

Rapist receives Probation

By Timothy Cwiek

A South Philadelphia man who admitted raping another man last year will not spend any time in jail a Common Pleas judge ruled June 17. Edward Follett must serve eight years of probation, but he may serve it concurrently with another probation sentence, said Common Pleas Judge Gregory R. Smith.

Follett assaulted one gay man in April 2001, and sexually assaulted another gay man in July 2001. He met both his victims at Woody's bar and Restaurant, 202 S. 13th St., and brought them to his home, where he assaulted the, according to court testimony.

On March 13, Smith convicted Follett of aggravated assault in the first incident. Five days later, Follett pleaded guilty to one count of sexual assault in the second incident.

PGN does not report the names of alleged sexual-assault victims. A. Charles Peruto Jr., an attorney for Follett, said his client was pleased with the probation sentence. "He was facing four to eight years in state prison, and he got straight probation," Peruto said. "Wouldn't you be pleased?"

Peruto noted that Smith did not sentence Follett to a period of house arrest as expected. The rape victim attended the June 17 sentencing, but did not have any comment.

Peruto said Follett has no apologies for his victims. "My client doesn't believe he did anything wrong," Peruto said. "But he does regret being arrested." Follett did not speak at this sentencing, and had no comment for this story, Peruto said.

Follett also must refrain from visit Center City in the area of Broad to 11th Streets, between Walnut and Lombard streets. Follett also must register as a sex offender with the state police and must be examined by a panel of psychiatrists, to determine if he needs professional treatment, Smith said.

Follett also must pay \$1,700 in medical expenses to his first victim, who broke an ankle during his assault, and Follett must pay \$209 in court costs, Smith said. Prosecutor Jason Bologna said he disagreed with the sentence.

"The defendant is a twice-convicted felon," Bologna said. "Whenever a person is violent in these ways, they belong in jail. But the judge, hearing the facts and circumstances of both cases, thought otherwise."

Bologna said he had no opinion on the sensitivity of the criminal-justice system concerning same-sex rape. "I don't have an opinion on that subject based on one case," he said.