

## 2 Plead Guilty in Death of Transvestite Hustler

PORTSMOUTH, Mass.—Two white men charged in the death of an African-American male transvestite prostitute both pleaded guilty to voluntary manslaughter in separate trials according to *Our Own*.

Joseph Paul Stone, 26, pleaded guilty May 2 to voluntary manslaughter and to hit and run with injuries in the death of Vernon Sivills. Police said Sivills either jumped or was forced from Stone's pickup truck Nov. 3, 1989. Police found Sivills, 28, unconscious on the Effingham St. ramp to 1-264 in Portsmouth. He died of massive head injuries Nov. 4.

Michael A. O'Donnell, 26, pleaded guilty May 5 to voluntary manslaughter in Sivills's death. A charge of failing to report a hit-and-run accident with injuries was dropped.

Prentace said Stone's plea agreement calls for him to receive a suspended sentence of 15 years in prison and serve four years of supervised probation. O'Donnell's plea agreement calls for a suspended three-year prison sentence, said Prentace. Prentace said he expected Judge Richard Bray to abide by the plea agreements when the men were due to be sentenced later in the summer.

Under the agreements, O'Donnell was to testify against Stone, who had been charged with 2nd degree murder. However, O'Donnell could not testify that he had seen Sivills in Stone's truck because he could not identify photographs of Sivills dressed as a man. Sivills was wearing a dress and wig while in Stone's truck.

Prentace said he agreed to Stone's plea to a reduced charge of voluntary manslaughter because other witnesses, both transvestites, who saw Sivills get in Stone's truck did not testify at Stone's trial. One witness was in the hospital with AIDS. Prentace said he suspects the other one, who could not be found, was in a local jail during the trial. The basis for this assumption was not mentioned.

Shortly after his arrest, O'Donnell told a Portsmouth police officer, "All faggots deserve to die anyway," according to police testimony at a December 1988 hearing.

Prentace said evidence summarized at the trials indicated that O'Donnell and Stone picked up Sivills in downtown Portsmouth after drinking beer in Stone's truck.

Prentace said Sivills told the men that he wanted \$30 from each of them for sex. Stone then pointed a pistol at Sivills and said, "This is going to be for free," said Prentace. Then Sivills became agitated and either jumped out of the truck or was forced out as it was moving about 40 mph.

Although Stone and O'Donnell saw Sivills stand up and fall down, they did not stop or call the police, said Prentace. Instead, Stone drove to a 7-Eleven to buy more beer and went back downtown, where police arrested the two men.

## ACLU Gives 1990 Rights Nod to Whoopi Goldberg

LOS ANGELES—The ACLU Lesbian and Gay Rights Chapter has awarded its 1990 Human Rights Award to Whoopi Goldberg. The award will be presented at the Lesbian and Gay Rights Chapter's annual ceremony, this year to be held at the Magic Castle in Hollywood.

The organization cited Goldberg for her support of the gay and lesbian community, her active involvement in producing educational Public Service Announcements on AIDS, her appearance at the 1987 March on Washington and her yearly involvement in Comic Relief.

## Search on for Missing Atlanta Black Gay Man

ATLANTA—The Atlanta Police Department is seeking information in the disappearance of Dennis G. Williams according to *Southern Voice*. Williams, a sous chef at the Mansion restaurant and resident of Virginia Highland, left his home at 11:30 p.m. on Saturday, June 9 to get some bread according to his mother, Alma.

When he failed to show up for work the following day, friends and employees searched the Midtown area and found his car on Park Drive. The 1987 blue Dodge Aires was locked. Williams's wallet and some articles of clothing were found inside the car according to APD Det. R. F. Richardson.

The 37-year-old Williams was described as a "workaholic" whose major concern was "his mother's health" according to sister-in-law, Glenda Williams. The elder Mrs. Williams, who is hypertensive, moved to Atlanta about seven months ago so that her son could assist in her health care, according to the sister-in-law who lives in Indianapolis.

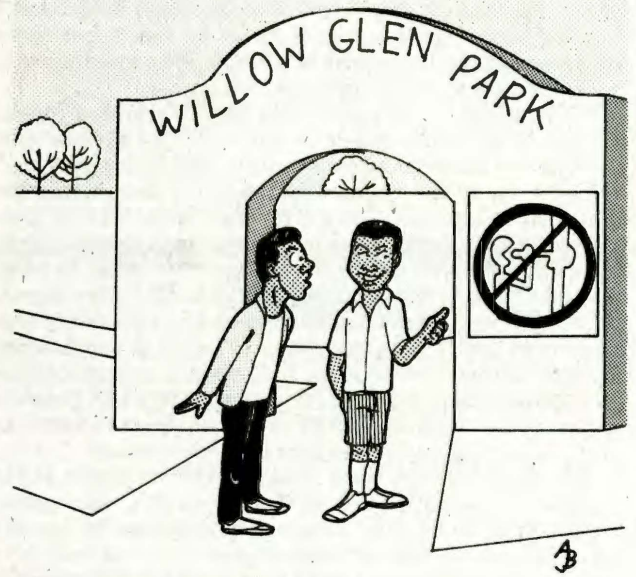
Family members combed the tree trails in Piedmont Park, passed out flyers requesting information in bars and stapled the flyers to trees on the trails.

"There have been numerous robberies and assaults on the trails," said Det. Richardson, "and even a murder a couple of years ago, but [to my knowledge] this is the first missing person." The police have searched the trails on foot and on horseback but found no signs of Williams according to Richardson.

Williams's housemate and co-worker John Lindsey said that the missing man didn't go to bars or other hangouts, but Williams's mother confirmed that her son did have a pattern of leaving the house around midnight. His normal work hours at The Mansion were 8 a.m.-7 p.m. according to Lindsey.

Both police and community activists have been vocal in their warning about the dangers of being on the trails.

Speaking for the entire family, the younger Mrs. Williams said, "We would really appreciate any help that members of the gay community can give us. We're just worried sick."



"Look's like they've got this place psych'd pretty well."