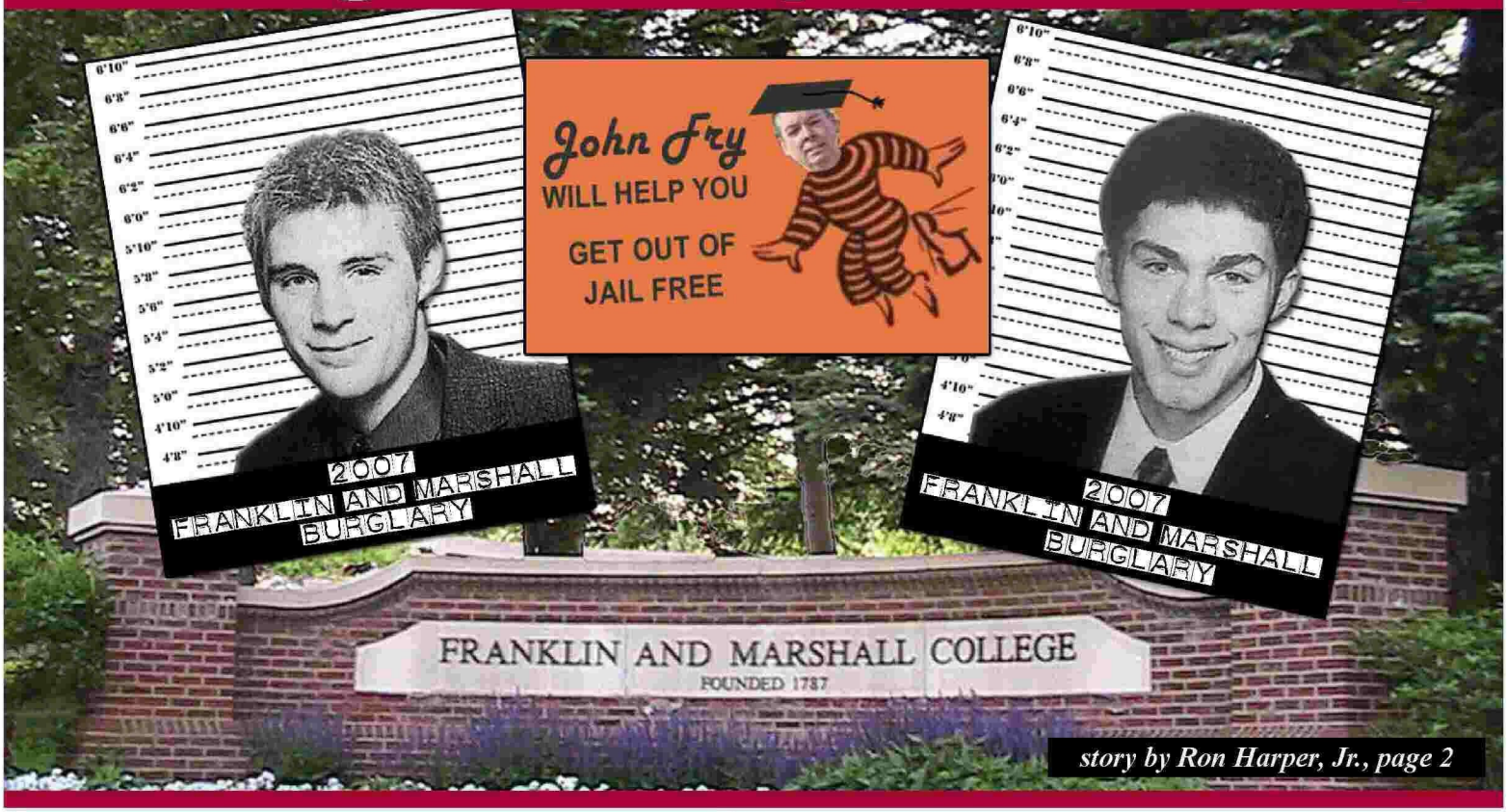
Week of May 30th, 2008 - Volume 1 Number 7

LANCASTER POST

nothing but the truth...

Collegiate Caper Cover-up



story by Ron Harper, Jr., page 2

Seeking Justice
CLYMER & MUSSER, P.C.
Protecting Your Rights and Legal Interests
ClymerLaw.com (866) 507 - 6247

INSIDE:

Side by Side: Lowering the Drinking Age...pg 3
They Said WHAT?!?.....pg 7
County Entertainment Guide.....pgs 10 & 11
The Barnstomers' Latin Connection.....pg 19
... and much, much more

Lancaster's Law & Order

by Ron Harper, Jr.
Lancaster Post

One law for the rich and connected, another law for the rest of us?

The guard raised the gate to allow passage onto Bent Creek Drive. The long meandering road cut through the exclusive golf club and past one of the highest concentrations of expensive homes in Lancaster County.

It was an unlikely location to attempt an interview with a young man accused of three felonies and a misdemeanor: burglary, conspiracy to commit burglary, criminal trespass, and theft by unlawful taking.

The young man in the fancy neighborhood was one of three accused of these crimes. All three were former basketball stars at Manheim Township (including the school's all-time high scorer), with two of them going on to play for Franklin & Marshall College, and one at Shippensburg University.

One would think three local college basketball stars accused of multiple felonies would warrant a newspaper story or two. The fact that these are the first words written in a newspaper about this subject is not a testament to great newspaper investigative work, but rather a comment on effective use of power and prestige to silence the issue and to attempt to avoid responsibility for the players' actions.

The president of F&M, John Fry, has been quoted as saying, "What's good for F&M is good for Lancaster."

There are some who might disagree.

The scene of the crime was the bar in the yet-to-be-opened Iron Hill Brewery on Harrisburg Pike. It was directly below junior F&M basketball star, Clay Scovill's, student apartment. The banker's son was partying with teammate and fellow court star, senior Derek Hines. It was November 24, 2007. Casey Snyder, a Shippensburg University student and fellow Manheim Township grad, was partying with them, as well.

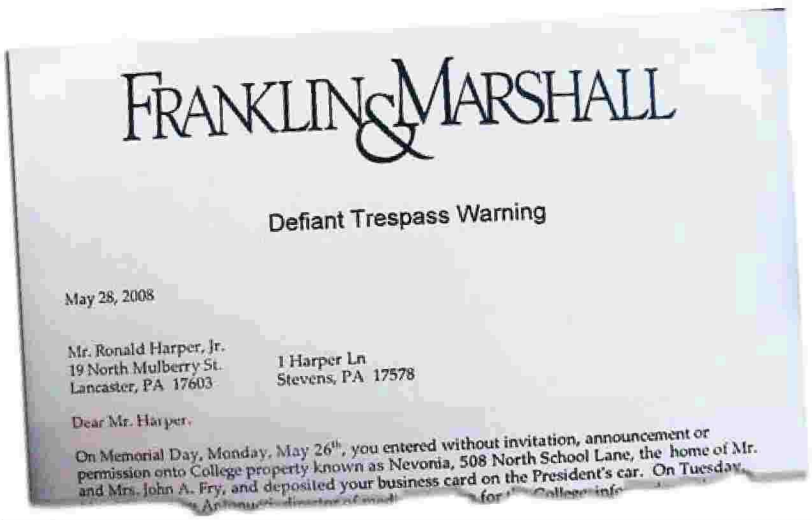
The F&M basketball team beat Juniata that night, 66 to 57, and the 6'3" Scovill and 6'7" Hines had led the team to victory. The stars were feeling good on this Saturday night.

According to court documents, Lancaster City Police Detective Bradley R. Shenk wrote that video surveillance showed that the three, along with an unidentified female, entered an unlocked employee entrance door to the pub. They spent 31 minutes inside and left through the same door. Fourteen minutes later, at 3:32 a.m., the three (the female was not with them) entered the bar again, this time carrying out 7 bottles of liquor valued at $171.73. During the first trip to the brewery, the would-be thieves merely cased the joint and didn't bother to hide their faces. On the second trip, they attempted to cover their faces, but with the earlier video surveillance exposure and their unusual height, it was fairly easy to identify the F&M players as the thieves.

On December 13, they were officially charged with three felonies and a misdemeanor. One week later, the F&Mers fingered Snyder (the Shippensburg student) in separate interviews with the police. Police did not charge Snyder with breaking in, because the door was already opened. When the three appeared for their first court proceeding, the arraignment, none had to put up any bail money.



The scene of the crime, Iron Hill Brewery.



FRANKLIN & MARSHALL

Defiant Trespass Warning

May 28, 2008

Mr. Ronald Harper, Jr.
19 North Mulberry St.
Lancaster, PA 17603

1 Harper Ln
Stevens, PA 17578

Dear Mr. Harper,

On Memorial Day, Monday, May 26th, you entered without invitation, announcement or permission onto College property known as Nevonia, 508 North School Lane, the home of Mr. and Mrs. John A. Fry, and deposited your business card on the President's car. On Tuesday,

A courthouse source, familiar with the cases, said that John Fry lobbied Craig Stedman to go easy on these "good boys."

'Go easy' means a plea deal where the men will plead guilty to the crimes, pay a fine, and a year later the felonies will be erased from the record - like nothing ever happened – all records deleted. The deal is to go down June 20, 2008, subject to the court's approval. The judge is yet to be determined.

The program – Accelerated Rehabilitative Disposition (ARD)—is designed for first-time offenders to get a fresh start. The question: would anyone who committed these felony crimes get the same treatment?

The Post made several attempts to contact John Fry, including showing up at his house (people were clearly home, but no one answered the door), but Fry has refused to comment on the matter.

The Post also contacted F&M Vice-President for Administrative Services and External Affairs, Keith

Publishers' Note:

As the Post was going to press, a uniformed guard and the Franklin & Marshall director of public safety showed up at the Post's business address and delivered a letter threatening legal action if Post News Editor, Ron Harper, Jr. stepped on F&M property.

The letter contained several libelous statements against Mr. Harper. Instead of responding to the Post's legitimate questions in the public interest, Franklin and Marshall, presumably at the behest of college president, John Fry, attempted to intimidate the Post. Make no mistake, we will not bow to this intimidation, and call on our colleagues of the 4th Estate to pressure president Fry to disclose any involvement he had in lobbying on behalf of these students.

Lancaster's Law & Order

continued from page 2...

Orr, who referred all inquirers to Dulcey Antonucci, the media liasion for the college. Her response was no response – call the authorities.

Lancaster County District attorney, Craig Stedman, would only comment, "If this is a pending case, ethical rules and good sense for all parties would not allow me to comment until the plea takes place."

Tom Zeager, President of Justice & Mercy, a non-profit organization, which focuses on prison reform and re-entry issues, said that he didn't have a problem with the ball players getting ARD, but wants poor people to get the same deal, even though they do not have the money and connections the ball players do.

"Too often, the poor get abused by the justice system. We need to focus on changing people's lives and not just punishment."

The Franklin & Marshall basketball coach, Glenn Robinson, who suspended the players for two games, said, "I really don't want to discuss this. Going on the details I knew at the time, it was the appropriate thing."

The victim in this case – Iron Hill Brewery – seems fine with letting the kids off. "You got to understand, F&M is our landlord," said Clint Wagner, who was the manager at Iron Hill Brewery. "We want to keep good relations. They are good kids that did something stupid. We got our restitution and they got ARD and will have their record expunged. We're OK with it."

And what about the role of Lancaster Newspapers, whose staff was aware of the situation and identities of the men? Why didn't they cover the story? "We were told it was a minor thing," said Harold Ziegler, retired Lancaster New Era Sports writer. "Someone didn't pay a bill or something like that."

It was more than not paying a bill. It was burglary and other felonies, and it is legitimate to ask: would another young man, who didn't have a good jump shot or live in a palace with guards and gates, have gotten the same deal?



F&M's new dormitories above the bar crime scene.