Report on Jennifer may take weeks

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The medical examiner's office has indicated it likely will be a "couple of weeks" before any determination will be made on the cause of Jennifer Schweiger's death or when she was murdered.

Meanwhile, detectives working on the investigation are reviewing any cases involving handicapped, emotionally troubled, and physically handicapped children who have disappeared on Staten Island and in other places Andre Rand has visited.

Rand has been charged with kidnapping Jennifer, whose nude body was found buried in a shallow grave 50 yards from a campsite used by the 43-year-old transient. Jennifer had Down's syndrome and congenital heart disease.

Police are also looking into any murders or other violent crimes uncovered on the grounds of Staten Island Developmental Center during the years Rand has been on Staten Island.

Ellen Borakove, a spokesman for the medical examiner, said chemical tests using microscopic slides in addition to "other investigative work" were being used to learn the details of Jennifer's murder.

But, she said, ascertaining how long the girl had been dead and what method was used would be "difficult" due to decomposition of the body.

Jennifer disappeared July 9 after setting out for a short walk in her Westerleigh neighborhood. She was last seen walking hand in hand with 43-year-old drifter Andre Rand, who was arrested last week and charged with kidnapping the girl from a street near her Wardwell Avenue home. Rand is currently undergoing a court-ordered psychiatric evaluation in Kings County Hospital.

District Attorney William L. Murphy said his office was not preparing to charge Rand with murder at this time.

"First of all we don't have a cause of death," Murphy said. "The matter will be submitted to a grand jury and we'll see what the grand jury does with it."

When asked when the matter would be submitted, Murphy replied, "In a few weeks."

Meanwhile, police continued their grim task of searching the grounds of the Staten Island Developmental Center for additional bodies yesterday, volunteers who led authorities to the body of Jennifer were making preparations "in case this ever happens again."

Specialized teams of police spent hours searching and digging for clues near Buildings 27 and 28, according to Sgt. John Clifford, a police spokesman.

It was behind Building 27 that volunteer searchers, acting on the hunch of retired firefighter George Kramer, discovered the grave in which Jennifer Schweiger had been buried.

Donna Cutugno, coordinator for the Friends of Jennifer group, said a registry of volunteers would be established around noon today at Holy Family R.C. Church on Watchogue Road in Westerleigh.

"We want them to register. In case this ever happens again, we'll have a team of expert people who know the woods, know the search, know how to give out the flyers," Mrs. Cutugno said. "It will save a lot of time."

Volunteers will place their names and telephone numbers on file along with an idea of the hours they would be available. Members of the group hope to develop a "strike force" which could be called in to action on just a few hours notice.

While consulting with detectives from the Crimes Against Property Squad yesterday, volunteers were called back into the search and given a list of locations to check for pieces of Jennifer's clothing or the pocketbook she ws carrying the day she disappeared. No trace of Jennifer's clothing has been found by police searching the thick woods around the grave and campsite.

Concerned volunteers will be trying to tear away the veils of mystery covering the murder case by digging for clues on parts of the Staten Island Developmental Center grounds that are not being searched by special police teams, according to Mrs. Cutugno.

Volunteer searchers were also asked to check lots and tunnels in Mariners Harbor, and wooded areas in and around Baron Hirsch Cemetery. Before his arrest last week, Rand had reportedly been seen at all of the targeted locations.