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Gay man found critically injured

Press inquiry spurs authorities to investigate; family accuses police department of dragging its heels

By David Webb
Staff Reporter

A gay Dallas resident is in acute care at Texas Specialty Hospital three weeks after being found injured and unconscious in the parking lot of an Oak Lawn apartment complex.

Dorian Russell, 35, was found lying face up in the 5000 block of Bowser just before dawn on Dec. 26. Blood was running from his left ear and his mouth, according to investigators.

Paramedics found injuries to the back of Russell's head, left elbow, both knees and lower leg, the report said. A trail of blood led to a staircase nearby, where more blood was found on the wall and a stair step, it said.

Russell was taken to Parkland Hospital in critical condition and required emergency surgery.

Police found a 1991 white Toyota with a door open, the engine running and lights on about 200 feet away from Russell. The owner of the car could not be found, and the apartments closest to Russell were vacant.

Police towed the car, which did not belong to Russell, to the city auto pound.

Police classified the incident as an injured person report until Wednesday, when an inquiry by Dallas Voice resulted in the case's transfer to the crimes against persons investigative unit.

Russell, who works in the Kodak



Dorian Russell, 35, lies in a hospital bed three weeks after he was found unconscious and bleeding in an apartment parking lot. Russell was taken in critical condition to Parkland Hospital, where he underwent emergency surgery.



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Qualex photo shop at Target, was found beaten and bleeding by his partner, according to Rick Wagner, a friend of the injured man.

Wagner said the vicious attack was proof "that fag-bashing is still alive and well in Dallas."

Russell's mother, Lovene Jones, said that she also believes her son was beaten, and that medical personnel agree. He had no broken bones, which would likely result from being hit by a car or suffering an accident like falling down stairs, she said

"I've never seen so many bruises on a person in my life," Jones said.

The police report gave no indication of how Russell sustained the injuries.

Jones said that her son, who can barely talk, will be in the hospital for months. He had severe brain damage and required emergency surgery.

"He probably will never be able to remember what happened," Jones said.

Jones said police officers the family spoke with refused to investigate the matter as a crime.

"They said they couldn't because there were no witnesses, and they couldn't talk to my son," Jones said. Wagner said that Russell's cell phone and wallet were missing when he was found. Doctors at the hospital told Russell's partner that injuries to his hands indicated that he was apparently trying to defend himself from someone, he said.

"If he was simply hit by the car the injuries would have been located in the place of impact, not methodical places on arms and legs," Wagner said. "It's a dead-end street with little traffic, giving indication that the act was deliberate and not accidental."

Jones said that family members called her son's cell phone number and discovered someone was using it. Police were informed but took no action, she said.

"They've been dragging their heels

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for almost a month," Jones said. "I'm glad they're finally doing something."

The investigating officer, Sgt. R.T. Smith, who was assigned to the case this week, could not be reached for comment.

Wagner said that Russell suffered a head injury that required partial removal of the cranial bones to alleviate his brain's swelling.

Wagner said that he was disappointed that Russell's injuries had gone unnoticed by the GLBT community for three weeks.

Dallas Tavern Guild president Alan Pierce said that Russell's plight is a reminder for everyone to always be more vigilant to the possibility of a criminal attack when they are outside at night.

"I'm honestly not aware of any crime going on right now," Pierce said. "I haven't heard about any from my customers or the police."

Pierce said that police officers warned club owners about a string of armed robberies and assaults in the Lower Greenville and Oak Lawn entertainment districts several weeks ago. But those appear to have stopped, he said.

Pierce said that he was also concerned that Russell's situation had gone unnoticed by the community for so many weeks. Bar patrons and business owners need to be aware when problems occur, he said.

Pierce noted that Russell was found in a rougher area than the Oak Lawn entertainment district, and a different police substation monitors it. The Crossroads is located in the central police substation's coverage area, and it is sensitive to GLBT concerns, he said.

