

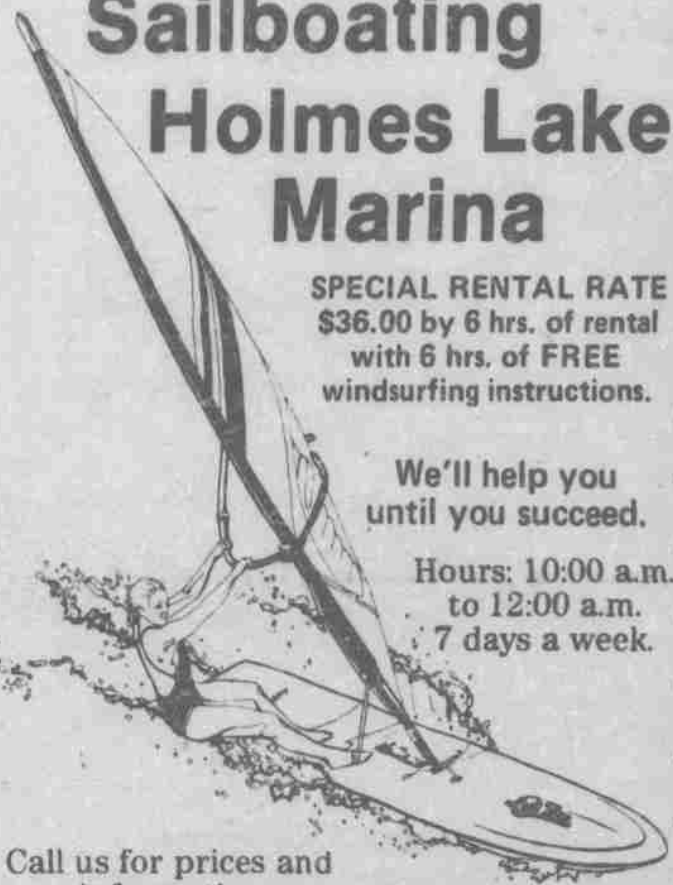
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County judge orders Lincoln man to stand trial for wife's death

By Ward W. Triplett III

A Lancaster County Judge Monday found enough probable cause and evidence to order a Lincoln man to stand trial for the rope strangulation death of his wife.

Mohammed El-Tabech, 26, is charged with first-degree murder and the use of a weapon to commit a felony in connection with the June 24 death of his wife Lynn El-Tabech at the couple's home at 815 N. 30th St.

El-Tabech, the former Lynn Prusia, was a secretary with the International Educational Services of UNL. She married El-Tabech in December.

Lancaster County Judge Gale Pokorny, while admitting he was "troubled" by the points brought out in the preliminary hearing, also denied two motions by Chief Deputy Public Defender Scott Helvie that would have lowered El-Tabech's \$250,000 bond and allowed him to visit his wife's grave.

El-Tabech was arrested at the scene of the murder June 24. Witnesses had said during the hearing that the couple had argued several times "loud enough to hear three blocks away."

A neighbor testified that the El-Tabech's came home from a local restaurant about 6:30 p.m., and shortly before 7 p.m. El-Tabech left alone. He returned around 7:30 p.m., and called 911 around 7:33 p.m. to report the death.

State attorney Alan Everett contended that El-Tabech could have committed the crime during the half-hour he was at the house, then drove away to try to think of an alibi.

However, Helvie said in his closing arguments that the state had not presented one piece of physical evidence to support that theory.

Helvie repeatedly mentioned that the El-Tabech home was burglarized around the time of the murder, which might indicate that someone else could have broken into the home and killed El-Tabech.

The last witness during Monday's hearing was detective sergeant Noah Van Bursel, who presented a tape which recorded the 911 call El-Tabech made the day of the murder.

During the tape, El-Tabech is sobbing loudly and openly begging police to hurry to the address and saying, "Somebody maybe killed her...what should I do?"

During the playing of the tape, El-Tabech sat silently beside county attorney Sean Brennen and bowed his head.

Helvie said that to accept the state theory was to accept the idea that El-Tabech coldly and calculatingly committed the murder, planning it well enough to wave to a neighbor right before re-entering the house at 7:30 p.m. The state theory would have that, and the frantic call as "just acts," he said.

Helvie pointed out that an ambulance attendant at the scene said El-Tabech's emotions were consistent and real. But, Everett said "he could have been legitimately sorry after he did this. That does not change the fact that the homicide had been committed."

Pokorny scheduled El-Tabech's trial for Aug. 23 in District Court.

New placement director sets goals

By Judi Nygren

Job interviews are tough. But if the new director of UNL's Career Planning and Placement Office accomplishes his goals, most future graduates will walk into interviews with an aura of self-assurance.

Gerry Phaneuf said that in the past, only a small group of seniors who had completed a major and needed guidance in planning careers visited UNL's office. This is a "backward" process, Phaneuf said. He recommends that students use the office in their freshmen year to discuss career options and examine majors to fit those options.

Through contact with freshmen, Phaneuf said, the office's counselors can help students develop interviewing skills. When students reach their senior year, they will be confident about interviews, he said.

"Interviews become much more productive when a student knows who they are and what they want," he said. "Employers want people who know what they want."

When interviews become more productive, Phaneuf said, job placement rates go up. Companies that may have only hired one or two UNL students may suddenly begin hiring more, he said.

To draw younger students into the office, Phaneuf said, the staff is trying to increase campus awareness of its services. Plans are underway to offer seminars ranging from resume writing to basic career planning. Counselors also may set up offices in individual colleges where students can get pamphlets, counseling and other services, he said.

"We're going to be a lot more responsive to stu-

dents," Phaneuf said. "We are here to teach life skills."

Another new program that involves bidding for job interviews with companies visiting UNL also may encourage students to use the office's services, Phaneuf said. Rather than make students wait in line for hours to sign up for job interviews, Phaneuf said, this fall students will spend a few minutes each Monday bidding for time slots. Students will use 500 points each week to bid on a maximum of five time slots. The results will be figured on Tuesday and posted on Wednesday, he said.

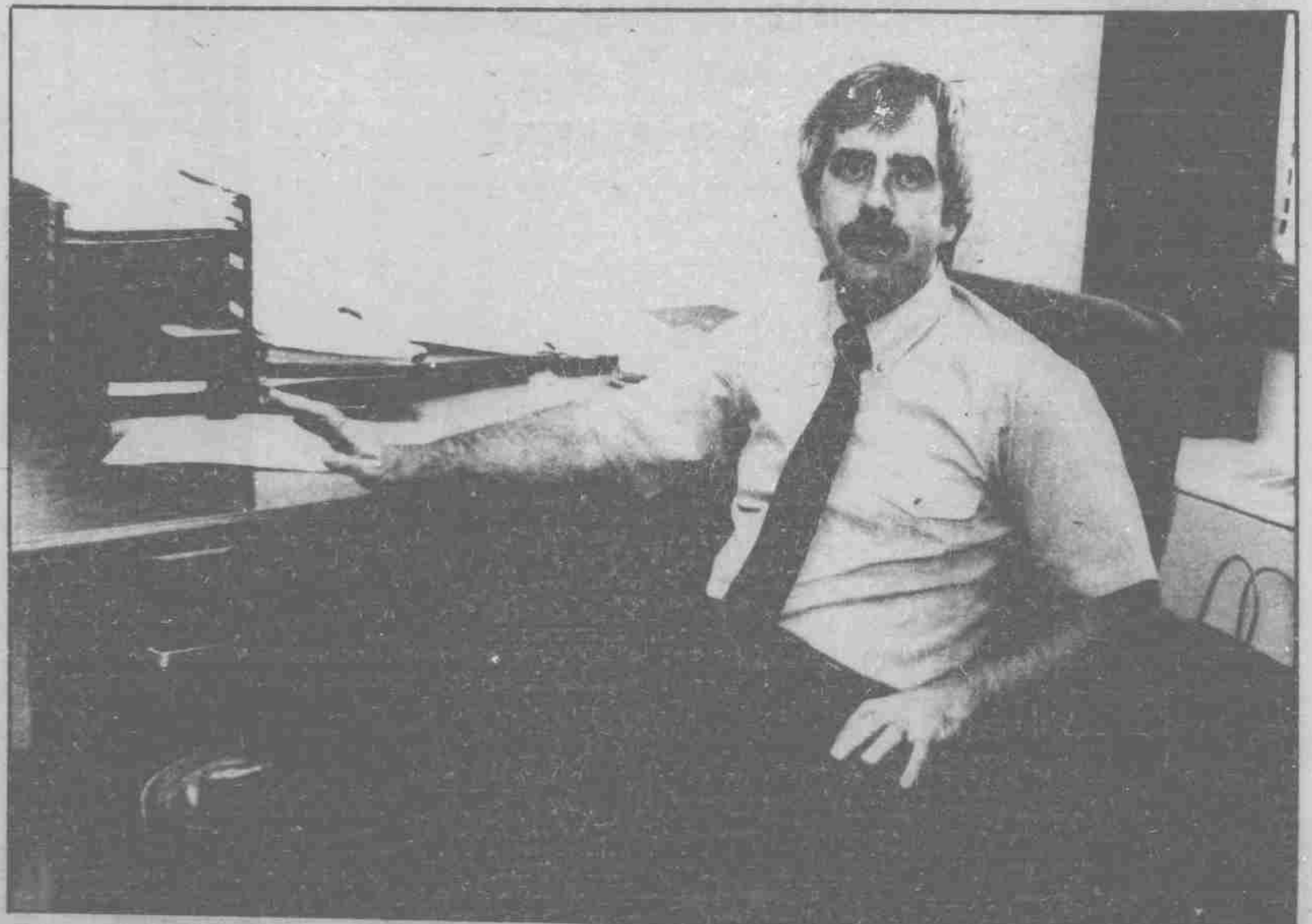
If there is a tie, he said, the tying bids will be thrown into a lottery or the office will call a company and ask for an extra interviewer. Bids will be made two weeks before company visits.

The bidding system has many advantages, Phaneuf said. It should eliminate long lines that often force students to miss classes, make the interview process more efficient and help companies attract the most interested students, he said.

While drawing students in, the office also will reach out to companies throughout the nation. Last year 300 companies visited UNL. That number is low for a campus of UNL's size, Phaneuf said. Through brochures, phone calls and letter, Phaneuf said he hopes to attract about 900 companies to UNL.

"It's a bargain for companies to visit campus," he said. "We just have to reach out to them and let them know that we have a good product."

Phaneuf came to UNL from Texas State Technical Institute where he was the assistant director for the campus' Career Planning and Placement Office. He received his master degree in student personnel services from Texas Christian University in 1977.



Gerry Phaneuf recently took over as director of UNL's Career Planning and Placement Office.

David Trouba/Daily Nebraskan