

Safety Group Targets Area Schools

Local elementary students participated in the first of a series of seminars teaching the essentials of fire safety.

By SABINE HIRSCHAUER
Staff Writer

Second-graders from Mary Scroggs Elementary School fidgeted in their chairs Tuesday morning as they anxiously awaited a safety presentation from the Chapel Hill Fire Department. The newly founded Orange County Risk Watch group kicked off a series of safety seminars for second-graders at Scroggs and Glenwood Elementary Schools with the fire and burn prevention program.

The teaching program is part of a nationwide injury prevention curriculum for children in preschool through eighth grade.

Jim Bona, a local firefighter and a coordinator for the group, said he saw a need for safety awareness within the Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools.

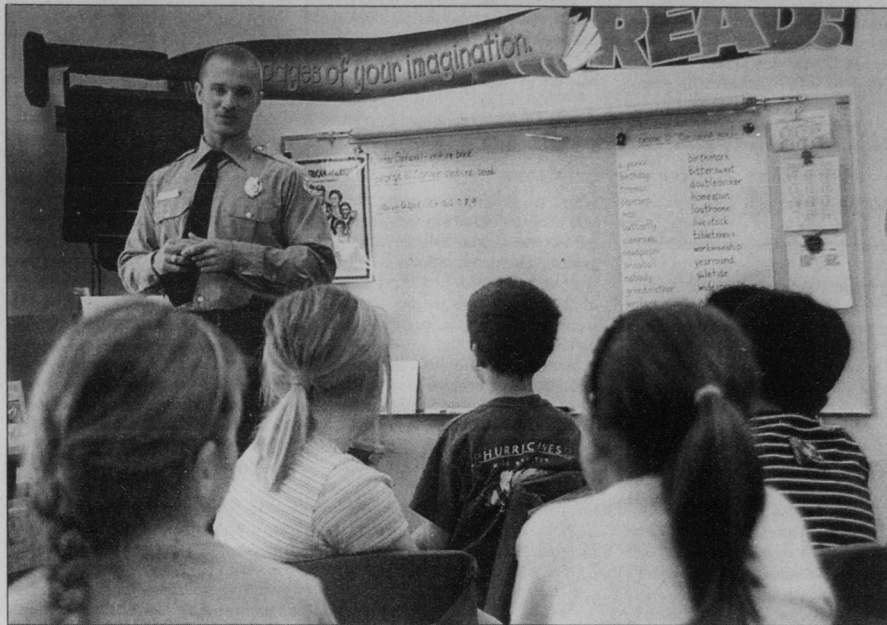
"We met with all elementary (school) principals and asked Mary Scroggs and Glenwood Elementary School to become our two pilot schools for the program," he said.

Firefighters quizzed the children on safety procedures and what to do in an emergency. After showing a safety video and talking with the children, Bona surprised the children and assigned homework.

"I want all of you to go home, make an escape plan, find two ways to get out of every room and tell your teacher tomorrow about it," he said.

Bona said unintentional injuries killed and disabled more children than kidnapping, drugs and disease combined.

"The National Fire Protection



Firefighter Mike Ward talks to second-graders about burn prevention at Mary Scroggs Elementary School as part of the Risk Watch program, which kicked off Tuesday morning.

Association researched unintentional injuries as the number one health risk for any school-age children today," he said.

This year the group is planning seven similar events addressing safety issues, including presentations on motor vehicle safety, poisoning and firearm injury prevention.

"The motor vehicle safety as well as the firearm injury prevention program will be taught by the local police department," Bona said. "But we are looking to other local outside agencies to teach

some of these seminars."

Bona said the group wanted the children to receive hands-on, practical prevention information.

"We want them to play detective in their own house, to look for possible fire hazards, look for electric heaters, fireplaces and smoke detectors," he said. "We want them to be aware of a danger and how to call for help."

Carol Hubbard, another program coordinator, said it would be integrated into other classroom curriculum.

"The program is designed to be very

teacher-friendly and incorporates into the classes writing assignments on issues which have been discussed during the lecture," she said.

Paula McCarthy, principal of Mary Scroggs Elementary School, said the school was excited to be the pilot school for the program.

"We think it is very important for children to learn early on about home, school and personal safety."

The City Editor can be reached at citydesk@unc.edu.

Ariz. to Introduce Online Voting Sites

The Department of Justice ruled that Internet votes in the March 11 Democratic Primary will be binding.

By WORTH CIVILS AND KRISTIAN KORDULA
Staff Writers

Voters in Arizona's upcoming Democratic primary will be able to cast ballots online, after a landmark U.S. Department of Justice ruling that will make Internet votes legally binding for the first time.

But the decision is being challenged by an organization that claims allowing online voting discriminates against poor and minority voters who do not have Web access.

Cortland Copeland, the Ariz. Democratic Party's interim executive director, said the party hoped online voting would bring more people into the election. "In 1996, 12,800 people voted in our primary," Copeland said. "This year, we'll see a total of 75,000 people."

We think the increase in voter turnout will be extraordinary."

Arizona residents who utilize traditional polling sites will vote on March 11, while online voters will be voting at home from March 7-10.

The extended voting period for online voters has some groups, such as the Voters Integrity Project, worried about discrimination against citizens who do not have Internet access.

The Virginia-based nonprofit group filed a discrimination lawsuit against the Ariz. Democratic Party in January.

VIP President Deborah Phillips said last week that the group would appeal the decision, based on a strong warning from the judge that decided the case.

"(The judge) said in the strongest possible language that the voting process would be followed very closely to ensure fairness," Phillips said. "We're filing a suit today to appeal the decision in the 9th federal circuit court."

Phillips said she was optimistic about getting the decision overturned. But Copeland denied that the online voting would discriminate against those who lacked Internet access.

"(The Ariz. Democratic Party) worked with the Intertribal Council, Arizona's chapter of the (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People) and state legislators within minority communities to ensure that all citizens of the state will have voting access," he said.

Copeland said the Ariz. Democratic Party promised the justice department it would increase polling sites in minority areas to ensure fairness.

Christine DiBartolo, spokeswoman for the justice department's voting section, said all changes in the voting process required the Justice Department's approval.

Arizona's Democratic Party recently sent a letter to the Justice Department requesting to use online voting.

While the department ruled that Arizona could use online voting, it reserved the right take legal action if it found any minority groups were adversely impacted.

Scott Falmlen, the N.C. Democratic Party's executive director, said online voting was not too many years away for North Carolina.

"I think it's a good idea," Falmlen said. "You

have to take steps and precautions to make sure of security and access, but if you can resolve these issues, (online voting) is probably the wave of the future."

But for now, Arizona will set the example for North Carolina and other states across the nation, Copeland said.

"(Arizona) will have the eyes of the world upon us on March 11."

"(The judge) said ... that the voting process would be followed very closely to ensure fairness."

DEBORAH PHILLIPS
Voters Integrity Project President

The State & National Editor can be reached at stntdesk@unc.edu.

Senator Warns Students About Alcohol

By BROOKE ROSEMAN
Staff Writer

A state senator who was the guest speaker at Students Against Destructive Decisions panel Tuesday night urged University students not to let their underage friends drink.

Roy Cooper, D-Nash, majority leader of the N.C. Senate, was among a panel of experts who addressed a group of about 50 students and members of the community.

"I know and you know that any one of you, no matter how old, can buy alcohol in this town or this state," Cooper said. "We've got to take personal responsibility as a community."

Other panelists at the event included University Police Maj. Jeff McCracken, Chapel Hill police Maj. Gregg Jarvies, N.C. Highway Patrol Sgt. Phil Wadsworth and Greg Dail, president of

the Triangle chapter of Mothers Against Drunk Driving.

Cooper said he was not reprimanding alcohol use but rather warning students not to use it excessively.

"I am not here to criticize alcohol in and of itself; I am here to criticize the tolerance of the overuse of alcohol," he said. "Excessive drinking destroys communities in many ways."

He said people ages 21 to 24 accounted for the largest number of drunk driving arrests. "In North Carolina now, repeat offenders - if we catch them - go to jail and lose their car and first-time offenders can do jail time," Cooper said.

He said North Carolina was one of the toughest states in the nation when prosecuting repeat offenders but that sentences should not stop there.

"Being the toughest in the nation isn't enough if it doesn't take care of the problem," Cooper said. "We need to

stop those repeat offenders by putting them in prison."

One audience member asked the panel whether some form of identification could be used to help law enforcement locate repeat drunken driving offenders.

Cooper suggested identifying offenders by a tag on their license plate.

"I think this would be a great opportunity to publicly scrutinize repeat offenders," Wadsworth said.

But Jarvies said he did not necessarily agree. "Tags may make for lazy law enforcement officers."

Jarvies said Chapel Hill police only did six driving while intoxicated checkpoints a year. "We don't want to preach to people that they should refrain from drinking and driving; that should be common sense," he said.

He also said UNC students did not make up a large amount of those who were charged with a DWI last year.

"It's not too common that you pick up a DWI from a checkpoint in Chapel Hill. Most of the 500 per year do not come from UNC students."

The University Editor can be reached at udesk@unc.edu.

Want a wide horizon of money-making possibilities?

WORK AT HOME
SET YOUR OWN HOURS
EARN \$15-\$40 PER TEST QUESTION

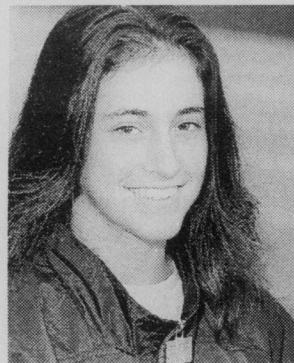
Measurement Incorporated of Durham, NC is recruiting high school test item writers for science specialties needed include: biology, chemistry, physics, geology, environmental chemistry, atmospheric/ocean physics and astronomy. Contact Michael Gaffigan at 919-286-2495 or mgaffigan@measinc.com.

GUMBY'S Pizza
968-FAST (3278)
Voted "Best Delivered Meal" by Readers of the DTH (1997, 1998 & 1999)

Gumby's Value Menu
YOUR CHOICE ONLY **\$5.99** plus tax

- 1) 14" CHEESE PIZZA
- 2) 12" ONE TOPPING PIZZA & ONE SODA
- 3) 10" TWO TOPPING PIZZA & ONE SODA
- 4) 10 WINGS & ONE SODA
- 5) 10" POKEY STIX & FIVE WINGS
- 6) 10" CHEESE PIZZA & FIVE WINGS
- 7) 12" POKEY STIX & ONE SODA
- 8) 10" CHEESE PIZZA & TWO PEPPERONI ROLLS
- 9) FIVE PEPPERONI ROLLS & ONE SODA

FAST FREE DELIVERY!
WWW.GUMBYSPIZZA.COM • EMAIL: GUMBYS1@AOL.COM



Virginia Stewart

The University of North Carolina and Wachovia would like to congratulate Virginia Stewart, the Wachovia Woman of the Week.

Virginia is a senior from Durham, NC, and a member of UNC's fencing team. While only competing for two years, Virginia has left a strong mark on the team. She traveled as a starter her first year, while also competing as a member of Carolina's dance team. Majoring in Biology, she spends her free time working with patients at UNC Hospitals. Virginia is a strong leader and a treasure to the fencing program.

Wachovia is committed to supporting achievements made by women and is proud to celebrate Virginia Stewart's accomplishments.

WACHOVIA
Let's get started.
Wachovia Bank is a member FDIC.

WOMAN OF THE WEEK
WACHOVIA WORLD OF WOMEN'S SPORTS AT UNC
VISIT: WWW.GOHEELS.COM/WOMENSWORLD