

**COPS BELIEVE IT'S JENNIFER****S.I. searchers  
unearth body  
of a young girl****By JAMES DUDDY  
and BOB KAPPSTATER**

Daily News Staff Writers

A young girl's body believed to be that of Jennifer Schweiger, the 12-year-old Down's syndrome victim missing since July 9, was found last night in a shallow grave behind an abandoned building at the former Willowbrook state mental facility on Staten Island.

Police initially said they had no "positive identification of the body," but sources indicated they were "more than certain" it was Jennifer.

They said the grave, "a slight rise in the ground or a mound," was discovered at 8 p.m. behind Building 27 of the sprawling facility by two volunteer searchers who scraped away the loose soil and found the body of "a young female."

It was not immediately known whether the body was clothed or what state of decomposition it was in.

Local precinct cars, the police crime-scene unit and Emergency Service trucks immediately came to the area, where searchlights were set up to help police look for additional evidence near the shallow grave.

A 43-year-old homeless man with a record of crimes involving

**MISSING GIRL** Jennifer Schweiger.

children was arrested Aug. 4 and charged with kidnaping Jennifer.

The suspect, Andre Rand, also known as Frank Bruchette, was identified by several witnesses as the man last seen with Jennifer and was questioned by police when she first disappeared.

He initially was released, but he was placed under surveillance by cops who hoped he might lead them to the missing girl.

Rand, a former attendant at Willowbrook, had been living in a

makeshift camp on the grounds of the center, not far from Building 27. At the time of his arrest, he was staying in a shelter for the homeless in the St. George section of the island.

**Hundreds of volunteers**

The discovery of the grave was made by an off-duty police sergeant and an off-duty fireman, two among hundreds of volunteer searchers who daily have combed the grounds and the abandoned buildings and underground tunnels on the 382-acre wooded facility, now officially called the Staten Island Developmental Center. Only about 100 patients currently are cared for at Willowbrook, and they are expected to be moved out this fall.

Police dogs earlier had traced the scent of Jennifer's clothing to the facility, making it the focus of an intensive search.

She last was seen alive that steamy July day, walking hand-in-hand with a vagrant through her nearby Westerleigh neighborhood.

Rand now is undergoing 30 days of psychiatric observation at Kings County Hospital.

Friends and neighbors of Jennifer's parents, Karen and Kenneth, as well as strangers from across the city had joined in the daily search for Jennifer.



**SUSPECT** Andre Rand, shown after his arrest earlier this month, once lived on the Willowbrook grounds.