

News Notes

Regional

Ex-Morehouse Student faces hate crime charge

ATLANTA, GA — Aaron Price, a former student, expelled from Morehouse College appeared in court and was officially notified he will be prosecuted under a state hate crime law for attacking a dormitory mate with a baseball bat because he thought the student was gay. The student allegedly looked into Price's shower stall. During the attack, the student suffered a fractured skull. The maximum penalty is 20 years. The law also requires those convicted to serve 90 percent of their sentences. "It is the state's contention that Mr. Price intentionally selected the victim in this case based on Mr. Price's perception of that victim's sexual orientation," prosecutor Holly Hughes said.

National

"Don't ask" author: Draft trumps gay ban

WASHINGTON, DC — After two Democratic congressmen proposed this week a reinstatement of the national draft for military service, the primary architect of the Pentagon's "don't ask, don't tell" policy said it should be scrapped in the event of a draft. The idea of restarting the draft, proposed by Reps. Charles Rangel, D-NY, and John Conyers, D-MI, generated much publicity, as the Bush administration is considering a possible war with Iraq. Charles Moskos, the influential military sociologist who helped craft the ban, said it should be abolished if the draft is re-enacted, because mandatory service represents a "higher virtue" than the privacy considerations of heterosexual soldiers. In remarks Wednesday to researchers at the Center for the Study of Sexual Minorities in the Military, Moskos added that a draft could turn "don't ask, don't tell, don't harass, don't pursue" into a loophole.

Two face hate charges in shooting of transvestite

MIAMI BEACH, FL — A New Jersey man and his companion from Miami face hate crime charges, after one of the men shot a transvestite after learning the person was not a woman. Police say Adrian Miller of Long Branch, NJ, shot an unidentified transvestite in the shoulder in Miami Beach. They say he and Billy Ledan of Miami are both charged with attempted murder. The hate crime charges were added because Miller allegedly cursed at the victim with an anti-gay slur before firing the gun. He's also charged with possession of a concealed firearm, since police say they found a semiautomatic weapon inside his car. Police reports say Miller and Ledan propositioned the victim, who told them, "I think you know what you're getting into. I'm a man." At that point, Miller allegedly used the slur and shot the transvestite, police said.

Governor wants ceremony announcements

BOSTON, MA — Gov. Parris N. Glendening (D-MA), a staunch supporter of gay rights throughout his term in office, is asking Maryland's major newspapers to consider running announcements of same-sex commitment ceremonies alongside traditional wedding announcements. In letters sent to editors at *The Sun*, *The Washington Post* and the *Capital in Annapolis*, the departing Democratic governor encouraged the papers to join other major dailies across the country that have begun publishing proclamations from gay and lesbian couples. "Maryland has a rich tradition of justice and fairness," he wrote. "Including same-sex civil commitment ceremony announcements alongside announcements of heterosexual weddings is just and fair."

Schnuck is real shnook, denies space for papers

ST. LOUIS, MO — Schnuck Markets here turned down the offer to display *Vital Voice*, a free regional newspaper catering to the gay and lesbian community, because of the space limitations and the lack of appeal to a broad audience, said Lori Willis, spokeswoman for the retailer. "The decision to not carry *Vital Voice* was not meant to be a criticism or a value judgment," she said. "It's an effort to remain consistent and fair in evaluating the many requests we receive annually [to carry newspapers and magazines]." Schnuck looks for publications with mass appeal, Willis added, and the newspaper's small circulation of 15,000 does not fit Schnucks' criteria. *Vital Voice* is urging its community to boycott Schnuck Markets because of the retailer's decision, according to published reports. The newspaper was unavailable for comment at press time.



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