

Otto, 27, University student

BY LINDSAY MICHEL
ASSISTANT UNIVERSITY EDITOR

Eileen Catherine Otto — devout Catholic, devoted friend and UNC student — died Friday, ending her battle with juvenile rheumatoid arthritis, immune deficiencies and diabetes. She was 27.

Friends remember Otto, a Chapel Hill native, as an outgoing individual whose afflictions never held her back.

"She was a go-getter," said Rosa Lee Brooks, who worked as an aide for Otto since October. "When she wanted something, she would go get it."

Otto was a continuing education student at UNC, studying Spanish during the last six years. She also taught English as a second language to local students.

"She was very intellectual,"

Brooks said. "She was determined to get her stuff done with school."

Emily Harris, Otto's aide and friend, said Otto aspired to become a Spanish teacher.

Harris, who worked with Otto for 2 1/2 years, said Otto expressed interest in her classes and often registered for summer school.

Otto was also passionate about advocating for the rights of those with disabilities.

She began the Tar Heel Action Recreation and Sport Club at UNC to help inform University administrators and fellow students about how to make buildings more accessible to students, employees and faculty members with disabilities.

Otto once took former Chancellor Michael Hooker on a tour of campus to point out build-

ings that were not fit for people with disabilities, said David Otto, her father.

Otto's passion for Catholicism shined through during her everyday activities, Harris said, recalling one summer when she assisted Otto in an art class.

When students were instructed to make a mold of their hands, Otto placed hers together to resemble Jesus' hands in prayer, Harris said.

Otto also sang in the choir at the UNC Newman Catholic Student Center.

Father Phillip Leach, who presided over Otto's memorial service Tuesday afternoon and was a close friend of Otto's, said that her love for others was exemplified in her demeanor each day.

"Few people engendered as

much love as Eileen did," he said to attendees at the service.

Leach said that when he recently visited Otto at UNC Hospitals, the attendant working at the information desk didn't need to look up Otto's room number because everyone on her floor knew her infectiously friendly nature.

"She could just make people feel," Leach said. "She just had that ability."

Otto suffered from juvenile rheumatoid arthritis since she was a child and eventually became wheelchair-bound. Otto also suffered from diabetes, a disease that required her to receive dialysis in recent years.

Despite her physical ailments, Harris said Otto was never shy and had a positive, friendly presence.

"In some ways, her whole life was kind of a fast," Leach said. "And she was never allowing anyone else to feel sorry of her."

Patreek Perez-DaSilva, a friend and neighbor, spoke of Otto's good heart during Tuesday's service.

"Eileen was one of the greatest heros for me and someone that everyone should look up to," he said.

In lieu of flowers, the Otto family requests that donations be sent to the Harvard Stem Cell Institute.

Otto is survived by her parents, David and Priscilla Otto, and her sister, Meghan Otto.

Contact the University Editor at udesk@unc.edu.

CLARIFICATION

The Feb. 8 article "Elections board hopes SBP race ends quietly" states that allegations of violations in last year's election came at the end of "Election Day." The phrase referred to the day of the runoff election, not the general election a week earlier.

To report corrections, contact Managing Editor Chris Coletta at cchetto@email.unc.edu.

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POLICE LOG

FROM STAFF REPORTS

Three vehicle-related incidents were reported Monday at 600 Airport Road, Chapel Hill police reports state.

According to reports, a vehicle was stolen, another was broken into and a stolen vehicle was recovered, all at 600 Airport Road, in the parking lot areas near the Northampton Plaza.

A dark blue 1991 Honda Accord, valued at \$2,500, was reported stolen at 7:07 p.m.

The car matched the description of a vehicle seen in Durham, police spokeswoman Jane Cousins said.

A second 1991 Honda Accord, valued at \$4,000, was recovered earlier Monday morning, reports state.

A blue Honda Accord was found running at 6:58 a.m., with items scattered behind the trunk, reversed into a parking space in front of High Rise apartments, Cousins said.

Cousins said that wiring was hanging from the steering console and that no key was in the ignition.

About \$400 in damaged and stolen contents were recovered. The items stolen were matched with a woman's complaint of items stolen from the parking lot behind the Carolina Brewery, Cousins said.

And a gray 1989 Ford Taurus was broken into at 6:01 a.m., sustaining \$200 in damage, reports state.

According to reports, an unknown suspect smashed the passenger-side window with an unknown object and removed a car stereo.

Cousins said the information is unclear as to whether the incidents are related, but she warned that six of the last 10 vehicles break-ins in the area occurred in Honda vehicles.

Older models with after-market stereo systems are the most likely targets for larceny, Cousins said.

Police are still investigating the incidents.

Two vehicle-related incidents were reported Monday in parking lot areas at 207 Pinegate Circle, Chapel Hill police reports state.

An unknown suspect stole a 1989 Acura Integra, valued at \$3,000, without force at 7:12 a.m., reports state.

A break-in was reported in a 1989 Black Jeep Pioneer at 7:39 a.m., reports state.

No property was taken in the incident.

Police spokeswoman Jane Cousins said that there is not

enough information to suggest that the incidents are related.

An employee of Mercia Properties was arrested in a taxi driving away from the scene of a larceny Tuesday, Chapel Hill police reports state.

According to reports, James Lafayette Watkins, 33, of 100 W. Rosemary St., was stopped at 12:33 a.m. while driving south on Airport Road in a Tar Heel Taxi, following a report of larceny from the Harris Teeter on Airport Road.

Reports state that officers frisked Watkins and found five, 1-pound bags of Harris Teeter-brand frozen shrimp, valued at \$64.95.

Watkins was charged with one misdemeanor count of larceny and was taken before the magistrate.

He was released on a written promise to appear March 21 in Orange County District Criminal Court in Hillsborough.

A Nomadic Training Co. of Carrboro employee was arrested and charged with one count of assault and battery Tuesday, Chapel Hill police reports state.

According to reports, Earl Joshua Flamer, also known as "Hammer," 50, of 100 W. Rosemary St., was located and arrested in Carrboro.

He was released on a written promise to appear March 21 in Orange County District Criminal Court in Hillsborough.

A fugitive from New Jersey was arrested in Chapel Hill on Tuesday, reports state.

According to reports, Reginald Perry Reid, 21, was arrested at 105 Hargraves St. and charged with one misdemeanor count of possession of marijuana, one misdemeanor count of drug paraphernalia and one felony count of being a fugitive.

He was taken to Orange County Jail and released on a written promise to appear today in Orange County District Criminal Court in Hillsborough.

An ATM reported stolen Monday from the Bruegger's Bagels at Eastgate Shopping Plaza was recovered in Wake County, said Chapel Hill police spokeswoman Jane Cousins.

The ATM, valued at \$7,000, was taken at 2:27 a.m. Monday after a hammer was used to break the glass surrounding the machine.

Cousins said the ATM was found, but all the money had been taken.

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