



Jurors listen to recording of confession

Bjorklund Trial Update

- ▶ Prosecutors played an hour-long, taped confession Roger Bjorklund gave to Lincoln police on Dec. 6.
- ▶ Bjorklund detailed the abduction, rape and murder of UNL student Candice Harms.
- ▶ In the confession, Bjorklund said he and Scott Barney were equally responsible for the crime.

DN graphic

By Steve Smith
Senior Reporter

Though Roger Bjorklund didn't take the witness stand Wednesday, it was his voice that provided the most powerful evidence to date in his first-degree murder trial.

Prosecutors played an hour-long, taped confession Bjorklund gave to Lincoln police officers Greg Sorensen and Sandy Myers on Dec. 6.

The tape was entered into evidence despite objections from Chief Deputy Public Defender Scott Helvie.

In the tape-recorded statements, Bjorklund detailed the abduction, rape and murder of University of Nebraska-Lincoln student Candice Harms, of Lincoln.

Bjorklund, 31, is on trial for Harms' death. Bjorklund rocked in his chair, scribbled in a notebook and yawned while jurors and more than 100 onlookers listened to his confession, which was played on a stereo sound system.

"Something took over us that I don't, I can't, explain. I don't know what it is. I have my own religious theories why we were both

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Football player among suspects in beating case

By Jeff Zeleny
Senior Editor

UNL students Justin Stephens, 18, and Ralph Lott, 21, will be arraigned on third-degree assault charges Nov. 17 for the beating of an international student.

The two suspects were charged Tuesday by the Lancaster County Attorney's office for the Oct. 17 assault of Boon-Chung "Marco" Ong. Another suspect, whose name will not be released because he is a juvenile, was arraigned Wednesday.

Stephens is a University of Nebraska-Lincoln freshman and a redshirt Nebraska football player on full scholarship. The scholarship includes tuition, fees, room, meals and books.

Nebraska football coach Tom Osborne said Wednesday Stephens would be suspended from traveling to a post-season bowl game. Because Stephens is a redshirt, he cannot be suspended from any regular-season games, Osborne said.

Osborne also said Stephens would not lose his scholarship "right now."

Lott, a former football player, is not a registered UNL student. He was a student from

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From scratch



Jay Calderon/DN

Brian Swerczek, a junior agronomy major, recently won \$10,000 in the Nebraska Lottery. Swerczek purchased the winning ticket at a Hy-Vee grocery store.

Lucky ticket pays student's tuition

By Matthew Waite
Staff Reporter

Buying groceries will never be the same — at least not for one University of Nebraska-Lincoln student.

While grocery shopping at the Hy-Vee grocery store at 48th and Leighton streets Wednesday, Brian Swerczek bought five \$10,000 Money Match lottery tickets.

Swerczek, a junior agronomy major, said he just put the tickets in his pocket and went home.

Little did he know. When Swerczek arrived home, he pulled the tickets out of his pocket and started scratching.

"My whole body just

kind of went numb," Swerczek said. "I started shaking."

Swerczek had scratched off a winning \$10,000 ticket.

He said he showed his roommate to make sure he wasn't dreaming.

"He couldn't believe it," Swerczek said. "I had to see if I was seeing things."

Swerczek then took the ticket to the Lincoln Claim Center. After state and federal taxes were withheld, Swerczek walked out with \$6,500 in his pocket.

Swerczek said he usually was not a lucky person.

"This is probably the luckiest thing that has ever happened to me," Swerczek said. "I just happened to walk in the right aisle at the grocery store."

"I'm just kind of taking my winnings. I doubt if I can ever get that lucky again. I haven't bought a ticket since."

Now that Swerczek is a lottery winner, he said he had received some attention from local media. A radio station interviewed

him live Monday.

"(The disc jockeys) were upset I didn't bring them doughnuts," Swerczek said.

Swerczek said he had been taking a lot of jokes about his winnings, including people asking him for interest-free loans.

He said he had also been getting a lot of suggestions about how to spend his riches.

"I have a lot of people ask me if I have thought about taking a chunk of the money and buying tickets and seeing if I win more (money)," Swerczek said. "I'm just taking

what I have, and I'm happy with it."

Swerczek said he planned to save the money. He said the money would help fund his last three semesters at UNL and pave the way for after graduation.

Swerczek said the only thing the money would change about him is his bank account security.

"I doubt it will change much else," Swerczek said.

China to take spotlight, speaker says

By Neil Feldman
Staff Reporter

The global "dynamo of the future" is China, Stanley Karnow said in a speech Wednesday at the Lied Center for the Performing Arts.

Karnow's 30-minute lecture, "The New Face of East Asia: Relationships with the United States," focused on China's recent swing toward democracy.

Karnow, addressing an audience of about 800 people, was the third of five speakers participating in this season's E.N. Thompson Forum on World Issues. A Pulitzer Prize winner for his book, "In Our Image: America's Empire in the Philippines," Karnow is considered an expert on Asian politics and history.

"It's mind-boggling that China is advancing so quickly," Karnow said.

By the year 2000, Karnow estimated China's imports would grow to \$650 billion and its gross domestic product would peak at \$10 trillion.

Many factors, Karnow said, account for the drastic change.

Following World War II, the United States pumped billions of dollars into China and Taiwan, he said.

The money, coupled with a Chinese culture that revolves around "family ethics and wise investments," means China will have few difficulties advancing as a leading economic stronghold, he said.

Contrary to American culture, Karnow said,

the Chinese do not spend their money in a nonsensical fashion.

He said economic practicality was paramount when a country like China was going through an overnight transition of democratic reform.

In addition to the Pulitzer, Karnow has won three Overseas Press Club Awards, received six Emmys for his PBS documentary series, "Vietnam: A Television History," and was described by Newsweek as the "best journalist reporting on Asia."

While China's democratization was a central issue in his lecture, Karnow also spoke on what he called the intra-Asian theater.

See FORUM on 6

Irvine officials heap praise on new NU President Smith

By Matthew Waite
Staff Reporter

The University of Nebraska is getting an aggressive, innovative leader as its new president, University of California at Irvine officials said.

Dennis Smith, the executive vice chancellor at UCI, was chosen as NU president Sunday by the NU Board of Regents.

William Parker, UCI's associate executive vice chancellor, said that

Smith had made difficult decisions and provided strong leadership during his years as an administrator at Irvine.

"He doesn't shy away from difficult decisions," Parker said. "If tough decisions are to be made, he makes them."

Parker said Smith served as acting chancellor of the university for nine months. During that time he was forced to cut the budget by \$18 million.

Smith was able to cut administra-

tive costs and prevent the academic quality at UCI from deteriorating, he said.

Parker said NU's decision to hire Smith was a good one.

"Your gain is our loss," he said.

UCI's Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs Horace Mitchell said Smith was an excellent administrator who provided excellent financial management. Smith made academics a top priority in budget cuts, he said.

"Our primary reason to be here is academics," Mitchell said.

Mitchell said Smith protected the UCI's academics by cutting the administrative budget 6 to 7 percent more than academics. The administration was cut 8 to 9 percent while the academic budget was cut 2.5 percent.

Hans Bode, a UCI professor of developmental cell biology, said Smith provided new ideas that improved UCI's College of Develop-

mental and Cell Biology during Smith's three-year tenure as dean.

"When he came to take over the deanship, he provided a new and vigorous leadership," Bode said. "He came on with new ideas, not old baggage."

Smith takes a thorough approach to all the tasks he undertakes, Bode said.

"He attacks (problems) like a steam roller, coupled with no fear to start something new," Bode said. "He's like a bulldog."