

ing laws including the Americans with Disabilities Act, which forbids job discrimination based on HIV or other disability status.

A lower court dismissed Waddell's claims in August with the erroneous conclusion that his practice as a hygienist posed a significant risk of HIV transmission to patients—something that never has happened in the history of the epidemic. In its appeal, Lambda cites the 1998 U.S. Supreme Court ruling in *Bragdon v. Abbott*, which requires that decisions about whether health care professionals pose a significant risk of transmitting HIV to patients be scientifically based.

OHIO

Approximately 100 HIV and AIDS patients were denied the opportunity to attend a January retreat at a Cincinnati-area Christian camp because of concerns about promoting homosexuality, the *Columbus Dispatch* reports Nov. 29. Woodland Lakes Christian Camp and Retreat Center in Amelia later asked for the Ohio AIDS Coalition's forgiveness.



Executive director Kim Jackson accepted the apology but said the retreat would not be rescheduled. "It's not in our mission to be in a facility that discriminates."

Jackson said the center offered to play host to the campers on the condition that they refrain from acting on homosexual urges. "They say they do not have hatred for them; they just can't have people acting that way."

The center issued a news release saying, "There may have been a miscommunication" about cancellation of the retreat. "Woodland Lakes Christian Camp loves all people and strives to minister to them in a Christlike manner."

The camp's Web site indicated mixed reactions ranging from "Thank you" to "Shame on you" and "What would Jesus do?" The cancellation outraged Perry Slone, director of Beacon Fellowship, an interfaith gay advocacy group.

"This is hatred of the worst kind," he said. "What part of 'Love thy neighbor' do those camp officials not understand?"

VIRGINIA

An 18-year-old pleaded guilty Dec. 6 to three charges stemming from the near-fatal attack of a gay teen-ager, the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* reports.

Thomas Rivers faces a maximum 26 years

of incarceration when sentenced in March for one count each of malicious wounding, felony wounding and misdemeanor assault. His lawyers were planning a temporary insanity defense—claiming the attack resulted from an "irresistible impulse" that resulted from post-traumatic stress that resulted from being molested a couple of years ago—but changed their minds just before the trial got under way.

According to prosecutor Eric Olsen, Rivers first encountered the 16-year-old victim when they bumped into each other in a hallway during summer school last year. A classmate had told Rivers the victim thought he was good-looking, so he told him, "I don't like faggots" and later spat on him while they were riding a bus.

The attack occurred several months later when Rivers and three other teens spotted the victim on their way to a theme park. Rivers, wearing a hat pulled down over his face, approached the victim from behind and struck him in the head with a metal pole as the boy crouched near a pond while looking for tadpoles.

The victim underwent brain surgery, and doctors placed a permanent metal plate in his head. As a result of the injury, he is more prone to have seizures and headaches.

WISCONSIN

Many gay and bisexual men lack key information about syphilis, including how to identify signs and symptoms of the sexually transmitted disease, according to a study presented during the National STD Prevention Conference held from Dec. 4 to 7 in Milwaukee. The study comes as increasing evidence indicates the annual incidence of syphilis and other STDs is rising among gay men in a number of U.S. cities.

"Syphilis and other STDs that many have long forgotten continue to pose a significant health risk to gay men,"

said Helene Gayle, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention National Center for HIV, STD and TB Prevention director. "Efforts to prevent sexually transmitted diseases must be revitalized and reshaped to stop this increasing toll."

Based on a survey of 683 men who have sex with men attending a gay event in Chicago, researchers found that 42.5 percent did not know syphilis facilitates HIV transmission and that 52.3 percent were unaware syphilis is increasing among gay men in some communities. The study was led by Carol Ciesielski of the Chicago Department of Health.

Only 26 percent of respondents correctly identified rash as a sign of syphilis, while 61.5 percent incorrectly identified urethral discharge as a symptom. The majority of those surveyed knew that penile, oral and anal ulcers are signs of the disease.

"Prevention has to begin with awareness and basic education," the CDC's Ronald O. Valdiserri said. "Together with other recent reports of upswings in risk behavior and STD rates, this survey underscores an urgent need for syphilis education appropriately tailored to the gay community." **JO**

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