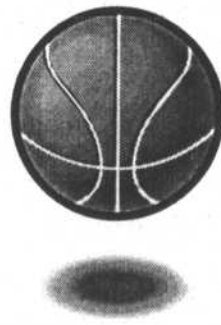


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SPORTS
Off Center
Nebraska basketball coach Danny Nee says the Cornhuskers plan to play without a center this season.
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Tuesday
50/30
Cloudy today with a chance of afternoon showers. Wednesday, dry with highs in the upper 50s.

Deliberations to continue in Bjorklund trial

Harms' parents, boyfriend allowed into courtroom

By Alan Phelps
Senior Reporter

Jurors in Roger Bjorklund's first-degree murder trial will resume deliberations Tuesday, perhaps reaching the end of a case that began more than one year ago.

Bjorklund's fate was left in the hands of eight women and four men from Cheyenne County at 1:53 p.m. Monday. Jurors deliberated for more

than three hours after prosecuting and defending attorneys made closing arguments in the trial's 14th day.

Lancaster County Attorney Gary Lacey told jurors the state had proved its case against Bjorklund "beyond any doubt whatsoever."

But Chief Public Defender Scott Helvie said the jury should disregard what he called three involuntary confessions Bjorklund made to police.

Bjorklund is charged with co-defendant Scott Barney in the abduction, rape and murder of Candice Harms.

For the first time, Harms' parents and her boyfriend, Todd Sears, were allowed into the courtroom gallery.

Witnesses had been barred from watching testimony. Those who knew Harms comforted each other as they listened to attorneys detail the last hours of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln student's life.

An unshaven Bjorklund, wearing a black shirt, denim jeans and two black stud earrings, glanced occasionally at his wife, Shannon, who also was allowed in court for the first time. The defendant took notes and scribbled on a plastic foam cup as prosecuting attorneys accused him of murder.

"Roger Dale Bjorklund," Lacey told jurors, "is guilty of murder in the first degree."

Holding the .38-caliber revolver

police say Bjorklund used to shoot Harms after Barney shot her, Lacey told the jury how Bjorklund said shooting Harms was the humane thing to do.

"The law lets you be the judge of that," Lacey said.

Lacey detailed the murder and weapons charges Bjorklund faces. Bjorklund could be convicted of murder in two forms: premeditated murder or felony murder.

If jurors agree Bjorklund is guilty of first-degree murder, Lacey said, they won't have to agree unanimously about whether it was premeditated or

Bjorklund Trial Update

► **Deliberation resumes**
Tuesday morning as jurors work to decide Roger Bjorklund's fate.

► **Prosecuting and defense attorneys presented closing arguments Monday.** Jurors then deliberated for more than three hours.

► **Lancaster County Attorney Gary Lacey said Bjorklund sent threatening letters to jurors.**

See TRIAL on 3

Bjorklund sent threat letters to five jurors, attorney says

By Alan Phelps
Senior Reporter

Roger Bjorklund sent threatening letters to five female jurors last week during his first-degree murder trial, Lancaster County Attorney Gary Lacey said.

Lacey said the letters, apparently designed to cause a mistrial, told jurors harm would come to them or their families if Bjorklund was not found guilty. All of the letters were identical, Lacey said.



Roger Bjorklund

Defense attorneys filed a mistrial motion based on the letters, Lacey said, but it was overruled by Lancaster County District Judge Donald Endacott during a closed meeting last week.

Case law prevents defendants from manufacturing their own mistrial, Lacey said.

Three jurors had opened their letters, Lacey said, which were delivered to them at the Cornhusker Hotel. Two other jurors' letters were intercepted by police, he said.

Officials read the letter to all of the jurors, Lacey said. Attorneys interviewed the jurors to make sure they would not be influenced by the letters when arriving at a verdict.

Lacey said the jurors said they could put aside thoughts of the letter. Lacey said jurors had not been told Bjorklund was suspected of sending the letters.

Bjorklund has denied sending the threatening letters, Lacey said.

Lacey said inmates at the Lancaster County Jail, where Bjorklund is incarcerated, said they saw Bjorklund typing and handling paper while wearing surgical gloves.

Bjorklund evidently sealed the envelopes with a moistened towel, Lacey said.

A minister who visits Bjorklund periodically mailed the letters. Lacey said Bjorklund told the minister he was mailing the letters on behalf of other inmates who knew people at the Cornhusker Hotel.

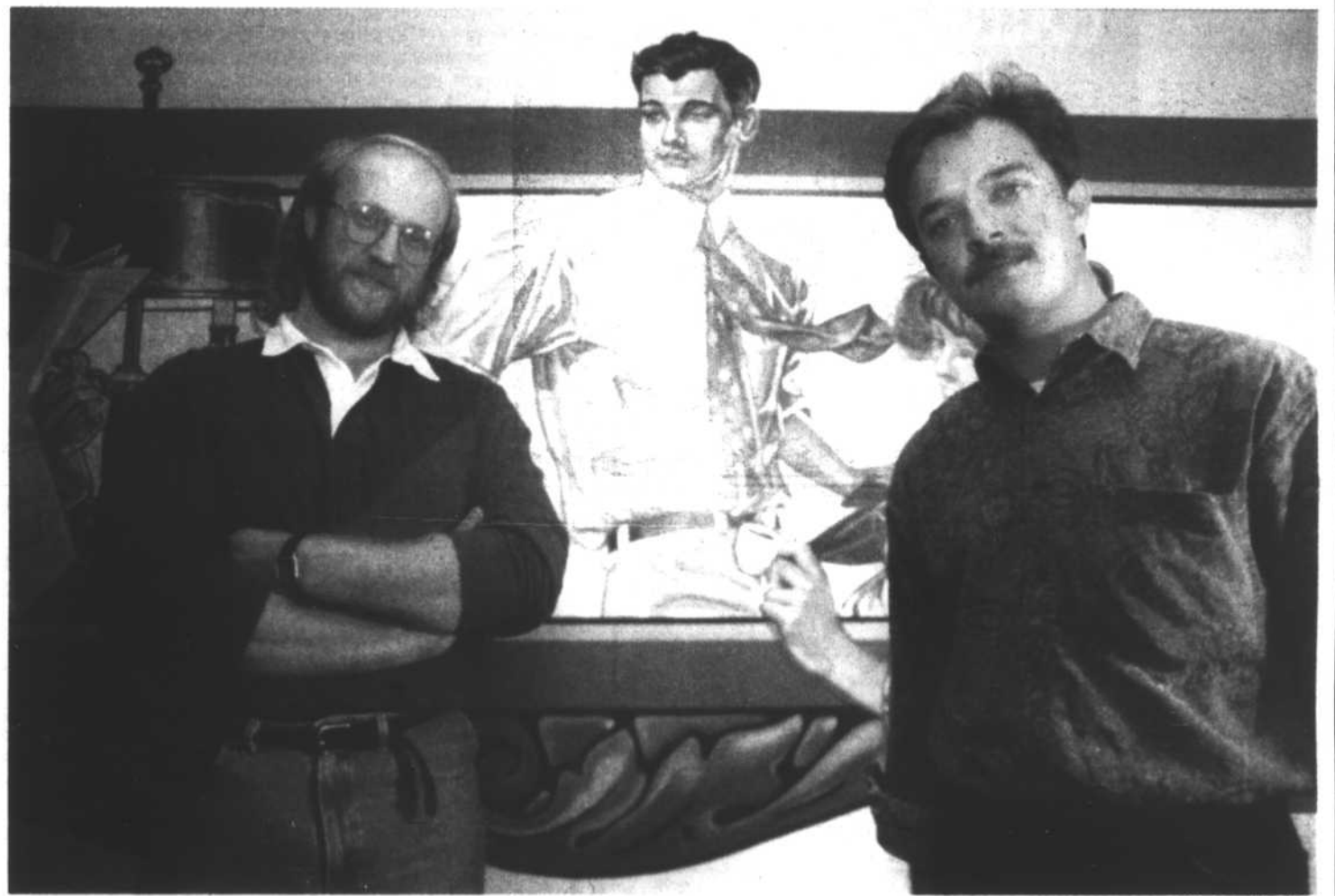
If the jury convicts Bjorklund, a hearing will be held next week to discuss the letters and the impact they had on the trial, Lacey said.

Bjorklund may have been trying to use reverse psychology by demanding the jurors to find him guilty, Lacey said.

Bjorklund, 31, is on trial for the abduction, rape and murder of University of Nebraska-Lincoln student Candice Harms, 18, of Lincoln.

Jurors began deliberations Monday after three weeks of testimony.

Senior Reporter Steve Smith contributed to this report.



Staci McKee/DN

Mike Nelson, left, and Dan Gutzmann of Mural Mural Graphics recently painted a late 1920s scene for Caffe Caper in Lincoln. The mural took the two men about 40 hours to complete.

Painting the town

Artists splash ads, imagination, creativity around Lincoln

By Jody Holzworth
Staff Reporter

Dan Gutzmann and Mike Nelson have splashed their imagination across town.

It's painted on the outside of buildings, at the fairgrounds, on business walls and even on buses.

Gutzmann and Nelson, both Lincoln natives who attended the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, recently created Mural Mural Graphics.

"I realized the two of us together could create some amazing stuff," Gutzmann said.

Since then, they have painted the Rock 'n Roll Runza tunnel, the Runza bus, and the outside wall of the South Street Liquor Store. Their work appears on the Weavers bus, the "Get Vertical" climbing wall at the state fair and on a wall in the Caffe Caper coffeehouse.

The team quit working at an advertising agency where they worked as billboard painters because, they said, it stifled their creativity.

"Artists are very free-willed and do not work well in a smothering environment," Gutzmann said. He has degrees in both commercial art and advertising.

"Unfortunately, I think everyone has been in the situation where you work with people who don't know how to promote creativity," Nelson said. He said he has taken several art courses at UNL and has an art degree from McCook Community College.

"You can only paint so many McDonald's billboards," he said.

Finally, he said, he is doing what he dreamed about all his life. Mural Mural Graphics' paintbrushes are limited only by imagination.

"We can give the client anything they want. The only limitation is ourselves," Gutzmann said. "We are free to do our absolute best."

Mural Mural Graphics has discovered creativity sells. After painting the Runza bus, which included hand paintings of Elvis Presley and Marilyn Monroe, they received calls from Chicago businesses wanting them to paint more buses.

Gutzmann and Nelson use a type of synthetic enamel to hand paint the billboards and large murals, such as the ones in the Rock 'n Roll Runza tunnel. They recreated the 6-foot by 10-foot mural from a small sketch.

On billboards and walls they have created everything from a jungle scene

— "You can only paint so many McDonald's billboards."

— Nelson
co-owner of Mural Mural Graphics

and beer on ice to Garth Brooks and the Aladdin movie video cover.

The two design the artwork based on the client's ideas.

"An artist can take someone else's design or idea and make it their own, just by their sight," Nelson said.

But painting their imagination onto a wall is not always an easy task.

"Some days flies are in the paint, you are perspiring and you are tired and hot," Gutzmann said. "Fifty percent of the time you're scared and worried, and you think, 'Boy, are we doing this right?' The other 50 percent of the time, you're saying, 'Wow, this is great.'"

The paintings Gutzmann and Nelson struggled with the most have turned out to

See PAINT on 3