

For majority of students, college life was never that boozy

By Lorraine Eaton
Knight-Ridder Newspapers

NORFOLK - "Animal House" is dead. Truth be told, for a solid majority of students, college life never really was that boozy after all.

"It's the best kept secret on college campuses," said Michael P. Haines, campus health coordinator at Northern Illinois University.

In fact, binge drinking has never been the campus norm, Haines said. Media reports and scare campaigns have focused on the 37 percent of collegians whom a 1997 National Institute on Drug Abuse survey found to be binge drinkers. That puts pressure on those who don't want to party hardy. Instead, colleges need to show students that responsible drinking is the norm and scrap programs that preach that all drinking is bad, he said.

Haines on Thursday drew a standing-room-only crowd to his somewhat politically incorrect, all day "social marketing" workshop for college students and health representatives. It was part of "Changing the Tide," the Virginia Dept. of Alcoholic Beverage Control's 13th annual College Conference. Representatives from 30 of Virginia's public and private colleges attended, including Old Dominion University, Norfolk State University, Hampton University and Virginia Wesleyan College.

The issue of campus drinking is particularly touchy in Virginia, after the alcohol-related deaths of several college students last year. The state's legal drinking age is 21, but underage drinking is widespread. Gov. Jim Gilmore has earmarked more than \$30,000 for colleges to start and measure the success of alcohol awareness campaigns.

Setting the record straight, telling the "good truth," and dealing with the reality that most students will drink no matter what, is the key to making college campuses safer and better places to learn, Haines believes.

"Students don't know that most of them are not binge drinkers," Haines said. "Students don't know that most of them don't have a problem with alcohol at all."

At Northern Illinois, the focus is teaching students that the norm is responsible drinking or not drinking at all - it's what 72 percent of students do. A campaign that uses business marketing tools has resulted in reduced binge drinking for each of the past six years, with an overall 35 percent reduction, according to research done at the school.

Ads in the school paper give tips for dealing with a drunk friend but also point out that most NIU women say they drink 0 to 3 drinks when they "party." Another covers hangover prevention with a height and weight chart that shows how much a student can drink and keep his blood-alcohol content at a safe level.

Students are phoned randomly and asked trivia questions about information on the posters and can win \$25. Those who hang the posters in their dorms are given \$5. And in random quizzes around the campus students can win \$1 instantly if they correctly answer a question based on the ad.

Brian Roinestad, 21, a Mary Washington College junior who attended the session, agreed that perceptions need to be changed. "There is so much peer pressure; this would alleviate a lot of it."

Haines says his non-traditional approach is unpopular with those who believe that abstinence is the best message. But he points to research and anecdotal evidence that shows that college students have been drinking for centuries. At Harvard University, the country's oldest college, a local sheriff still leads the graduation procession to control drunk students, a tradition that lingers from Colonial times.

"Since the 1700s alcohol has been associated with college attendance," Haines said. "Students using alcohol on campus is nothing new, nor is it going to go away."

The NIU program impressed Linda Tisdale, Virginia Wesleyan College's director of health services. "It makes perfect sense," she said.

Campus stunned after gay student dies from savage beating

By Julie Cart
Los Angeles Times

LARAMIE, Wyo. - Students at the University of Wyoming, already shocked by the savage beating of a gay student last week, returned to school on Monday to find flags on the leafy campus riding at half mast. The flags snapping in a cool fall breeze sent a silent signal of more horrid news to the student body.

"I looked up, saw the flags and thought, 'Oh, my God, Matthew's dead,'" said Shannon Rexroat, a senior who edits the campus newspaper. "The entire campus is in shock and outraged. I teach an orientation class for freshmen. Most of them can't imagine anyone with enough hate in them to do this. Many of their parents sent them here because it is supposed to be so safe."

The death of Matthew Shepard, a popular political science student, left emotions raw in this windswept prairie town. Shepard died early Monday morning at Poudre Valley Hospital, about 60 miles away in Fort Collins, Colo. The 21-year-old had been on life support since he arrived last Thursday with severe head trauma.

Shepard's family, who had traveled from Saudi Arabia to be at his bedside, issued a statement urging parents to hug their children and enjoy every day with them.

Police say Shepard was beaten, lashed to a fence post and left to die

by two Laramie men who later espoused anti-gay sentiments. Authorities said the main motive appeared to be robbery, but indicated Monday that the charges against the two would be upgraded to murder.

Shepard's death brought immediate calls for legislative change both in Wyoming and nationally. President Clinton called the beating an "evil act" and urged Congress Monday to strengthen laws against hate crimes.

That call echoed even more loudly in Wyoming, one of only eight states

out of this tragic death."

On campus, yellow ribbons marked with green circles, signs of sympathy for Shepard, could be seen wrapped around ponytails and tied to backpacks. Many students and faculty were wearing "Straight but not Narrow" buttons. All over, impromptu discussions of attitudes about homosexuality were taking place.

"Is there approval of homosexuality in Wyoming? Absolutely not. Is there social activism against it? No," said Susanna Godwin, director of the university's Ethics Center. "Laramie

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Shannon Rexroat, University of Wyoming senior

that does not have a hate crimes law. A bill that would have created extra penalties for criminals who target victims because of their race, religion or sexual orientation died in the state Senate in February.

Many in Wyoming, which proudly calls itself the Equality State because it was the first state to allow women's suffrage, are now looking inward.

State Rep. Mike Massie, a Democrat from Laramie, the who co-sponsored of three unsuccessful "bias crime" bills, said he would try again. "I hope we recognize the reason for it and call it Matthew's Law - like Megan's law in New Jersey - so we can have something positive come

is a fairly comfortable place to live. So I thought."

Shepard's death coincided with the first day of Gay Awareness Week on the 10,000-student campus. Steve Hassheider and Phil Underwood were working at the table sponsored by the campus' Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered Association.

"We've been getting a lot of support around campus," said Hassheider, watching a parade of denim-clad students shuffle past his table in the Student Union. "Last year you could see people veering away from the table, afraid to even be seen near it."

Hassheider was heartened by this reaction but said he and his friends

know to be discreet about their sexuality in Laramie.

Underwood, a social work student, worried that the show of support will turn out to be short-lived. "Our greatest concern is that the authorities in Wyoming are going to back off, saying it is was an isolated incident," he said. "No hate crime bill, no more awareness."

Jeannie Crofts, a 20-year-old student who grew up in Wyoming said she'd seen gay friends in high school beaten up but never imagined such anti-gay brutality was possible here.

"I think about him out there, tied to a fence for 18 or 20 hours - what was going through his head? It's too terrible for me to even think someone would do that."

Russell Henderson, 21, and Aaron McKinney, 22, were charged with kidnapping, aggravated robbery and first-degree murder, charges that could bring the death penalty. Two women described as the pair's girlfriends, Kristen Leann Price, 18, and Chastity Vera Pasley, 20, have been charged as accessories after the fact to first-degree murder.

Shepard on Tuesday night attended a meeting of the campus gay and lesbian organization, which was planning Gay Awareness Week. At the meeting, the group's president told of an incident in which he was harassed near the campus' Fraternity Row and advised students to be careful.

After the meeting Shepard asked a female friend if she wanted to stop at the Fireside Bar, a popular lounge. The friend begged off, saying that she had to study.

At the bar, police said, Henderson and McKinney, both high school dropouts, told Shepard that they were gay in order to lure him outside. They left in McKinney's truck, beating Shepard as they drove. Once they reached the edge of town, police said, the men lashed Shepard to a wooden ranch fence and continued beating him, smashing his skull with a .357 magnum handgun. Shepard continued to beg for his life until he lost consciousness.

Shepard remained by the side of the road for 18 hours until mountain bikers noticed him.

Police say the men stole Shepard's wallet and shoes. But McKinney's girlfriend told the Denver Post that McKinney said that Shepard had embarrassed him by making a pass at him in the bar. To get back at the student, McKinney and Henderson decided to take his money.

Shepard grew up in Casper and lived abroad until deciding to return to Wyoming and attend his father's alma mater. Shepard's father, an oil rig safety instructor, took a job in Saudi Arabia and Shepard finished high school at a boarding school in Lugano, Switzerland. Shepard, who spoke Arabic and German, wanted to pursue a career in the foreign service.

Domino's sues UK campus over Papa John's debit-card contract

By John Cheves,
Lexington Herald-Leader, Ky.
Knight-Ridder Newspapers

(KRT) — Domino's Pizza delivered a piping-hot lawsuit this week to the University of Kentucky.

Judson Ridgway, owner of the Domino's, is unhappy with the tasty deal UK has offered to competitor Papa John's Pizza: As of last Friday, students can charge pizzas to their UK-issued debit cards — sending the bill to Mom and Dad, or whomever pays their college bills — but only if the pizza comes from Papa John's.

"This is a big deal. It means a lot of money to whoever gets this

contract," said Ridgway, who filed a lawsuit against UK Tuesday in Fayette Circuit Court.

"If you're a student and you've got a \$20 bill in one pocket and a debit card in the other, and you're hungry, what are you going to do? Are you going to spend your \$20? Or are you going to buy a pizza with your debit card, and then you still have your \$20 to party with?" Ridgway asked.

Corinne Geerken, a UK senior from Ashland, seconded that idea yesterday as she bought a pizza at the Papa John's on South Limestone Street near campus.

"It's just easier," Geerken said, paying for her pie with her debit card. "As a student, I try not to carry a lot of cash. It's just more convenient for me to say, 'Just put it on my (UK) Plus Account.'"

Domino's lawsuit calls into question the way UK chose its primary pizza provider during the summer.

Four pizzerias competed for the debit-card deal: Domino's, Papa John's, Pizza Hut and Mad Mushroom Pizza. The businesses submitted bids that specified the commissions they would pay to UK if they were selected.

Papa John's came in last in this category, with an offer of 15 percent; the other three offered commissions of at least 24 percent.

But an informal campus poll placed Papa John's as the students' first choice, gobbling 44 percent of the

vote, compared to Pizza Hut (25 percent), Domino's (13 percent) and Mad Mushroom (5 percent).

UK vice president for fiscal affairs George DeBin said the student poll played a big role in UK's final choice, as did other factors, including price and the pizzerias' ability to handle high-volume sales.

Domino's contends a random survey of 200 students on campus is not the statistically accurate way to learn which pizza is the most beloved.

Mad Mushroom — which joined Domino's in a written protest to the university in July, although it is not a plaintiff in the suit — makes the same argument, said owner Steve Hart.

"We have a really strong hold on the campus. We'll do at least 300 pizzas that go on campus a day, and we don't even open until 4 p.m.," Hart said. "Numbers don't lie. The kids like our pizza."

DeBin said he didn't oversee the student survey, but he thinks its results are sound.

"If it's 200 people at random, based on a dormitory population of 5,300, that's one in 25 kids who we asked, or 4 percent of the overall population," DeBin said. "I'd say that's pretty good."

Domino's also wonders if the generosity of John Schnatter, Papa John's founder and chief executive officer, played a role. Papa John's has given millions to Kentucky schools in recent years, including \$1 million last November to the UK athletics program.

Terry B. Mobley of the UK Development Office agreed yesterday that Schnatter is a supporter of school athletics but said the fix was not in when picking a pizzeria.

Schnatter hasn't "given enough to the university to just automatically get any kind of pizza contract," Mobley said.

In the future, UK might open the competition to all interested pizza peddlers if it gets the hang of handling off-campus dining by debit card, DeBin said. The school still is experimenting at this point, he added.

That makes the most sense to Craig White, a UK junior from Georgetown.

White, who orders pizza about once a week, said he doesn't care who arrives at his door, but "it's better to have an option than to have someone who's got a monopoly on the students."

Police blotter: A look at campus crime briefs

Compiled By Peter Levine
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College Press Exchange

NORTHRIDGE, Calif. (CPX) — According to the Daily SUNDIAL, a woman at California State University at Northridge reported to police on Sept. 15 that she saw a man on campus clutching his abdomen as if in pain. The woman said she ran in the direction of campus police to get the man help. As she looked over her shoulder, she spied the man unzipping his pants and exposing himself. The woman said the man chased after her while yelling obscenities. She told police she ran home and was unharmed.

BOULDER, Colo. (CPX) — A couple living near the University of Colorado at Boulder told police on Sept. 18 that they awoke to find a drunk student passed out in their bathroom.

According to The Campus Press, the student, a 19-year-old male who lives on campus, apparently opened the couple's front door, unlatched a chain lock to let himself inside and wandered into the bathroom, where he passed out.

One of the victims told police that he heard a loud noise in the middle of the night but went back to sleep. He found the student when he awoke to use the bathroom at 6 a.m.

The student was treated for a cut on his head and charged with first-degree criminal trespassing.

CINCINNATI, Ohio (CPX) — Five students at the University of Cincinnati who were accused of breaking into the Cincinnati Zoo to ride the camels pleaded no contest to criminal trespassing on Sept. 28 and were fined \$150 each.

At about 3:30 a.m. on the previous night, the students had managed to scale two fences — one surrounding the camel pit — before security guards caught them, police said.

BOSTON, Mass. (CPX) — Talking in class won't necessarily get you extra credit.

Just ask the Boston University student who, on Sept. 25, got smacked in the head by a woman who repeatedly asked him to pipe down during the professor's lecture.

According to the Daily Free Press, the man was not seriously injured, and the woman fled before police arrived.

MADISON, Wis. (CPX) — According to The Badger Herald, a judge has ordered a student at the University of Wisconsin at Madison to stay away from Gov. Tommy Thompson until charges of disorderly conduct against the student are settled.

Ben Manski, a senior known for his campus activism, has pleaded not guilty to the charges. He was arrested after police said he repeatedly shouted "What about democracy, Governor?" during a Sept. 10 speech Thompson delivered at the university.

Manski said he shouted during Thompson's speech because the governor has denied students' requests to meet with him.

The ruling allows Manski to participate in protests and to write editorials against Thompson, said his attorney, Jordan Loeb.

"But, if you were thinking about going golfing with the governor, it is off," Loeb joked with Manski after the hearing.

If convicted, Manski faces a \$1,000 fine and up to 90 days in jail. His next court appearance is scheduled for Nov. 4.

Another student, Erin Clare Quinn, also was arrested for being rowdy during the event. She said she will fight the \$240 ticket she received — not because she wants to make a political statement, but because she can't afford to pay it.

"I hope it's reduced, or they won't get any money from me," Quinn said. "I'd rather eat than donate to the Department of Corrections."

ATLANTA, Ga. (CPX) — Police at Emory University said one student could have avoided a whole lot of trouble on Sept. 20 if he had simply walked home after having too much to drink.

According to the Emory Wheel, police spied the man lifting bicycles over his head and throwing them to the ground. Officers said the student broke into a run as they approached him. Once caught, police said the student told them, "I only had a few shots."

Police also reported that the student told them he was "born in 1980," but produced a driver's license stating he was older.

Police charged the student with public intoxication and possession of a fictitious license and jailed him for the rest of the night.

"Usually it takes behavior other than the appearance that you've been drinking before we will arrest (you)," said campus police Chief Craig Watson.

AUSTIN, Texas (CPX) — A junior at the University of Texas at Austin has been charged with manufacturing fake IDs and selling them to high school and college students for \$100 each, the Daily Texan has reported.

Travis Wade Scott, a computer science major, was arrested Sept. 28 after police searched his apartment and found several fake driver's licenses and computer equipment believed to have been used to make them, said Tela Goodwin Mange, a spokeswoman for the campus' department of public safety.

According to the Daily Texan, police had investigated Scott for nearly a year after fake IDs bearing certain similarities turned up throughout the Austin and San Antonio area. Several minors also named Scott as the person from whom they purchased the fakes, Mange said.

While she declined to say how many fake IDs Scott may have produced, Mange did say he is believed to be a part of a large forgery ring and that additional arrests are likely.