded, but since he is a very healthy man and he is very young, the chances are fair to good, I would say," Ivatury said.

Authorities in Maryland, meanwhile, continued testing a shell casing found in a white rental truck to determine if it could be linked to the sniper attacks. Police said it would be at least Monday before they could announce whether the casing is connected to the shootings.

A source close to the investigation, however, said Sunday that "it has nothing to do with this case." The source, speaking on condition of anonymity, would not confirm reports that the shell was .30-caliber, a different size from the sniper's bullets, but said: "It's got caliber problems, it's got age problems."

The shell casing was found in a car seized at a rental agency near Dulles International Airport in Virginia, authorities said.

AP Writer Stephen Manning in Rockville, Md., contributed to this report.

STATE

S.C. Supreme Court to rule on bar hours

CHARLESTON (AP) — The state Supreme Court will take last call for Charleston's bars when it hears oral arguments Wednesday in a case over who gets to decide when liquor-selling businesses have to call it a night.

The earlier closing time took effect in early 2001, but a lower court sided with the bars several months later, ruling that the state, not municipalities, has the right to regulate bars' hours.

The city appealed, and now the case goes to the Supreme Court.

While awaiting the high court's ruling, the city's bars have returned to serving spirits past the 2 a.m. deadline, but say they never have recovered from the brief prohibition.

State law allows bars to remain open and serve beer and wine 24 hours a day during the week. Hours are restricted on weekends to limit alcohol sales on Sundays.

Man hunting for sniper is arrested

FLORENCE (AP) — A Laurens man who claimed he was on his way to Washington, D.C., to hunt down the area's deadly sniper has been charged with possession of unlawful weapons.

James S. Bloodworth, 50, was overheard by employees in a fast-food restaurant here saying he was going to capture the gunman, said Florence County Sheriff's Capt. Todd Tucker.

"The statements (Bloodworth) made obviously alarmed the staff members, who in turn notified the sheriff's office," Tucker said.

When deputies responded to the McDonald's at Interstate 95 and state Highway 327, they said they found Bloodworth locked in the cab of his pickup truck. After coaxing the man out, deputies said they found four guns in a search of the truck.

NATION

Pentagon will train Saddam's enemies

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Pentagon will train thousands of opponents of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein to help in a possible invasion, under an order signed by President Bush, U.S. officials said Saturday.

Former Iraqi military officials are among more than 1,000 men the Defense Department already has vetted for training in combat and other skills, said the officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

The Pentagon also is looking at the names of more possible recruits, all recommended by the Iraqi National Congress, a London-based group of exiled opponents to the government that Bush wants to overthrow.

The first phase of training could begin next month under a presidential directive Bush signed this month, allowing the Pentagon to use \$92 million for the program, the officials said.

White House and Pentagon spokesmen declined comment.

Bush says he has not definitely decided to use military force to achieve his goal of "regime change" in Iraq.

D.C. police charged with illegal search

WASHINGTON (AP) — The American Civil Liberties Union has filed an improper search lawsuit against the Washington, D.C., police department on behalf of Mitchell Fernandors, a D.C. resident who is accusing police of violating him during a routine body search in which an officer allegedly used his hand to examine the Fernandors' rectal region.

The type of search is common, according to Arthur Spitzer, the legal director of the ACLU in the national area. Fernandors contacted the agency believing it was wrong, and "after checking with a number of people [the ACLU] concluded it was a problem," Spitzer said.

WORLD

Bomb in Philippines goes off near shrine

ZAMBOANGA, PHILIPPINES (AP) — A bomb on a parked bicycle exploded near a crowded Roman Catholic shrine Sunday in the southern Philippines, killing a soldier and injuring 18 people. It was the fifth bombing this month.

The blast demolished stalls selling food, candles and other religious items outside the historical site of Fort Pilar in Zamboanga, a predominantly Christian port city about 530 miles south of Manila. The ground was splattered with blood.

Zamboanga was the target of twin blasts that tore through two department stores last week. Investigators have yet to find or arrest those behind those explosions, which killed seven people and injured more than 150.

Sunday's bomb was concealed in either a box or a tin can and placed on a bicycle, witnesses said. The bicycle was parked near a gate to Fort Pilar - a complex that includes century-old remains of a Spanish fort, a shrine to the Virgin Mary and an open-air worship area where Mass is celebrated.

Saddam clears out prisons across Iraq

CAIRO, EGYPT (AP) — Iraqi President Saddam Hussein reached out to his people Sunday, issuing a decree meant to empty his jails of everyone from pickpockets to political prisoners.

Inmates were seen streaming out of Iraqi prisons carrying their belongings in plastic shopping bags and some chanting: "We sacrifice our blood and souls for Saddam."

U.S. officials dismissed it as a ploy to rally domestic and international support.

"They better watch out where the next door is that puts them right back in jail. I mean, this is typical of this man's use of human beings for these political purposes of his," Secretary of State Colin Powell said Sunday.

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