

Tragedy Strikes University Community

SUSPECT

FROM PAGE 1

"The first two incidents set a perception about him that he was off the deep end," the student said.

Williamson's mother, Fonda, said she was shocked to learn Thursday that her son was involved in the shootings. She said she last spoke with him Jan. 12 when he was home in Clyde for Winter Break.

"We're as baffled as to how this could have happened as anyone else," she said in a telephone interview from her home in western North Carolina.

When asked if her son had been having problems recently, she said: "He'd been somewhat stressed. But all law students are under stress."

"We've always had a good rapport. He has always been a very satisfactory son, a good student, an all-around good person until this happened."

Fonda Williamson, who lives with her husband, said they were discussing coming to Chapel Hill. "We haven't yet decided whether to come," she said.

The pending warrants for her son's arrest on two counts of first-degree murder came as a total shock to Fonda Williamson. "We're somewhat stunned," she said. "He's always been a sociable guy with a bunch of friends."

But law school classmates of Wendell Williamson portrayed him as a loner with few friends. Williamson graduated from UNC with honors in English in 1990.

Law student Mark Bibbs said Thursday that he sat next to Williamson in a family law class last semester but had spoken casually to Williamson.

"He was a very quiet individual from what I could tell. He kept to himself," Bibbs said. "He didn't engage in class discussions when I was there."

Third-year law student James Coblin said he often saw Williamson at bars and thought he was always pleasant to talk to.

"He's a nice guy for all I know of him," Coblin said. "He was definitely a loner-type person."

Williamson often wore an army jacket or fatigue clothing, Coblin added.

"I would never have thought of this him," he said. "He wasn't the normal kind of law school guy. He definitely had something strange about him."

Williamson lived alone at 103-M Rock Creek Apartments in Carrboro. A neighbor said she had only spoken a few times with Williamson in the 2 1/2 years the two had lived in the same building.

"He hasn't been around a lot recently. I've barely seen him in months," the neighbor said. "I probably said 'hi' to him less than five times, and he's lived here as long as I have. And I've been here 2 1/2 years. I've probably told him to be quiet, like, twice. Then he played (guitar) at 3 o'clock in the morning like two days in a row, and I wasn't going to get up at 3 o'clock in the morning, so I filed a formal complaint."

The neighbor said she had a friend who Williamson might have had a romantic interest in but had had difficulty talking to in person. "He didn't harass her," the neighbor said. "He called her a couple of times, but he would never talk to her in public, really. He seemed too shy. We would all be out there, because a lot of us were friends, and he would walk by and not say anything. Then as soon as we'd all go back to our apartments and she'd go back to her apartment, he'd call her. So he had to be



Officials load Kevin Reichardt's body into an ambulance on Henderson Street about 4 p.m. Thursday. Reichardt, a sophomore lacrosse player from Riva, Md., was found between an off-white Chevy Cavalier and a silver Acura Integra in front of the Phi Mu annex at 215 Henderson St.

DTH/KATE CANNON

SHOOTING

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watching us out there." Women in the law school said that at times Williamson had made them uncomfortable by staring.

"It didn't come as a complete surprise to any of us," said one third-year law student who spoke on condition of anonymity. "He didn't hurt anyone at the law school, but he struck us as someone who was on the edge. He would stare at several women, and I know for a fact some of them felt very uncomfortable about it. People eventually had to go to the dean about it."

Professors and deans at the law school acknowledged Thursday that Williamson was enrolled in the law school, but they said they had no other comment.

Students said they rarely saw Williamson at the law school this semester, but another third-year student who spoke anonymously said she had seen him the previous two days on Franklin Street. On Wednesday, he was in Brueggers Bagel Bakery and had a blank stare, she said. The student also said she had often seen Williamson at Henderson Street Bar & Grill and at Linda's Bar & Grill.

In law classes, the student rarely participated, she said.

"He always sat in the back row, and he always passed when he was called on," the law student said. "I don't think he felt comfortable talking. He just seemed not to be a part of the whole process."

Thanassis Cambaris and Kelly Ryan contributed to this article.

he and Bob Epting tackled and disarmed the gunman.

Chapel Hill police Chief Ralph Pendergraph said the police had no motive for the shootings. "We don't have to deal with these things too often in our lives," he said. "The one thing we have a difficult time doing is trying to make any logic out of things like this. I think we all agree what happened was not something that any reasonable person can understand."

According to witnesses, the gunman began walking south on Henderson Street just before 2 p.m. He opened fire on pedestrians and automobiles. The first victim, a man, fell in front of 302 Henderson St.

Reichardt was the gunman's next target. Witnesses said Reichardt was traveling south when the gunman began firing at him. According to witnesses, Reichardt jumped from his bicycle and attempted to flee. The gunman then shot Reichardt again in front of the Phi Mu sorority annex at 215 Henderson St., witnesses said.

"I didn't actually see him (Reichardt) go down," said April Coble, a senior from Angier. "I heard shots, and my roommate said she saw a man with a gun ... (the people) next door had seen the guy (Reichardt) get shot."

People on the street said they began to run for cover when they heard the shots and saw the rifle.

"He actually shot at me three times,"

said Mallory Reeves, a junior from Selma, Ala. "I was riding down Henderson Street on my bike and at that little alleyway, I saw him walking (south toward Franklin Street). He was holding a big, brown rifle — holding it down at his waist. When I saw him, he veered around into a shooting position, and I jumped off my bike and ran."

Pendergraph said the gunman was using a 30.06 World War II-type rifle. He said the gunman did not have any other weapons with him. Witnesses said the gunman was also carrying a bag full of ammunition that he used to reload the rifle several times. Several people estimated that he fired more than 30 shots during the seven-minute incident.

"I heard around 40 shots," said David Jones, a bartender at Henderson Street Bar & Grill. "He was on the corner of Rosemary and Henderson firing off six to eight shots at a time. He first shot at a Coors truck. The driver got out and ran away."

After Reichardt was shot, Stephenson had turned south onto Henderson Street from Rosemary Street when the gunman fired into her car at point-blank range. The car swerved onto the curb and hit a parking meter. Witnesses reported that Chapel Hill police officers began returning fire from underneath a tree on the southwest corner of Henderson and Franklin streets.

"I heard gunshots, the cops were coming to the corner and returning fire," said Lenny Williams, a Pizza Inn employee who witnessed the shootings. "People were running everywhere. It was complete madness."

Pendergraph said that while Williamson was being treated for two gunshot wounds to his legs, he could not confirm that an officer had returned fire resulting in the wound. "There is an SBI investigation of all officer-involved shootings, and I'll get a report as soon as they get through."

Pendergraph said several officers were already in the area because hearings were in progress at the District Court on the corner of Franklin and Henderson streets. "I don't know the number of officers who were under fire, but there were a significant number of officers," he said.

Gunshots hit at least five civilian vehicles and several buildings during the incident. Another two police cars had their back windows shattered, and shots hit the post office building.

After shooting in the direction of the post office, witnesses said, the gunman backtracked and ended up behind the dental offices of Dr. Celeste Hunter Sloop on the east corner of Rosemary and Henderson streets. At that point, Leone made his move.

Officials immediately blocked off Rosemary, Henderson and Franklin streets. All roads were cleared by 8:30 p.m. Dr. Robert Thompson, chief state medical examiner, said autopsies would be performed this morning. Pendergraph said the arraignment would take place when the suspect was physically able to appear in court.

Wendy Goodman, Edward Marshall and Kelly Ryan contributed to this article.

REICHARDT

FROM PAGE 1

That's how the 1995 North Carolina lacrosse media guide profiled Kevin Eric Reichardt, a sophomore midfielder with virtually his whole life and career ahead of him. The Riva, Md., native, who turned 20 on Jan. 20, lost the opportunity to excel in sports and beyond when a gunman shot and killed him and another man Thursday afternoon on Henderson Street.

"This is a terrible and senseless tragedy that is impossible to understand," said UNC Director of Athletics John Swofford in a statement late Thursday night. "Our thoughts and prayers are with the families of both victims, especially the Reichardts. It is a tragic loss for them."

"This is a horrible loss for the Carolina athletic family and a terrible blow to Kevin's lacrosse teammates. He will certainly be missed."

Swofford said Reichardt exemplified the term "student-athlete." "He was a Dean's List student and had been selected to represent the lacrosse team on the Athletic Director's Student-Athlete Advisory Council," he said in his statement.

Reichardt's death was not confirmed until late Thursday night because he had been mistakenly identified by police, said UNC Dean of Students Fred Schroeder.

Reichardt was riding his bicycle on Henderson Street when he was initially shot near the Phi Mu sorority house. The gunman, according to witnesses, shot Reichardt once more after he crossed the street.

One teammate said that when Reichardt didn't show up for practice Thursday, the team "didn't think about it, but after (practice) we thought about it more and more."

Around 5:30 p.m., the team received word that Reichardt was not a victim but was instead thought to be a witness to the shooting. Later that night, several lacrosse players went to the police station on Airport Road when they put three clues together: Reichardt was missing, his bike shoes were missing, and they saw on television shoes similar to a pair owned by their teammate on a shooting victim lying on the ground on Henderson Street.

At about 11:30 p.m., after the police contacted Reichardt's parents, Schroeder released his name.

The 6-foot-2, 185-pound Reichardt, a business administration major, often wore Air Jordans for games on artificial turf. He scored four goals and one assist and won almost 53 percent of his 38 faceoffs in his freshman season last spring.

Reichardt went to St. Mary's High School, where he played four years of lacrosse and two years each of basketball and soccer. He was a co-captain on all those teams as a senior. He is survived by his parents, Karl and Carol Reichardt.

Jacson Lowe and Ryan Thornburg contributed to this article.

LEONE

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was being interviewed by the State Bureau of Investigation. He seemed calm but tired. He had on a hospital shirt, a visible bandage across his left shoulder, gym shorts and a Virginia baseball hat.

"I've felt better, but all things considered, I feel fine," he said.

His actions probably saved lives and led to the apprehension of the gunman by police.

"It was not bravery, it was stupidity," Leone said. "I don't know why I did it."

Leone is an industrial relations major from Moorestown, N.J. He joined the Marines, with whom he served in Desert Storm, after high school to earn money for college.

His actions didn't come as a surprise to many who know him. According to friends, he is outgoing and has a good heart.

"I could see him doing that," said Chris Pierson, a friend and bartender at Tammany Hall. "He's one of the nicest guys I know."

Leone's roommate agreed that this was typical of his personality and said he was not surprised either.

"He is a very brave guy and is willing to do anything for anyone," said the roommate, Todd Butler. "He has a real big heart."

When asked if he considered himself a hero, Leone responded: "Not at all — I'm just happy to know that I saved lives."

Erica Beshears contributed to this article.



Onlookers at a residence near the scene of the shootings watch as Reichardt's body is loaded into an ambulance.

DTH/CRAIG JONES

SORORITY

FROM PAGE 1

said. "He was crawling away (after being shot once) screaming 'Oh God.' He was hiding behind a car and was shot again."

The body was lying on the southbound lane in front of the annex at 215 Henderson St. between a white Chevy Cavalier and a silver Acura Integra. A brown mountain bike lay on its side across Henderson Street.

Another man was found shot to death three houses down on the east side of the road.

The Phi Mu house was damaged in the shootings. The gunman apparently fired once through the wooden front door of the annex, leaving a small bullet resting beside two pink chairs in the lounge. Also, at the main house, the gunman shot a hole through a window, seriously damaging a computer terminal in the computer room.

Other women in the house who heard gunshots were shaken up.

"I was in my bed napping, and I heard a noise which I thought was firecrackers," said Julie Puckett, a member of Phi Mu. "I looked out the window and saw people running in the yard."

Many of the women in the sorority spent the afternoon calling worried parents who had seen accounts of the shootings on national television.

Stephanie Vojvoda, state director of Phi Mu, said plans were being made to aid the UNC chapter, but she declined to comment further on the matter.

Ron Binder, UNC director of Greek affairs; Nathan Berolzheimer, a clinical social worker at Student Health Service; and John Edgerly, director of the University Counseling Center, visited the sorority late Thursday to offer comfort and explain the services open to the women at the University.

"I'm just amazed by the level of caring in that sorority," Binder said. "These are the times that try brotherhood and sister-

hood the most." In the coming days, a variety of services will be open for students who are having a hard time dealing with the shock.

At 3 p.m. today in the second floor of SHS, a support group will be held for students suffering from distress.

If services students want are unavailable at certain times, they can go to the first floor of SHS and speak to a psychologist.

"The important thing is to have a place to express feelings and just talk about what thoughts and feelings are going through them," said Dr. Kathy Ney, associate director of Student Psychological Services. "We're simply shocked and stunned. We've cleared out our schedules to arrange times with students."

Edgerly said the road to recovery from such shocking events varied in length, adding that talking about the situation is recommended.

"It will be a while," he said. "This is a shocker, there's no question about it."

Reactions

"This is a terrible and senseless tragedy that is impossible to understand. Our thoughts and prayers are with the families of both victims."

John Swofford

"I had a friend who was standing behind Silent Sam, and when he and all the students around him heard the shots, they all hit the ground."

Jennifer Harrelson

"We banned him from our bar. We didn't want him in there because he's weird and talked to his beer."

John Lauby, talking about the suspect

"He shot at me and was about 20 feet from me ... I just kept running and dodging between the cars."

Mallory Reeves



Chapel Hill police Chief Ralph Pendergraph and Chapel Hill Mayor Ken Broun respond to questions posed by the media Thursday evening. Broun said that the incident was a tragedy but that it could have happened anywhere.

DTH/SHELLEY MARTIN