



# the Seahawk



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## Students get involved with local shelter

**BARBARA TWIGG**  
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

October is National Domestic Violence Awareness month, and UNCW has already been involved in working for the cause.

The object of an October calendar designation is to keep the offense in the public eye. This month is a time for the community to mourn the loss of victims, recognize brave survivors, and celebrate progress being made, according to the Wilmington Domestic Violence Shelter and Services, Inc.

The local domestic violence office, located at 2901 Market St., is called Open Gate.

During the UNCW school year, there are usually two to four students interning at Open Gate.

Heather Patterson, shelter direct services and outreach director, said the UNCW interns are social work or psychology majors. She said there are now two social studies interns, Beverley Jordan and Angie Nguyen and psychology intern, Lauren Stephenson.

"They're very helpful here and we

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## Raise your awareness during Domestic Violence Month



Heather Curtis / THE SEAHAWK

Senior Laura Stephenson lights and holds a candle at the "Take Back the Night March and Rally" in remembrance of abuse victims. She is one of many UNCW students interning at Open Gate, the domestic violence office on Market Street in Wilmington.

**BARBARA TWIGG**  
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

Despite the high number of domestic violence cases, Wilmington Domestic Violence Shelter and Services, Inc. is the only such shelter in New Hanover County.

Its statistics indicate that domestic crime locally is on the rise. "Our agency figures for the first six months of 2004 indicate there is an 18 percent increase in the number of victims we serviced over 2003," said Angel Funk, the shelter's Outreach Coordinator and Advocate.

Last year the Wilmington agency served 1,116 people, 879 women, 17 men and 220 children, according to agency figures. The non-profit center is funded by city, county and state grants, local fundraising and private donations.

Although the definition of domestic violence is often very broad, including sexual assault or dating abuse, the local agency defines it this way: "Domestic violence occurs between intimate partners, current or past, and generally takes place at home," Funk said.

Wilmington Domestic Violence Service, which began in 1986, quotes FBI statistics estimating that

one out of two women will be physically abused by men with whom they live.

The local domestic violence office is located at 2901 Market St. called Open Gate, it is a visible, welcome-looking frame house with brightly colored doors hung with floral wreaths.

As the Open Gate name is meant to indicate, the shelter and services are open to all, without discrimination and without judgment.

"Everyone who needs our help is welcome here," said agency Director of Development and Operations, Kitty Yerkes. "Our services are free. We don't require any health insurance, Medicaid or Medicare. We don't want to put up any barriers."

Yerkes emphasized that most of the people served did not stay at the overnight shelter they provide, but rather took part in other programs, such as counseling, support and empowerment groups.

In 2003 she said 99 women, 96 children and two men stayed overnight, some of them returning many times. The shelter is at an undisclosed location in Wilmington.

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## Help UNCW officially name the school mascot, the Seahawk

**BEN WIMMER**  
STAFF WRITER

The University of North Carolina at Wilmington will be holding a contest for students to pick an official name for the school mascot, the Seahawk. The student who comes up with the winning name will receive a gift certificate to the campus bookstore for \$150. The contest will consist of two rounds. In the first

round, students will think up creative names for the Seahawk and enter them by replying to an e-mail sent to all students' UNCW e-mail accounts. Entries must be received by Monday October 25th, 2004. A committee made up of representatives of the five branches sponsoring the event will pick the top ten entries. These will be announced in an upcoming edition of the Seahawk

and sent out to students via e-mail.

In round two of the contest, students will vote on the top ten names selected by the committee. These votes will also be entered by replying to the second e-mail sent to all students. The entries must be received by Monday November 8th, 2004. The winning name will be announced in the November 18th edition of the Seahawk along with the

winning student's name. In the case of a tie there will be a drawing to determine which student wins the \$150 gift certificate. The five campus departments sponsoring the event include University Relations, Athletics, SGA, the Campus Bookstore, and Student Media.

*"It's up to the student body, and I think it's well worth the vote. Hopefully it will instill more school spirit."*

—the Seahawk mascot in an interview Sept. 30 with Ben Wimmer, Staff Writer



Nicole Smith / THE SEAHAWK



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