

## Ex-bus driver admits showing explicit video

Wednesday, Oct. 10, 2007

A Leonardtown area man faces up to a year in jail after pleading guilty to showing a sexually obscene video to boys on a school bus earlier this year, before he was abruptly fired from his job as its driver.

Christopher Paul Espina, 41, also was charged with sending lewd telephone text messages to a teenage girl and rendering her in need of supervision. Those charges were dropped last week at a court hearing, where she said she had hoped that her reporting the matter wouldn't lead to criminal charges.

St. Mary's Assistant State's Attorney Kevin McDevitt said that Espina showed a video with "graphic sexual content" on a portable DVD player on at least one occasion to at least three boys during a bus ride from Great Mills High School to the Dr. James A. Forrest Career and Technology Center near Leonardtown. One student said it was a "Girls Gone Wild" video, according to the prosecutor.

McDevitt also spoke of evidence that Espina had sent sexually-suggestive cell phone messages to the teenage girl and enabled her to skip classes by giving her a ride back to her car at the school, but Espina's lawyer said his client's guilty plea and admissions were limited to showing the "Girls Gone Wild" video.

"Mr. Espina had a DVD on the bus," defense attorney David W. Densford said. "He was fired immediately."

Espina said he now is self-employed, primarily delivering sheds for a company in Charles County.

District Judge Robert Riddle ordered that Espina, originally charged in the case through a summons, be on supervised release while a presentence investigation is conducted in advance of a sentencing hearing in January, and that he have no contact with any of the children involved in the incidents on the bus.

"You are not to be in the presence of any minor under the age of 18, alone," the judge said. "He's to have no contact with any of the victims."

The female teenager approached the judge with his consent and said she went to school officials because she wanted to directly confront Espina. "I didn't really want it to get this far," she said. "I wanted to tell him it was wrong and it was to stop. They wouldn't give me that opportunity."

The judge said the matter now is in his hands. "Whatever happens to him is my responsibility, not yours," he said.