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Woodward sentenced

It's not a bias crime because the attacker didn't say "gay" during the attack

by Inga Sorensen

A former Portland State University wrestler convicted of assaulting the patron of a Portland gay bar has been placed on three years' probation, and must serve ten weeks in a community service forest camp, undergo gay sensitivity and anger counseling, and enroll in an alcohol treatment program.

Lesbian and gay activists are applauding the August 12 sentencing of Clayton Alan Woodward, 21, who was convicted on a single count of fourth-degree assault stemming from his attack in early March on two men and a woman at Ray's Ordinary Bar and Grille in Old Town. Woodward was originally slated to go on trial for assaulting all three, but agreed to a plea bargain in which he pled no contest to one assault charge against Bruce Fuller.

"I really feel as though justice has been served," says an enthusiastic Fuller. "I feel vindicated, like all the blood, sweat and tears have paid off."

Fuller was slammed in the back of the head by Woodward on March 5, as he sat with friends at the bar. He fell to the floor, his eyeglasses smashed, his face cut and bleeding. "This has already helped my healing process. If we didn't take this to court, or didn't get a conviction, the situation would remain unresolved. It feels great that it's all finally over," he says.

According to Deputy District Attorney Susan Howe, who prosecuted the case, the attack was not classified as a hate crime due to lack of "sufficient evidence." For instance, though Woodward assaulted patrons of a gay bar, he did not make any anti-gay slurs during the actual

attack. "It was a really tough call, but we felt it was better to go with the assault charge," says Howe.

Multnomah County District Judge Thomas Moultrie has also ordered Woodward to write letters of apology to the victims after he completes a few months of counseling, and he must pay Fuller \$441 for his medical expenses. Howe had requested that Woodward serve jail time, but he did not receive that penalty as part of his sentence. Fuller says, however, he's not disappointed. "I'm really pleased about the gay sensitivity counseling. Hopefully that will help him. It may do more for him than sitting in jail ever could," he says. "We're also really pleased about the amount of community service he must serve. We had asked he serve 80 hours, and instead he's received 500 hours."

Members of Neighborhoods West-Northwest, an organization representing nine neighborhood associations in the city's Northwest quadrant, joined with lesbian and gay activists to form a court watch. They sat in on court proceedings to help ensure Woodward did not walk away without due punishment. "We felt this was an important issue to get involved with," explains Maria Calvadetscher, crime prevention specialist for the neighborhood group. "We had initiated court watches in the past, involving issues like drug dealing in Washington Park, and we were successful. It made sense that we should get involved in this. This kind of violence hurts all of our neighborhoods and it cannot be condoned."

PSU officials have since revoked Woodward's athletic scholarship, and he has chosen to transfer to another college.

The OCA won't go away

The Oregon Citizens Alliance ballot initiative could have disastrous effects on AIDS services and organizations throughout the state. The initiative forbids state, county, or city funding to any program that might "promote, condone, encourage, or facilitate" homosexuality. Here are some things to consider:

OCA members on a recent AM Northwest program made it clear that one of their primary targets was AIDS education in public schools, including colleges and universities.

The OCA wants to eliminate current AIDS prevention programs targeting gay and bisexual men.

The Oregon AIDS Hotline could be prohibited from answering questions regarding safer sex practices.

Anonymous or confidential HIV testing could be challenged as facilitating homosexual behavior.

Volunteer organizations such as Cascade AIDS Project, Willamette AIDS Council, Phoenix Rising, Shanti in Oregon, etc. could lose significant portions of their budget.

-Radical Activist Truth Squad (RATS)

Corvallis against the OCA

On Monday, August 5, the Corvallis City Council and AFTER 8, a gay and lesbian education and advocacy group, co-sponsored a press conference publicizing a resolution passed unanimously. The Corvallis City Council resolution opposes the recent initiative filed by the Oregon Citizens Alliance.

Spokespeople included Corvallis City Councilors Prudence Miles and Edgar Bolden, Louis Van Leer from AFTER 8, Corvallis Mayor Charles Vars, State Senator Clifford Trow, Benton County Chief Deputy Stan Robson, the Rev. David Zaworski from the First Congregational-United Church of Christ who represented local clergy, and Merry Demarest from National Organization for Women.

Miles read the resolution, which stated, "The City reaffirms its pledge of full support to ongoing efforts to educate the people of the Corvallis Community with the goal of eliminating, to the extent possible, bias and prejudice based on race, religion and sexual orientation." Miles added, "This initiative serves only to harass further law-abiding lesbian and gay citizens who want to live peaceful lives and enjoy the full civil rights due them as members of society."

(Continued on next page)