

Sheets to get new trial

BY JOSH FUNK

The Nebraska Supreme Court ruled Friday that death-row inmate Jeremy Sheets should get a new trial, but the Attorney General said he plans to appeal.

After reviewing the case for almost two years, the court agreed with Sheets' claim that the jury should not have heard a taped statement given by alleged accomplice Adam Barnett that implicated Sheets.

Sheets was convicted of the 1992 racially motivated kidnapping, rape and murder of 17-year-old Kenya Bush in Omaha.

Barnett's taped statement was central to the state's first case against Sheets, and without it, prosecutors may not re-file charges.

Attorney General Don Stenberg said he was hopeful that the U.S. Supreme Court would agree to hear the case.

"It's very likely no one will ever be punished for this horrific crime," Stenberg said if this court decision stands.

Defense attorney William Gallup, who first argued the case before the state high court in October 1998, has said he was not aware of any other murder conviction in U.S. history where a taped statement was the sole evidence used by

prosecutors.

"There was absolutely nothing to connect him to the case," Gallup said. "They didn't have anything but that tape. Nothing."

The case was still under investigation in the fall of 1996, when Barnett was arrested after bragging that he and Sheets were involved in the murder.

After brokering a plea agreement with the prosecution, Barnett gave a statement to police detailing Bush's murder. In that statement, Barnett said that Sheets was the one who had raped, beat and stabbed Bush while he held her down.

Later, Barnett recanted his statements and said neither he nor Sheets was involved in the crime, and that he made up the story to impress people at a party.

Then Barnett committed suicide in his jail cell before Sheets' trial began, leaving the prosecution with only the taped statement.

Sheets, through his lawyer, objected to the use of the statement because he was denied his sixth amendment right to confront his accuser.

Without the benefit of cross examination and seeing Barnett testify on the stand, the jury could not evaluate his trustworthiness.

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

Greeks seek new image

■ Fraternities and sororities hold summit to increase house safety and dispel stereotypes.

BY JILL ZEMAN

A fraternity house is nothing but a 24-hour drinking fest, filled with constant parties and beautiful women.

Right? Though this perception may be far from the truth, many members of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's greek system say they have found themselves unfairly labeled by this stereotype.

And on Sunday, representatives from fraternities and sororities met in a Greek Risk Management Summit to formulate plans to make houses safer and the public's perception more accurate.

The idea for a summit stemmed from an earlier conference sorority members attended in 1999, said Chris Linder, coordinator for the Panhellenic Association.

Because the original conference went well, Linder said, the Panhellenic Association decided to include fraternities in it.

The group heard Matt Hamill, director of chapter development of Delta Chi Fraternity, address the risks of alcohol, drugs, sexual abuse and harassment, hazing and fires.

Hamill said his goal was to help fraternity and sorority members prevent accidents.

"The bottom line is we want to have safe members and guests to their houses," he said.

Tom Workman, NU Directions communications coordinator, said helping reduce high-risk drinking in the greek system is just one step in making the campus safer.

"The association between greek students and drinking has become immediate," Workman said.

"The only way to change that is if they become leaders rather than the targets."

Workman said he encouraged students to realize that high-risk drinking is more than just a legal liability — it's an image liability as well.

"Anything we can do to support leadership and create a safer environment is a good thing," he said.

Joe Dierks, Interfraternity Council director of recruitment and member of Theta Xi Fraternity, said he felt a lot of good discussion was generated by the summit.

"A lot of people were recognizing their faults and learning from other people's ways," Dierks said.

Each chapter sent members of its executive board, as well as freshman, sophomore, junior and senior representatives, he said.

"When (members of the executive board) are gone, the others can continue this," he said.

Dierks said some people can become discouraged when only negative information, such as a party bust, is reported in the newspapers.

But instead of resenting that, members should pour more energy into their philanthropies and leadership positions, he said.

"We need to focus on the positives instead of thinking it doesn't matter what the newspaper says," he said.

Graduate awarded poetry honor

■ Susan Atefat Peckham, a former UNL student, received \$1,000 and a book publication.

BY KRISTEN ELIAS

A University of Nebraska-Lincoln graduate will hit the road on a book tour to promote her soon-to-be-published book.

UNL graduate Susan Atefat Peckham is one of five people to get the National Poetry Series Award — one of the top awards for poetry writing.

The recipient received \$1,000, the publication of her book "That Kind of Sleep" and a book tour.

Peckham, an assistant professor of creative writing at Hope College in Holland, Mich., graduated from Baylor University in Waco, Texas, in biology and chemistry. She went on to get her master's degree in English at Baylor and earned a doctorate in English from UNL.

While at UNL, she taught creative writing, literature and composition classes. She was also an editorial assistant for Prairie Schooner, the literary magazine published by the University of Nebraska Press.

Peckham said she did all of her work independently with professors. She said that kind of learning atmosphere helped her grow as a writer.

"The most beneficial quality of the professors at UNL's English department was their willingness to give me the space I needed to figure out the ways in which I work and ... to take risks and discover beauty," Peckham said.

Born to Iranian parents and raised in France and Switzerland, Peckham said she draws on her own culture and unique experiences to shape her poems.

"My biggest influences are in my surroundings — observing the changes of season and the changes of culture to which I was exposed as a child,"

Peckham said.

"That Kind of Sleep" was selected as a winner of the 2000 National Poetry Series for Coffee House Press by poet Victor Hernandez Cruz.

Cruz said he saw her work as "a pendulum between cultures."

"This poet was from America and from an interior of incense," Cruz said. "(She) gives us a joy of flashes, which makes us all ancient and renewed in a paradise of language, dancing in spirals, whirling."

Peckham's themes range from heritage to self discovery, and a favorite subject of the poet is first generation Iranian Americans.

Peckham said "That Kind of Sleep," to be released in 2001, is just a stepping stone in the journey she is taking, although she doesn't know quite where that journey may lead.

"I am still learning where and how I fit into the rich tapestry of American writing," she said.

Bell tower tolls differently for all

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inate from a CD-ROM based CD player.

Klein has tiny rectangular discs called AutoBelCards. Each card has about 15 songs on it.

Klein puts one card in the player and then leaves it for about two months, he said. Each song that's played during this time comes from the same card.

Klein's been doing this so long, he said, that he doesn't really listen to the music anymore.

It doesn't matter to him if the tower is playing Billy Joel's "Piano Man" or Simon and Garfunkel's "Bridge Over Troubled Water."

He just listens to make sure the tower is working — to make sure something is playing.

Not all UNL students and faculty members share Klein's devotion to the bell tower.

Professor and vice chairman of English Robert Bergstrom says the tower fades into the background of the university.

But he said he's quite familiar with the structure, as his second-floor Andrews Hall office looks out over it.

He said he's indifferent toward it.

"I like that it goes off five minutes before class starts, and I like the variety of songs."

Alisha Maul senior psychology major

"It isn't something I raise my fist at everyday like Snoopy does at the Red Baron, but if it suddenly fell silent I don't think I'd pine away," Bergstrom said.

Bergstrom said the tower's music does help him keep up with what time it is, but the music is a bit strange.

"There are things it plays that intrude on my consciousness unpleasantly," he said. "It does hymns, which are strange in a university context."

Maia Schwartzman, a graduate student studying French, agreed that the tower's music was strange.

Schwartzman said she didn't enjoy hearing Muzak-like versions of popular songs like the Beatles' "Yesterday."

When the bell tower was first constructed, there was a keyboard that was taken out of the little room and played on Husker game days.

Schwartzman said she thought it might be better if they

did that again today.

"That would be better than just playing random tunes," she said.

Brent Nickol, professor and vice director of the school of biological sciences, said he used to hate the bell tower.

Twenty years ago, Nickol taught a class in the auditorium of Bessey Hall. The bell tower's music would interfere with his lectures, he said.

"It was annoying," he said. "Classes go all the time. And that was the day of open windows and doors."

Since he has moved to Manter Hall, Nickol said, he can no longer hear the music and hasn't noticed the bell tower.

Alisha Maul, a senior psychology major, said she likes the bell tower, and nothing about it annoys her.

"I like that it goes off five minutes before class starts, and I like the variety of songs," Maul said.

Would you like nude dancing with that?

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

DELMONT, Pa. — You want pasties with that?

In a country that offers everything from drive-through burgers to drive-through church services, a strip club near Pittsburgh has something new for those who can't stop in for lap dances — drive-through nudity.

"When they leave, customers are falling out laughing," said Nick Fratangelo, owner of the Climax Gentleman's Club in Salem Township on an isolated stretch of U.S. Route 22, about 35 miles east of Pittsburgh.

Motorists pull around to a window at the back of the club, show proof they are 18 or older and pay \$5 per minute. Then they pull up a few feet to a second window and watch a nude dancer for the amount of time they paid for.

A 26-year-old Climax stripper who would identify herself only by

her stage name, Barbie, said most customers pay for two to three minutes, but one man paid \$100 for 20 minutes.

Climax opened the drive-through in April after employees bounced around ideas to attract customers, Fratangelo said.

Bill Lyon, spokesman for the Free Speech Coalition, the Canoga Park, Calif.-based trade association for the adult entertainment

industry, said Climax is likely the only strip club in the country to open a drive-through window.

"One of the many problems faced by adult clubs are problems of generally people attempting to say they have 'secondary effects,'" Lyon said, such as strippers inflaming customers enough to provoke sexual attacks.

"This is one way of really overcoming that," Lyon said.

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Law & Order

Fight in Guitars lot ends in shooting

About a half-hour before the shooting on O Street, another shooting was reported at Guitars and Cadillacs, 5400 O St.

One of the club's bouncers had found a gun clip with six bullets in the parking lot at 1:07 a.m., Finnell said.

Someone driving a red 1985 Buick Regal approached the bouncer to retrieve the clip, but the bouncer refused.

Police caught up with the Buick near 31st and O streets where the driver, Diego Carter, told police that he had been in a fight with someone in a Cadillac Escalade, and shots were fired.

Police found a bullet hole in the rear quarter panel of the Buick, and 12 shell casings were found in the night club's parking lot. Ten of the casings were .45-caliber and two were 9-millimeter casings.

Police found the Cadillac near 31st Street and Old Cheney Boulevard, but the driver denied any knowledge of the shooting, though there was a bullet hole in the passenger door.

Carter, 26, of 2749 A St. Apt. 4, was arrested for attempted murder, use of a firearm to commit a felony and unlawful discharge of a gun in the city limits.

Compiled by Josh Funk

Gunfire across Q Street leads to arrest of two men

Two men launched a volley of gunfire across Q Street Friday, after an early morning argument at Amigo's.

An off-duty Lancaster County Sheriff's deputy working security at the 14th and Q streets restaurant broke up an argument between four men and asked them to leave just before 1:30 a.m., Lincoln Police Officer Katherine Finnell said.

While the deputy called Lincoln Police to advise them about the dispute, the men split up outside.

One pair started walking east on the south side of Q Street, while the other two crossed Q Street to the north side, Finnell said.

Moments later nine shots rang out across Q Street from the north side of the street.

No one was hurt in the shooting and no damage had been reported as of Friday.

Shortly after the shots were fired, police arrived to investigate the earlier disturbance and arrested two men for attempted murder, Finnell said.

Mitchell Haskins, 19, of 925 D St., was found in some bushes on the north side of the street with a .45-caliber semi-automatic handgun.

Theophilus Harvey, 18, of 815 Plum St., was found in a nearby parking lot with a .380-caliber semi-automatic handgun.

Article spurs club query

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yell out to a dancer who came close to making contact.

"One of the dancers at the Foxy Lady was complaining that she couldn't make any tips," Casady said.

The officers at The Night Before did not observe any violations, though they were identified as police by one of the dancers after one set, which lasts about 15 minutes.

Casady said police had investigated the clubs before, but the department didn't usually do undercover investigations in bars unless specific information about violations was obtained or a formal complaint made.

"I think this article stimulated some action, but I would expect that to deteriorate (over time)," Casady said.

He encouraged anyone witnessing touching violations to report them to police.

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