

The FRONT PAGE

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Two Charged in Killing

Synagogue attacks may be linked to killing of a gay California couple.

Associated Press

REDDING, Calif. (AP) — In the wake of a white supremacist shooting rampage in Illinois and Indiana that left two dead and six others injured, police in Northern California say they have arrested Benjamin M. Williams, 31, and James T. Williams, 29, in connection with the killings of two gay men, Gary Matson and Winfield Mowder.

Authorities refused to discuss details, but did say they had found "information and literature that suggests that the suspects may subscribe to some white supremacist beliefs."

The Williams brothers were arrested just hours after police found the slain couple's missing car. Both were armed, and one was wearing a bullet-proof vest. The two were charged were arraigned July 9 on charges of receiving stolen property that prosecutors said was linked to the victims.

Matson, 50, and Mowder, 40, were found July 1, dead from gunshot wounds. They were lying in bed in the trailer home they owned on five acres, about 180 miles north of San Francisco.

On June 20 another gay man, James Amos, 66, was also found lying in bed dead of gunshot wounds not far from the Matson-Mowder residence. Police declined to say whether the killings may be related.

Police said there was some indication the Williams brother may have known Matson and Mowder before they were killed.

Earlier in July, Benjamin Smith killed himself after a shooting rampage that left a black man and a Korean-American man dead and six Orthodox Jews wounded in Illinois and Indiana. He was later linked to the World Church of the Creator, which



A memorial to Winfield Mowder is displayed in the break room at Orchard Supply Hardware July 12 in Redding, CA where he worked. The bodies of Mowder and his gay partner were discovered July 1. (AP Photo/Susan Ragan)

teaches white racial superiority, anti-Semitic beliefs and hatred of homosexuals

Fires Linked to Pair

On July 10, Shasta County Sheriff's Capt. Ron Richardson confirmed a link between the brothers and evidence pointing to the June 18 synagogue fires. The arson attacks at three Sacramento synagogues caused over \$1 million in damages.

Authorities searched the brothers' modest house and brought out several bags of evidence, and a van from the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms was parked nearby.

The *Sacramento Bee* reported that authorities found a list of 32 prominent Jewish and civic leaders, linking the broth-

ers to the synagogue fires in Sacramento, about 150 miles south of Redding.

FBI special agent James Maddock said protection was ordered for those individuals. Officials also urged Redding's only Jewish congregation, Temple Beth Israel, to increase security.

The fires, set within minutes of each other on June 18, caused more than \$1 million in damage at Congregation B'nai Israel, Congregation Beth Shalom and the Knesset Israel Torah Center.

A leaflet blaming the "International Jew World Order" for the war in Kosovo was left behind at one of the synagogues.

Ed Smith, who owns the Palo Cedro nursery where the older Williams brother

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Gay Soldier Murdered at Kentucky Army Base

By Bob Roehr
Contributing Writer

NASHVILLE — Antigay violence seems to have claimed another victim. PFC Barry L. Winchell, 21, was savagely beaten by another soldier in his unit at Fort Campbell, Kentucky on the night of July 5. He was flown by helicopter to the Vanderbilt University Medical Center in Nashville, about sixty miles to the south of the base, where he died the following morning. A memorial service was held on the base on July 9.

The Army has charged private Calvin N. Glover, 18, with premeditated murder in the attack and is confining him at Fort Knox, Kentucky pending legal proceedings. Fort Campbell spokesman Major Pamela Hart said there is "no conclusive evidence that this was a hate crime." The Army has said little more and has instructed soldiers not to talk to the media.

But almost immediately the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network (SLDN) began receiving phone calls alleging that the murder was an antigay hate crime. It dispatched staff attorney Kathi Westcott to the area to talk with members of the community and try to find out more.

SLDN spokesman Stacey Sobel said they "felt it was very important to get involved very early on in the process, to make sure that if it is in fact a hate crime, that it won't be covered up."

Westcott distributed more than 3,000 fliers seeking information as well as SLDN's "rights card" which outlines the legal recourse for service members who are either under investigation or are being questioned with regard to another investigation.

SLDN is being very cautious in their public statements. They have heard the rumors but say that they have not talked with anyone who has first hand knowledge of the murder.

Edward Clayton, president of the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual Veterans of America (GLBVA) expressed a similar cautious approach. "We want to get it right," he said. However, Clayton was willing to share a sanitized e-mail message said to have come from a person in

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Flag-Burning at Ohio Pride

COLUMBUS, Ohio (June 27) — Police in Columbus, Ohio, say they narrowly avoided a clash when protesters ripped down a Rainbow flag, a popular gay rights symbol, flying from a poll at Ohio's state capitol and set it on fire in front of a passing Gay Pride parade.

Authorities said Charles Spingola, 43, and Donald L. Richardson, 63, were charged with a variety of violations, ranging from disorderly conduct to riot and criminal damage.

Police said the flag was taken down just minutes after an annual Gay Pride parade passed by the capitol building as some 30 anti-gay protesters cheered. An argument between gay rights advocates and the anti-gay protesters broke out, leading to the flag-burning, wit-

nesses said. When more people joined in the increasingly tense confrontation, city police and state highway patrol officers had to step in to separate the two groups.

Stonewall Columbus, sponsors of the parade, had arranged to have the flag raised at the capitol. The group quickly raised a replacement flag unfurled at the same location.

The group also marched in the annual Fourth of July "Doo Dah Parade" in Columbus.

Members marched with rainbow flags and carried fire extinguishers, in an attempt to show they had a sense of humor. The incident led to a confrontation with Christian activists, however, resulting in two arrests.