

Anger

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About 12:15 a.m., as Gov. Ben Nelson was receiving a call at the Governor's mansion from the penitentiary saying the execution had been carried out, the pro-death penalty side began chanting, "Just like Otey."

They were referring to Harold Lamont Otey, who was executed Sept. 2, 1994. Otey was the first man ex-

ecuted in Nebraska's electric chair in more than 35 years.

Joubert was pronounced dead at 12:22 a.m.

A cheer went up from the pro-death penalty group when Joubert's pen pal from Ireland, Theresa O'Brien, with tears running down her cheeks, left the prison at about 12:25 a.m.

As she walked past the anti-death penalty group she stopped to hug Effie Johnson of Lincoln. O'Brien stayed with Johnson when she has

come to Lincoln to see Joubert.

O'Brien would not give a comment, but did speak quickly and quietly to Johnson before leaving the area. Johnson said she couldn't quote what O'Brien told her.

Scott Wesley, a member of Nebraska's Against the Death Penalty, said the last few months had been long.

"This is horrifying," Wesley said. "There have been no changes and the people of Nebraska haven't learned a damn thing. We have a lot of work to do."

John Joubert: a timeline

Sept. 18, 1983

Danny Joe Eberle, 13, disappears while delivering newspapers on his Sunday morning route in Bellevue.

Sept. 21, 1983

Eberle's body is found in a ditch near Bellevue, about two miles south of Offutt Air Force Base. He was stabbed several times.

Dec. 2, 1983

Christopher Walden, 12, disappears while walking to school near Papillion.

Dec. 5, 1983

Walden's body is found in a snow-covered grove of trees in northern Sarpy County. He also was stabbed several times.

Jan. 11, 1984

A man attempts to assault a Bellevue pre-school teacher who memorizes the license plate on his rented car. Sarpy County authorities trace the license plate to Joubert. Joubert is arrested in Bellevue and confesses in detail to the murders of Eberle and Walden. He is charged with two counts each of first-degree murder, kidnapping and using a weapon to commit a felony.

July 3, 1984

Joubert pleads guilty to two counts of first-degree murder in Sarpy County District Court. The kidnapping and weapons charges are dropped in exchange for the pleas.

July 5, 1984
to Oct 15, 1990

Joubert is questioned, tried and convicted in Maine of the murder of Richard Stetson, 11, of Portland, Maine. Joubert lived in Portland when Stetson was killed on Aug. 22, 1982. He was sentenced to life in prison in Maine.

Oct. 9, 1984

A three-judge panel of the Sarpy County District Court sentences Joubert to death.

Dec. 29, 1986
to March 9, 1992

Joubert begins his legal battles. He comes close to the electric chair three times during this time period, each time receiving a stay of execution in the days before. He also tries to be moved to Maine, which has no death penalty, to serve his sentence in the Stetson murder.

Oct. 11, 1994

A U.S. District Court judge in Omaha overturns Joubert's death sentences, saying Nebraska's death penalty law is unconstitutionally vague. The judge orders Joubert resentenced in Sarpy County. State appeals.

Jan. 25, 1996

Three-judge panel of the 8th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals reinstates the death penalties.

May 16, 1996

State Supreme Court sets a June 28 execution date.

June 14, 1996 to June 27, 1996

In the days before his scheduled execution, Joubert's attorneys file a mountain of appeals. At one time, he had four suits pending in four courts. All were denied.

June 27, 1996

Six and one-half hours before Joubert was scheduled to be executed, the U.S. Supreme Court grants a temporary stay of execution to decide whether to hear his fourth appeal to consider his case.

June 28, 1996

U.S. Supreme Court delays ruling on Joubert appeal before death warrant expires.

July 1, 1996

U.S. Supreme Court rejected the two formal appeals filed in behalf of Joubert, clearing the way for state authorities to schedule a new execution date.

July 8, 1996

Nebraska Supreme Court schedules new execution date for July 17.

July 16, 1996

Less than 10 hours before Joubert's scheduled execution, the U.S. Supreme Court refuses two requests to delay it. Attorneys stop filing suits at that point.

July 17, 1996

At 12:22 a.m., Joubert is pronounced dead, ending over 12 years of legal battles.

Source: AP

Death Row

John Joubert was one of 12 men on Nebraska's death row.

The others:

ROGER BJORKLUND, 34

Sentenced Sept. 20, 1994, for the kidnapping, rape and murder of Candice Harms, 18, of Lincoln. The UNL freshman disappeared Sept. 22, 1992 and was missing for nearly three months before another man convicted in the case led police to her shallow grave. The case faces automatic review by the Nebraska Supreme Court.

May 16, 1996, ordered that Reeves be resentenced because the state Supreme Court did not give him enough information when it reaffirmed his death sentence.

The state is appealing the decision.

MICHAEL RYAN, 47

A cult leader, sentenced Oct. 16, 1986 for torturing and killing James Thimr at a farm near Rulo in 1985. Earlier Ryan pleaded guilty to second-degree murder in the killing of 5-year-old Luk Stice at the farm.

He has lost two appeals before the state Supreme Court, the latest on July 21, 1995, when the high court said he wasn't entitled to a new trial. The ruling upheld a decision by the Richardson County District Court. The state Supreme Court had set a Dec. 7, 1995, execution date before a U.S. District Court judge ordered an indefinite stay of execution. An appeal was filed in November 1995 in the U.S. District Court of Nebraska.

PETER LYNN HOCHSTEIN, 42, and C. MICHAEL ANDERSON, 44

Sentenced Aug. 24, 1978, for the murder of Omaha real estate man Ron Abboud in October 1975. A U.S. District Court judge reduced the sentences to life in prison on Jan. 16, 1996, on the basis of a ruling by the 8th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals that part of Nebraska's death penalty law was unconstitutionally vague. The state is appealing the decision.

JOHN LOTTER, 25

Sentenced Feb. 21, 1996, for killing three people in a farmhouse near Humboldt on New Year's Eve, 1993. Prosecutors said Lotter murdered Teena Brandon, 21, a woman who posed as a man, to silence her because she had accused him of rape. Lisa Lambert, 24, and Philip DeVine, 22, were killed because they were potential witnesses to the crime. The case faces automatic review by the Nebraska Supreme Court.

JERRY SIMPSON, 40

Sentenced April 30, 1996, for killing fellow prisoner Kevin Goodenow in North Platte in 1993. Simpson stabbed Goodenow at the Lincoln Correctional Center over a drug payment. Simpson was serving a life sentence for killing California man in 1976 near Sidney. The case faces automatic review by the Nebraska Supreme Court.

CLARENCE VICTOR, 63

Sentenced Nov. 21, 1988, for beating 82-year-old Alyce Singleton to death in her Omaha home in December 1987. The U.S. Supreme Court refused to review his case. A federal appeal is on hold while a state appeal proceeds in Douglas County District Court. A U.S. District Court judge stayed an execution that had been scheduled for Sept. 22, 1995.

CAREY DEAN MOORE, 38

Sentenced June 20, 1980, for killing two Omaha cab drivers in August 1979. The U.S. Supreme Court ordered him resentenced in Douglas County District Court, where he was resentenced to death in April 1995. He has appealed the sentence to the Nebraska Supreme Court.

ROBERT E. WILLIAMS, 59

Sentenced June 30, 1978, for killing two Lincoln women in 1977. Williams confessed to murdering Catherine Brooks and Patricia McGarry, both 25. He also told police he had killed Virginia Rowe, a Cornell, Iowa, farm wife who was found raped and dead in her home the next day. He also has admitted that he raped, shot and left for dead another woman in Minnesota who survived.

CHARLES JESS PALMER, 58

First sentenced to death Aug. 7, 1980, for killing Grand Island coin dealer Eugene Zimmerman in 1979. Palmer has been tried three times and sentenced to death three times. One appeal was denied by the U.S. Supreme Court in June 1994. His latest appeal was filed March 22, 1996, in the Nebraska Supreme Court.

Williams came within three hours of being executed March 22, 1995 before the state Supreme Court stayed the execution and ordered the Lancaster County District Court to determine if there had been jury misconduct in the case and, if so, whether it warranted a new trial. The Lancaster County District Court denied Williams' request for a new trial on Feb. 8, 1996. An appeal was filed May 30, 1996, in the Nebraska Supreme Court.

RANDOLPH REEVES, 40

Sentenced Sept. 11, 1981, for killing two Lincoln women in March 1980, one of whom was raped. The other woman was pregnant. Both women were stabbed to death. U.S. Supreme Court ordered the Nebraska Supreme Court to review his sentence in 1991. The state court reaffirmed his death sentence. A U.S. District Court judge on

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