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School copes in aftermath of girl's death

Students wrote messages of support for the family of Laura Ashley Williams.

BY MICHAEL KANAREK ASSISTANT CITY EDITOR

The day after tragedy struck Grey Culbreth Middle School, officials are trying to minimize the impact that the incident will have on students.

Laura Ashley Williams, a 13-year-old seventh-grader at the school, died Monday afternoon after shooting her-self in a school bathroom. Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools officials said Tuesday that Williams

Visitation with

family of Laura

Tonight

7 p.m. - 9 p.m.

Walker's Funeral

Home,

120 W. Franklin St.

enrolled at the school Oct. 1 and was a member of

the school's Quiz Bowl team. Hill Chapel police spokes-

voman Jane Cousins said the only information

currently available in the case was that Williams' injury was self-inflicted and that she used a family member's handgun.

The school sent home a letter with each student to | School officials basic stand behind give basic information security policies See Page 3 about the case and to outline

the support system that is in place for students and families.

Jim Huegerich, supervisor of crisis counseling for the Chapel Hill Police Department, said they were trying to create a "safety structure" for the stu-

The focus of the day was to make the day as normal as possible," he said. Huegerich said the incident was

more personalized for the children because it happened at school. "It makes school a less safe place to be in their minds," he said.

More than 60 professionals were on campus Tuesday to help counsel children and teachers, and more than 200 people — one-third of the entire school sought counseling today, he said. Huegerich said said officials did have

some fear of "copycats" and were keeping an eye on some students.

We have identified some students who are high-risk," he said.

Sherron Leplin, coordinator of exceptional education and students services for the school system, said they were helping children feel safe psychologically, physically and emotionally. a very healthy environment,"

she said The kids in the school wrote cards and poetry of support, which were

SEE SHOOTING, PAGE 7

Mother on a mission



Civil rights activist Willena Cannon is currently fighting to release her son, Kwame, from prison. Kwame Cannon was given two consecutive life terms for six counts of burglary

"I've always want-ed justice, and they showed me a way that I could actually fight for Justice From that beginning, she has been organiz-

'63," she said.

BY BRADY DENNIS

ASSISTANT STATE & NATIONAL EDITOR

Willena Cannon has never been the type of person to sit and watch life pass her by.

Since the 1960s, she has spent most of her waking hours working, as she puts it, to erase injustice anywhere she sees it. She worked in the civil rights and labor rights movements in

Greensboro. "I was actually part of the sit-ins On the trail

Greensboro Releigt

of

ing ever since, to the point where she became a known activist in the Greensboro community by the 1970s.

by.

She was instru-

mental in organiz-ing a protest against a 1979 Ku Klux Klan march in Greensboro, a march she now calls the "1979 massacre." During the heated conflict, a shooting broke out, leaving five demon dead at the hands of the KKK.

Cannon saw each offender go to court and be acquitted.

Life was not easy for her following the Greensboro march. Because she had helped organize the protest of the rally, Greensboro residents were afraid

to be in her company. "After '79, I was really blacklisted

SEE MOTHER, PAGE 7

Group says laptop plan limits 'computer freedom'

Some UNC faculty have formed People for **Computational Freedom.**

BY PAUL HOBSON

STAFF WRITER All is not quiet on the technological

front. Several faculty members have orga-nized People for Computational Freedom to protest the administration's handling of the Carolina Computing Initiative

The initiative will require all fresh-men to have laptops in 2000 and all stu-

GHTING

for a future

dents to have them by 2004. Financial aid will be available for students in need. Morehead Planetarium Assistant Educator Michael Neece, who helped form the group, said he feared UNC would limit freedom of choice in com-

initiative but didn't approve of UNC's choosing a PC vendor to provide all

who formed the group about two weeks

"We're not anti- anything, just pro-freedom of choice.

There's definitely room for more than one platform on this campus.

MICHAEL NEECE Morehead Planetarium employee

-40 ago with pediatrics research technician Jackie Kylander, said the University

should not proceed on a PC-only basis, as the initiative stated it would. "There's definitely room for more than one platform on this campus," he said.

Neece said the initiative could ultimately cost everyone a lot of money. "University departments have invest-ed great gobs of money in computer sys-tems," he said. Neece said many stu-dents and faculty didn't use PCs.

DTH/CARA BRICKMAN

But Student Body President Mo Nathan said the initiative would not restrict what type of computers students used

Nathan said the University would not continue to buy Macintosh computers for general computeristics, such as word processing and using the Internet in computer labs, but it would for pro-grams or departments that needed them. It's uncertain whether current

machines will be phased out, he said.

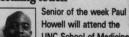
Nathan said many classes and departments needed non-PC systems like UNIX and Macintosh and would continue to use them under the initia

People for Computational Freedom hopes to organize its platform and spread interest at a meeting Thursday at 11:45 a.m. at Silent Sam. Nathan said he would attend the

Nathan said he would attend the meeting to hear the group's opinions. "I don't believe I agree with them, but I need to hear what they have to say," he said. Academic Technology & Networking Executive Director John Oberlin said he had not heard of the new group but said he supresend dia new group but said he supported dia-logue on the computing initiative.







Sixteen percent of Chapel

Another woman, who also asked that her name not be used, sits outside the

puting "I've heard great rumors about the University limiting us to a single vendor for computers," he said. Neece said the group supported the

computers to incoming freshmen. "We're not anti- anything, just profreedom of choice," he said. Planetarium worker Drew Gilmore,

Hill's population currently lives below the poverty line.

BY SHELLEY LEVINE STAFE WRITER

The word "poor" can mean many things to many people. It's an adjective, a noun and, according to many, a problem in Chapel Hill.

For Lendale McCall and Ethelene Drew, being "poor" means they can only visit their 6-month-old daughter once a week because she lives with her grandmother. It means they sleep on benches and collect money on Franklin Street, just trying to get by. Gerald, who asked that his last name

not be used, doesn't lack education or experience. He is "poor" because one felony conviction keeps him from finding work. He takes advantage of programs at the homeless shelter and spends his days distributing resumes and searching for a job so he can be independent again.

n't "poor" until her mother died recently, leaving her and her two children on the streets of Durham. Today her children are being taken care of in Durham, and has come to Chapel Hill to look for work

"(March 25) was the first night I had to spend outside," she said. The federal government defines "poor" in Chapel Hill as earning less than \$21,926 to support a family of four. This figure is higher than in many other towns in the area because of the high cost of living in Chapel Hill, according to information from the Orange County Economic Development Commission. Sixteen percent of the population of Chapel Hill lives below the poverty line,

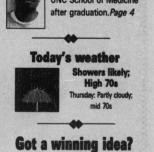
and those in the worst economic condi-tion are the homeless.

No one knows the exact number of homeless people living in town on a par-ticular day. A continuous shift of home-

SEE POOR, PAGE 5



Lendale McColl and Warren Steele sit on their usual bench on Franklin Street. McColl collects change from passersby, and he said that people in Chapel Hill seem friendly.



Do you want to see your story or photo-essay published in the Daily Tar Heel? If so, apply for the Joanna Howell Fund Award. The award honors the memory of Joanna Howell, a DTH editorial writer who was killed in the Phi Gamma Delta fire in 1996.

Camma Defta fire in 1996. To apply, turn in a detailed, typed, double-spaced story proposal of no more than five pages, no later than Friday. If you have any questions, call 962-0245.

