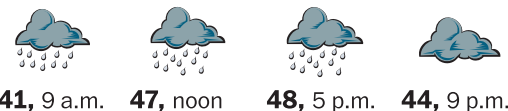


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THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2012

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41, 9 a.m. 47, noon 48, 5 p.m. 44, 9 p.m.

**Obituaries** Patricia Stephens Due was a civil rights activist in the 1960s who led a number of protests, including a "jail-in" in Tallahassee. She chronicled her actions in the book "Freedom in the Family." **B6**

**WASHINGTONPOST.COM**

**Same-sex marriage**

Follow coverage of the gay marriage debate this morning in the Maryland legislature. Go to [postlocal.com](http://postlocal.com) for live updates.

**VIRGINIA**

**The \$150 million question**

Rates along the Dulles Toll Road could double next year if Virginia doesn't deliver on its promise to contribute to the Silver Line. **B3**



**JOHN KELLY'S WASHINGTON**

**Chiming in on Old Post Office**

Some wonder how often its bells will ring once it's a hotel. They were set up in 1983, and William Theobald, left, was the bell-hanging supervisor. **B2**

More news focused on your neighborhood in the Local Living section inside today's newspaper

## A long dispute in D.C. nears an end

Judge is set to approve settlement in suit over mental health system

BY THERESA VARGAS

The year a group of psychiatric patients launched a class-action lawsuit against the District, calling for a mental health system that offered more options than a troubled hospital, Annie Alatishe was in her 20s.

She had not yet given birth to her son, Tamir. She had not yet heard doctors tell her that a fall down the stairs had injured the 1-year-old's brain. She had no idea that almost 40 years later — as the case approached a final settlement — she would have to consider whether she trusts the city's mental health system to properly take care of her son, now 23, for the rest of his life.

"If something were to happen to me, no one else would take care of Tamir," said Alatishe, 61. Without proper attention from the city, she said, "he would sit there and rot."

On Thursday, U.S. District Judge Thomas F. Hogan is expected to approve a settlement in a case that has outlasted the terms of five D.C. mayors and is now known as *Dixon v. Gray*. The landmark day comes after about 27,000 notices were sent out in recent months, inviting D.C. residents who depend on the system, such as Alatishe, to express their objections.

She was one of just 47 people who responded.

"I felt obligated because I have been dealing with mental health for so long," she said. Her son, who lives in a group home, has been diagnosed with autism and

SETTLEMENT CONTINUED ON B5

## Abuse case highlights reforms in Pr. William

BY JOSH WHITE

When Evelin Ventura brought her youngest child to the hospital in January 2009, the 8-month-old girl was emaciated, her enlarged head was bulging, and she was lethargic, vomiting and clearly in pain.

Ventura, 29, of Dumfries, said the infant girl had been riding in a stroller that tipped over, causing the baby to hit her head on the ground. Though doctors thought the injuries were more consistent with a violent shaking, social workers, Child Protective Services investigators and police determined that no abuse had occurred. Permanently blinded and with parts of her brain dead, the little girl went home with her mother.

Prince William County prosecutors argued in circuit court over the past week that Ventura's baby returned into the care of a "tormentor," a mother so upset that the baby even existed that she repeatedly abused her during the first two years of her life. Ventura escaped detection, they said, by lying to authorities and slipping through a system that repeatedly failed to identify what they called a pattern of chronic abuse.

"A lot of people let this child down," Assistant Commonwealth's Attorney Sandra Sylvester told jurors. "The police, social

BABY CONTINUED ON B5



Brenda Vivar, 15, right, of Hyattsville, with dentist Debony Hughes, left, and dental assistant LaShonda Johnson at a public dental clinic in Cheverly. The clinic is an example of local and state efforts to improve access to health care in Prince George's County.

PHOTOS BY SARAH L. VOISIN/THE WASHINGTON POST

## Health care on the exam table

Survey underway in Pr. George's as part of effort to rebuild medical system

BY MIRANDA S. SPIVACK

The questions are simple: Where do you go to the doctor? How long does it take you to get there? If there were a new hospital closer to home, would you use it?

But the survey underway in Prince George's County is intended to address a complex problem. Officials expect the data to give them a detailed look at the state of health and health care in the county, where conditions such as diabetes and heart disease are much more common than in the rest of the region and most of the state.

At the same time, officials hope that the information will help determine how to build a new regional hospital and primary-care network that would attract residents from a broad range of incomes and ethnic backgrounds.

Local government and health officials are looking not only at how much a hospital would cost to build but also at what types of services residents need to help them stay healthy and out of the emergency room.

"The basic question they are asking is what would a hospital center and a network around it really mean for health in the county," said Joshua Sharfstein, Maryland's health secretary. "It's not just the number of visits and services; it is about how to design a system to maximize the effect on health."

That approach, planners hope, could help lower high rates of asthma, diabetes, HIV, heart disease and low infant birth weight in the predominantly black county — problems that have been linked to racial



Maria Juana Callejas holds son Francisco Melendez, 19 months, on her lap as Hughes, the program chief at the Cheverly dental clinic, gives the toddler a checkup.

**Fixing a broken system**

Five years after a Prince George's boy died from a tooth infection, Maryland's child-dental-care reforms are making a difference. **B8**

disparities in health care.

At the same time, it could help the system become financially secure by attracting patients from inside and outside the county who can afford to pay for care.

"In Prince George's County, you have an interesting dynamic," said Stephen B. Thomas, director of the University of Maryland Center for Health Equity. "You have the highest-per-capita-income black population in the United States. Some of the premier health institutions in the country are in our state. The National Institutes of Health is in our back yard. Yet

HEALTH CONTINUED ON B8

## Defense theory in Love death

**EXPERT REBUTS TRAUMA FINDING**

Suffocation in pillow called likely cause

BY MARY PAT FLAHERTY AND JENNA JOHNSON

CHARLOTTESVILLE — Yearley Love probably smothered in her own pillow, after "she was thrown facedown" into it, according to an expert called by the defense team for George Huguey V.

Jan Leestma, a neuropathologist from Chicago, testified late Wednesday that he saw no sign of the serious brain injury that medical witnesses for prosecutors contend killed Love. Rather, he said, Love suffocated on a bloody pillow. Breathing into a wet surface, "that could do it," Leestma said.

Leestma didn't address how Love might have been thrown there or whether he thought that her intoxication level — which was 0.14 — had a role in her death.

Love's body was found by her roommate shortly before 2:30 a.m. May 3, 2010, and Huguey, of Chevy Chase, was arrested that day. He has pleaded not guilty to murder and five other charges in the death of Love, his sometime girlfriend, who like Huguey was a senior at the University of Virginia and a lacrosse player.

Leestma was among the first witnesses to testify for the defense, which has argued that Love's death was a tragic accident.

Earlier Wednesday, prosecutors admitted two final pieces of evidence — a photo of Love and

HUGUEY CONTINUED ON B5

## Doors closing? Obama's cut in Metro funding is ominous.



Robert McCartney

Although Metro officials and Democratic politicians are trying desperately to mute their criticism, there's no avoiding the fact that President Obama's proposal to cut federal

funds for our region's transit system is a worrisome step in the wrong direction.

It looks like a small trim: \$15 million of the \$150 million that Uncle Sam is supposed to give Metro each year to invest in safety upgrades and modernization.

But it sets a horrible precedent. It would shortchange Metro for the first time on a long-term funding deal that's been in place for only three years and was obtained only after more than four years of hard work beforehand.

The ultimate result could easily be a slowdown in Metro's encouraging initial efforts to repair some of the damage that years of underfunding and weak leadership had caused. Possible casualties include new rail cars and escalators and improved track signals.

Area business leaders and other transit advocates decried the proposed reduction, included in Obama's budget released Monday.

"A deal is a deal. Metro is in the midst of a real improvement turnaround. The last thing we need is the federal government cutting the [money] for a 10-year agree-

MCCARTNEY CONTINUED ON B4

## Interracial marriage rates soar as attitudes change

**Virginia has highest percentage of unions between blacks, whites**

BY CAROL MORELLO

Virginia leads the nation in the percentage of marriages between blacks and whites, a new study by the Pew Research Center shows, barely four decades after state laws criminalizing interracial marriage were struck down by the U.S. Supreme Court. And one in five new married couples in the District crossed racial and ethnic lines.

The prevalence of intermarriage in and around the Washington area reflects demographic changes that are pushing interracial marriage rates to an all-time high in the United States while toppling historical taboos among younger people.

According to the Pew study,

about 15 percent of new marriages in 2010 crossed racial or ethnic lines, double the rate from three decades ago. Intermarriages make up 8 percent of all marriages now, up from just 3 percent in 1980. And most Americans tell pollsters they are untroubled at the prospect of intermarriage in their own family.

"In the past half-century, intermarriage has evolved from being illegal, to being taboo, to being merely unusual," said Paul Taylor, director of the Pew Research Center. "With each passing year, it becomes less unusual. . . . The face of the country is changing, and behaviors are changing with it."

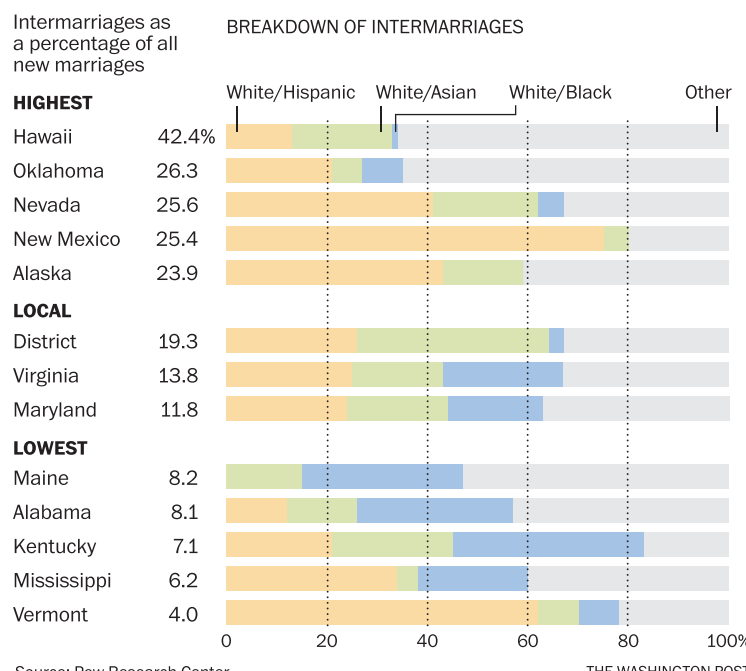
The study, called "the Rise of Intermarriage," found patterns that varied by gender, geography and race or ethnicity.

For example, black men were almost three times as likely to marry someone of another race as black women were. Conversely,

INTERRACIAL CONTINUED ON B5

**Intermarriage nationwide**

Of all newlywed couples in the United States in 2010, 15 percent were intermarriages. Here are the states with highest and lowest percentages of intermarriages as part of all new marriages statewide, 2008 to 2010, compared with the District, Maryland and Virginia.



THE WASHINGTON POST

# Demographics help boost interracial marriage

**INTER-RACIAL FROM B1**

Asian women were twice as likely to marry outside their race as Asian men were. There was no difference between genders for Hispanics and whites.

In the District, intermarriages account for 19 percent of all newlywed couples, compared to 14 percent in Virginia and 12 percent in Maryland. The only states where intermarriage is more common lie west of the Mississippi River.

But the biggest differences are between different races and ethnicities. The share of whites who marry "out" of their race has more than doubled since 1980, to 9 percent. The percentage of blacks who marry non-blacks has more than tripled, to 17 percent. Asians and Hispanics have the highest rates of intermarriage, with more than a quarter of all Asian newlyweds marrying a non-Asian. But that rate of Hispanics who marry

non-Hispanics hasn't changed since 1980, while the percentage of Asians who intermarry has dipped a bit.

Sociologists and demographers attribute that to four decades of immigration that has increased the pool of Hispanics and Asians who are potential mates.

"Because of the increase of the marriage eligibility pool of Asian Americans, the option of marrying outside in order to have a higher or middle-class lifestyle is much less," said Larry Shinagawa, director of Asian American studies at the University of Maryland. "You have a higher probability of finding someone of the same ethnic or cultural background."

Christian Oh, who teaches Asian culture at the State Department, never imagined while growing up that he would marry another Asian.

He came to the United States from South Korea when he was 2, in the early 1970s, so his father

could work for his PhD at Iowa State University. It seemed to him at the time that "there were no other Asians in a 400-mile radius" of Ames.

Eventually, the family ended up in Roanoke, where he was practically the only Asian in his high school. He dated girls who were white, black and Hispanic, and ended up going to his prom with an exchange student from India.

Only when he attended college at George Mason University did he start dating other Asians. He met his wife, Sarah, when she returned a pair of jeans at a Gap store where he was working. A new immigrant, she only spoke Korean.

Oh said he found an "ease" in dating a woman with a shared cultural background. The couple wed in 1997 and live in Merrifield.

"There are always going to be cultural explanations with someone who doesn't understand Asian culture," said Oh, who has one brother with a wife from Tai-

wan and another brother who married a white woman.

Non-Hispanic whites make up nearly two thirds of the population, so because of sheer numbers, the bulk of intermarriages have a white spouse.

As intermarriage rates have grown, attitudes have changed dramatically. In a 1986 Roper Poll, two-thirds of the people said they could never imagine themselves marrying someone from a different race. In a 2009 Pew poll, just 6 percent of whites and 3 percent of blacks said they would not accept an interracial marriage in their family.

Dan Lichter, a Cornell University sociologist who has studied intermarriage, said the trend shows the continuing blurring of racial boundaries.

"Different racial and ethnic minorities are increasingly sharing the same social space, in their neighborhoods, their job settings and schools," Lichter said. "It's a

reflection of declining inequality on a lot of fronts, including income and education."

But a post-racial society remains a long way off, he added.

"Most of the minorities who outmarry are not marrying other minorities," Lichter said. "They're outmarrying to whites. It's not a melting pot."

Nathan Nash, a black man who is divorced from a Korean American woman he was married to for five years, said that is particularly true for African Americans. A technology consultant who used to live in the District and now lives in Orange County, Calif., Nash said he has Asian friends who would not consider dating blacks.

"In the U.S., race pretty much comes first," he said. "People are slightly more open to the idea of interracial marriages. But as a country overall, we really identify people first as their race or ethnicity. There's still a barrier there."

morelloc@washpost.com

## THE DISTRICT

### Norovirus sickens about 85 at GWU

**BY CLARENCE WILLIAMS**

George Washington University officials alerted the campus Wednesday that about 85 students have been infected by the norovirus this week.

After testing by the university's Student Health Service and the D.C. Department of Health, officials confirmed that the norovirus was the cause of dozens of cases of gastrointestinal illness since Monday, university officials said in a statement. They said they could find no common link for the infections as students were affected who live at the Foggy Bottom campus, the Mount Vernon campus and off campus.

The ill students also attended classes, studied and dined at many locations, the statement said. Students were advised to wash their hands frequently and disinfect surfaces they use, and the school said it would increase the cleaning of commonly used areas.

The virus is usually not considered serious, and most people recover in one or two days. Symptoms include diarrhea, vomiting, nausea and stomach cramps. Other symptoms are a low-grade fever, chills and muscle aches.

williams@washpost.com

## A parent and her dealings with D.C.'s mental health care

**SETTLEMENT FROM B1**

psychosis. "I've had people say, 'He looks fine. There's nothing wrong with him.' And I'd say, 'If they only knew.'"

The widely anticipated settlement marks a major milestone for the city, ending court oversight of a mental health system that has made vast improvements, but that all sides agree has room for more.

"It communicates a message that the District is more than capable of operating its own agencies," Stephen Baron, director of the city's mental health department, said of the settlement. At the same time, he added, "We recognize there is still work to be done."

When the suit was launched in 1974, lead plaintiff William Dixon and other patients at St. Elizabeths Hospital sought less restrictive treatment options than the problem-ridden psychiatric institution. That year, more than 3,600 patients were housed there.

"Essentially, it was a fifth-rate prison," said Peter Nickles, who was one of the original Covington & Burling lawyers on the case and later served as attorney general for Mayor Adrian M.

*"I feel like if they work with him like they're supposed to, he will get to that level of independence. But they have to work with him closely."*

Annie Alatishe talking about her son, Tamir, who lives in a group home

Fenty (D). "You had all these people who were effectively jailed."

At that time, the federal government ran the hospital. In 1987, it transferred responsibility for the hospital to the District. Today, fewer than 300 patients can be found at the new St. Elizabeths Hospital, which opened in April 2010. More than 20,000 D.C. residents with mental health needs receive community-based care.

Dixon, who has since died, told The Washington Post in 1982 that the public's perception of him changed when he went from living at St. Elizabeths to a convalescent home: "When you live in a hospital, they say you were crazy. In a convalescent home, they say he lives there."

Mental health advocacy groups praise the District's progress in moving people to community-based care, but they warn that the needs of the city's most vulnerable remain great. In 2009, the National Alliance on Mental Health gave grades to mental health systems throughout the country, and the District earned a C. Overall, the nation received a D.

Shannon Hall, executive director of the D.C. Behavioral Health Association, which represents the city's mental health providers, said that in the past 18 months, eight providers have closed mental health programs, laid off a majority of their staff or gone out of business.

"Despite the Department of Mental Health's success, I don't think the big picture looks good," she said. "If nothing is done to help our providers, mental health care in the District will be left hollowed and inadequate."

And the city still struggles to meet the mental health needs of children, said Judith Sandalow, the executive director of the Children's Law Center.

"There's no question that D.C. is failing its children on the mental health side," Sandalow said. "We have well-educated, well-trained lawyers who have difficulty getting mental health services for our clients. And it's not just that they can't access services; there aren't services."

Dennis Jones, the court monitor who has overseen the case since 2002, said he saw the city go from having a poor-to-nonexistent mental health system to one that is "good and at times, very good."

"I think the challenge for the District is to go from good to great," he added, "and I think it has the capability of doing that."

Among the improvements that the District has agreed to meet by 2013: adding 300 supported housing units for people with serious mental illness and reducing the amount of time young people spend in psychiatric residential treatment facilities.

D.C. Council member David A. Catania (I-At Large), chairman of the Health Committee, which oversees the Department of Mental Health, said the District spends more money per capita on mental health services than any other jurisdiction in the country.

"Where we started in 1974 versus where we are in 2012 is night and day," Catania said. "At the end of the day, the Dixon case will have laid the foundation to help the District be a national leader in mental health services."

Annie Alatishe, a former crossing guard, said she had never heard of the Dixon case until she received the notice in the mail. She said the intent of her letter was not to stop the settlement but to inform the court about the way the system has treated her son.

During psychotic episodes, her son has been known to lock himself in his room and turn the television up loud to drown out voices in his head. At least one time he hurt himself. "It got to the point I couldn't handle him on my own," Alatishe said.

He has spent years going in and out of community-based treatment facilities and hospitals, including St. Elizabeths, and Alatishe said she has seen a system that has responded to her son's overarching needs but that has failed him on basic levels. One place had bedbugs, she said. Officials at another place didn't understand that her son needed help showering. In her letter, she said the settlement should provide more housing options. Her ultimate goal is for her son to live on his own, with the help of an aide who would check on him daily.

"I feel like if they work with him like they're supposed to, he will get to that level of independence," Alatishe said. "But they have to work with him closely."

vargast@washpost.com

Research director Madonna Lebling contributed to this report.



MARK GAIL/THE WASHINGTON POST

### Show time

Monique Walker plays the shekere, a traditional African musical instrument, as she and other members of the Soul in Motion Players perform in Laurel on Wednesday. Founded in 1984, the Rockville-based group specializes in African dance, drumming and spoken word.

## Case highlights changes in how child abuse issues are dealt with

**BABY FROM B1**

services, occupational therapists, doctors, and the one person who should care for her, her mother, the defendant."

On Wednesday, jurors found Ventura guilty of four counts of felony child abuse, one count of aggravated malicious wounding and two counts of assault and battery. Jurors recommended a prison sentence of 34 years and a \$100,000 fine; under Virginia sentencing rules, Ventura would be behind bars until after her 55th birthday should Prince William County Circuit Court Judge Mary Grace O'Brien uphold that sentence at a hearing scheduled for June 8.

The case, one in a stream of such child abuse trials in local courts, highlighted the path that Prince William County has followed in the three years since the high-profile death of Lexie Glover. Lexie, a special-needs girl known to police and social services officials, was left for dead in a frigid creek by her mother in January 2009. It was just days before Ventura brought her daughter to the hospital for her head injury.

Lexie's death, and the shortcomings it identified, led authorities to rethink the county's treatment of at-risk children and spawned a revamping of the way police investigate abuse. New protocols and training, police officials say, ensure such cases do not go uninvestigated.

With that new approach — involving social workers, doctors, more frequent forensic interviews and a team of detectives assigned to such cases — Ventura was arrested about a year after she brought her daughter to the hospital for the head injury. An observant day-care worker noticed scratches and bite marks on the baby's body, and Prince William County police Detective Dan Harris delved into the girl's history and interviewed her mother, who admitted some of the abuse.

A thorough examination of Ventura's baby turned up two old elbow fractures and injuries a doctor said were too numerous to count. Authorities said they be-

lieve the intervention likely saved the baby's life.

First Sgt. Liam Burke, who leads the county police's Special Victims Unit, said Lexie's case was a "learning experience" that helped refocus police efforts at protecting children and arresting abusers. Detectives received new training in early 2010 and since have looked more carefully at each case.

"We're looking at the totality of the circumstances, the history, full forensic interviews," Burke said outside of Circuit Courtroom 3 in Manassas on Monday, just after Judge O'Brien sent Ventura's case to the jury.

After Ventura's three children were taken from her, she was

*"A lot of people let this child down. The police, social services . . . and her mother, the defendant."*

Sandra Sylvester, assistant commonwealth's attorney

indicted, pleaded not guilty and testified at trial that the major injuries to her daughter were accidental; she said the girl fell off a bed and out of a stroller. The scratches were her fault, she said in Spanish through an interpreter, because she was "frustrated."

Ventura had been secretly living in an abandoned house because she was homeless, had no family support, was unable to properly care for her children, and was nearly penniless. Having a special-needs child who would cry incessantly pushed her to the brink, she and her defense lawyer, Margaret DeWilde, said in court.

"I felt that I had asked for all the help I could, and I felt I couldn't go on any longer," Ventura testified. "I didn't know what else to do."

So when her baby was brought to the hospital in June 2010 with the scratches and bite marks, Ventura said she lied and blamed another child for the injuries. She

was afraid of losing her children, Ventura said. And as an undocumented immigrant from El Salvador, she also risked deportation if convicted of a crime.

DeWilde argued that Ventura was a victim of poverty and was overwhelmed, leading her to miss doctor's appointments for a baby she loved and wanted to care for but lacked the experience to do so. She noted that the early cases were investigated and resulted in no charges.

"If CPS had felt there was an issue with child abuse, they could have done something in June 2008," DeWilde said, referencing the baby's first visit to the hospital, at 8 weeks old, when she was vomiting, crying and had bruising on her face, which doctors said was consistent with someone having grabbed her forcefully.

Prosecutors credit Harris with cracking the abuse case after he saw the baby in June 2010 and she appeared "very wasted away, emaciated" and with scratches and bite marks nearly from head to toe. Ventura initially denied hurting her daughter but later broke down and said she lost control when the baby was inconsolable.

Sylvester and Assistant Commonwealth's Attorney J. Regan Kline argued that Ventura was vengeful and sadistic, upset at the fact that her daughter's father was a married man who would not leave his wife to care for them. Kline told jurors that Ventura's youngest child was a "target" of her frustrations, and that she alone suffered malnutrition, physical abuse and neglect. Ventura's other two children were healthy and well cared for, according to testimony.

The baby survived the abuse, and she has since been living with her biological father. Though permanently blind and developmentally delayed, she is happy, healthy and playful, as seen in videos and photographs at trial. "The difference is, her tormenter has not had access to her," Sylvester said in court. She later ended her closing argument near tears: She "will never be able to fully comprehend what her mother did to her. That is a life sentence."

whitejs@washpost.com

## Huguely's attorneys begin to offer defense case

**HUGUELY FROM B1**

the tag from her body bag — before they rested their case. They contend that an angry Huguely shook Love until her head banged against a wall and then left her bleeding. The right side of Love's face was swollen, and she had an abrasion on her chin, according to testimony.

Leestma contradicted the prosecution's medical experts. The Virginia medical examiner's office ruled that Love died of blunt force trauma, which it attributed to whipsawing of her head or sharp torque that left her brain bruised and swollen.

Leestma said he did not see that. "I could not conclude it is trauma," he said. Love's brain was swollen, which was "abnormal," he said, but the swelling could have been caused by the cutoff of air as she lay on her pillow. He said bruising in her brain could be explained by a rush of blood to her head during efforts to resuscitate her.

Huguely told police that he and Love had fought before he tossed her bleeding back into her bed and left, without calling for medical help.

Jurors on Wednesday also heard from five former U-Va. lacrosse players who were friends of Huguely's. They said Huguely grew increasingly drunk on May 2, 2010, progressing from missing shots during a morning golf outing to urinating in public outside a restaurant.

Huguely had a "blank stare" when he arrived at home about midnight, Ken Clausen, a fellow lacrosse player, testified. "There was a change in his demeanor," Clausen said. "I asked him three times what was wrong."

Huguely never answered, Clausen told jurors, and he stared at the TV screen.

Clausen said that about 11:40 p.m., he and Kevin Carroll, Huguely's then-roommate, went on a beer run and that Huguely walked in after they returned.

Huguely told them that he had been downstairs with two other teammates in another apartment and that one of them was drunk, Clausen said. Clausen said he "thought that was kind of strange" because he knew that player was working on a paper. Carroll said he called the second player, who told him he was at his home, not downstairs.

"There was no reason to lie about something like that," Clausen said.

Francis McQ. Lawrence, one of Huguely's attorneys, asked players whether Huguely looked "disheveled" when they saw him around midnight.

He "was not disheveled?" Lawrence asked Clausen. "No," Clausen said.

"Other than being intoxicated, there was nothing unusual about him?" Lawrence asked William "Mike" Thompson. "No," Thompson said.

flaherty@washpost.com  
johnsonj@washpost.com