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PINELLAS

■ State concerned by drug-treatment program

ST. PETERSBURG — The state has “a litany of concerns” about Straight Inc., a drug-treatment program for teen-agers, according to a health official.

But Straight’s program administrator, Michael Scaletta, says the Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services is harassing the private, non-profit program. Straight, now operating under a temporary license, is being scrutinized for allegations of mistreatment and mismanagement and has been plagued by such allegations for years.

Founded 13 years ago in St. Petersburg, the nationwide program uses confrontational rap sessions and peer-pressure therapy to try to free adolescents from drug dependency.

MANATEE

HILLSBOROUGH

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A Hillsborough County grand jury on Wednesday indicted a Tampa man on a first-degree murder charge in the shooting death of a high school senior.

Frederick Leon Streater, 20, is accused of shooting King High School student William Robinson during an attempted robbery Dec. 2. Robinson, 17, resisted and shot Streater in the left thigh before being fatally shot himself outside the Kenneth Court apartments on North 43rd Street.

Streater has a criminal record that includes convictions for robbery, aggravated battery, burglary, arson and possession of cocaine. He was sentenced in October 1990 to consecutive prison terms of eight years and five years but was released earlier this year.

Woman crushed to death by car

TAMPA - An 83-year-old woman was crushed to death Wednesday when her idling car apparently popped out of gear, rolled back and pinned her against another vehicle, police said.

Margaret Wright of 3415 Windsor Court was pronounced dead at the scene of the 4:17 p.m. accident, police said.

According to police, Wright was involved in a minor traffic accident in the Winn-Dixie parking lot in the 8400 block of North Armenia Avenue. She got out of her car, leaving the engine running, to check the damage to the rear bumper. The car then rolled backward, trapping Wright, police said.

Country music singer postpones appearance

TAMPA - Country music singer Ricky Van Shelton, scheduled to appear Friday night at the Tampa Bay Performing Arts Center Festival Hall in downtown Tampa along with Great Plains, has postponed his concert because of illness. He likely will visit the Tampa Bay area in January, said publicist Jill Abramson.

PINELLAS State concerned by drug-treatment program

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But Straight's program administrator, Michael Scaletta, says the Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services is harassing the private, non-profit program. Straight, now operating under a temporary license, is being scrutinized for allegations of mistreatment and mismanagement and has been plagued by such allegations for years.

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MANATEE Boy on bicycle struck by car

BRADENTON - A 12-year-old boy was in critical condition early today, hours after his bicycle was struck by a car on 34th Street West, authorities said.

Robert Powell of 3614 47th Ave. W. was admitted to the intensive care unit at All Children's Hospital, a nursing supervisor said.

Powell was riding a bicycle north on the sidewalk of 34th Street Wednesday night when the two-wheeler went out of control and entered the path of a southbound 1982 Chevrolet, the Florida Highway Patrol said.

The driver, Linda Bey, 47, of 608 68th Ave. W., was unable to avoid the boy on the bicycle, the highway patrol said.

No charges were filed.

SARASOTA Veteran detective transferred to patrol duty

SARASOTA - A veteran Sarasota County sheriff's detective was transferred to patrol duty Wednesday after his supervisors complained of

slipshod work.

The transfer of Russell Marquiss comes after concerns by prosecutors that he arrested the wrong men in two high-profile cases while ignoring leads on other suspects.

The transfer also comes less than two weeks after lawyers for murder suspect George Ward Kingston III complained Marquiss and other sheriff's officials violated Kingston's rights and said related theft charges against him should be dismissed.

POLK Sides debate contraception in schools

BARTOW - Battle lines are being drawn over whether information on contraception should be included in sex education classes taught in Polk County public schools.

Brian Cobb, chief of emergency services at Polk General Hospital in Bartow, says sex education should be expanded to include high school students and that the time has come to add lessons on reproduction, responsibility and contraception.

But Sue Russell, a pediatric nurse from the Watson Clinic South in Lakeland, says the board should not back off from its strong message than abstinence is the only "safe sex."

- Caption: SIGNATURE
- Memo: TAMPA BAY METRO

Versions of some of these stories appear in regional sections of The Tampa Tribune. The Associated Press contributed to this report.

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