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Unlimited Tanning Tobacco trial may turn tide

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (AP) -Jean Connor, who smoked two to three 30 years and died of lung cancer in 1995, told her story from the grave.

In a videotape played for a jury, an ailing, bone-thin Connor told how, as a teen-ager, she thought smoking was glamorous.

"They tell me that Salem's a good cigarette. That I should smoke it. That I'll enjoy it. I'll like it, and it's pleasant, and good things happen to you when you smoke Salem," she said.

Her family's effort to hold R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Co. liable for her death comes as the legal and regulatory tide has turned against the industry. A verdict against the nation's No. 2 cigarette maker could weaken the industry's hand in negotiations toward a multibillion-dollar settlement with state governments around the coun-

could lose a lot more," said Melissa F. in damages. Ronan, an attorney with Litigation tended the entire month-long trial.

Norwood "Woody" Wilner, who won with cancer. a \$750,000 verdict against Brown & In the vid second time a jury has ordered the in-teen-ager in the 1950s.

packs of cigarettes a day for more than If tobacco loses this one, they could lose a lot more."

> MELISSA F. RONAN attorney with Lititgation Analysis for Wall Street

company was negligent in not warning of the dangers of smoking.

The case is a test of the use of RJR troduced for the first time to show that the company was aware of links be- no health warnings on cigarettes. tween smoking and lung cancer in the 1940s and early '50s.

"If tobacco loses this one, they at age 49. They are seeking millions hooked on cigarettes. She died in 1995 are made by R.J. Reynolds.

Analysis for Wall Street, who has at- chose to smoke and was not addicted year. because she was able to guit in 1993. Connor's legal team is led by two months before she was diagnosed

Williamson last fall on behalf of an- looking gaunt and wearing a wig, judge in Greensboro, N.C., ruled last other former smoker. It was only the talked about seeing cigarette ads as a week that the Food and Drug Admin-

In the latest trial, which is expected most of it was too prejudicial. During rette billboards near schools.

to go to the jury on Friday, Wilner and a hearing on the tape's admissibility, RJR's lawyers argued whether the Nachman at one point told lawyers to stop the video because the images of Connor were too disturbing to him.

Connor said she started smoking internal documents, which Wilner in- one or two cigarettes a day when she was 14 or 15. At the time there were

Connor first smoked Winston cigarettes, then switched to Salems be-Connor's family says she became cause she liked the menthol taste. Both

Taken alone, the trial is not that significant to the tobacco companies, RJR's attorneys argue that Connor which had \$50 billion in revenue last

But the trial comes as the industry faces lawsuits by more than 20 states and countless individuals and increas-In the videotapes, a dying Connor, ing regulatory pressure. A federal istration could regulate tobacco as a dustry to pay. The first verdict, in 1988 The jury saw only 1 1/2 minutes drug. And the Supreme Court this in New Jersey, was overturned on ap- of the 16-minute videotape because week refused to hear a challenge of a Circuit Judge Bernard Nachman ruled Baltimore ordinance restricting ciga-

agreement remains elusive

crete meaning" to pledges by the tries will meet and invite former al-United States and NATO not to lies of Russia to join the alliance. threaten Russia with its planned expansion to Russia's western border.

ministration Thursday to give "con- leaders of the 15 other NATO coun- in neutral Austria's capital Vienna.

MOSCOW (AP) — President that room for bargaining remains be- Primakov and NATO Secretary Gen-Boris Yeltsin urged the Clinton ad- fore July, when President Clinton and eral Javier Solana meet next week; and

Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, true to her prediction, was Much of the negotiating until then unable in talks with Primakov on will be in the European ministate and Thursday to close the gaps on a char-NATO member Luxembourg, where ter to give Russia a link to but no mili-The administration signaled back Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeny tary voice in the Atlantic alliance.

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DENVER (AP) - A former arms dealer testified Thursday that Timothy McVeigh called

him six months before the Oklahoma City bombing and asked to buy a detonator for a bomb, making it clear "he needed it bad."

'He asked me if I could get him a detonation cord ... a high explosive used to set off the main explosive," said Greg Pfaff, who met McVeigh at gun shows through his ammunitions outlet, Lock and Load Distributors.

Pfaff said he told McVeigh that a "det cord" is not normally sold at gun shows and could not legally be shipped in the United States. McVeigh, who was calling from Arizona, said he would personally pick it up.

He said it didn't matter, he needed it bad," said Pfaff, who was never able to come up with the detonation cord.

Pfaff, who now runs a deli in Harrisonburg, Va., said McVeigh was strongly opposed to the government siege on the Branch Davidian compound near Waco, Texas. "Basically that this could be the start of the government coming house to house to retrieve the weapons from the citizens," he said.

Witness details McVeigh's exploits Later, David Qarlak, a high school friend of McVeigh's from upstate New York, testified

> when he called in 1994 asking where he could buy some racing fuel.

> Darlak said he didn't know, and asked McVeigh why he needed it. Darlak didn't elaborate on McVeigh's response.

> he hadn't heard from McVeigh in two years

Prosecutors say nitromethane fuel, often used in drag racing, was mixed with ammonium nitrate fertilizer to make the truck bomb that blew apart the Oklahoma City federal

McVeigh, a 29-year-old Gulf War veteran, faces the death penalty if convicted of murder and conspiracy in the April 19, 1995, blast that killed 168 people and injured more than 500.

At the trial, a publisher of military how-to books also testified that McVeigh ordered three books in 1992 and 1993, including one -"Homemade C-4, A Recipe For Survival" that details how to mix ammonium nitrate and nitromethane.

Questions? Comments? Ask for the

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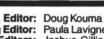
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