

LOCAL NEWS

Sequestered role is tough

One Oswald juror vows to revise system

By Kay Murphy Nolan
Freeman Staff

WAUKESHA — Richard Schroeder thinks justice prevailed in the Ted Oswald trial. But he says the practice of sequestering the jury unfairly prejudices jurors can't be trusted.

Schroeder served on the jury, but was one of two jurors selected by a drawing to sit out the final vote.

Rick Mueller was the other juror excused at the last minute. Both he and Schroeder said they would have concurred with the guilty verdict.

"I felt some sympathy for him, but not enough to make a different decision," Schroeder said.

He was not surprised the jurors reached agreement.

"Some people might have had a problem with Ted's upbringing," he said. "And there might have been some discussion of who shot whom on Oak Street. But those things don't really matter."

"Being sequestered is a tremendous inconvenience," said Schroeder, a Sussex resident and business analyst. "It's difficult on the job, on your family. I'd like to see some kind of revision of the system. I plan to be an activist to do something about it."

Mueller also said being separated from his family during the trial was extremely stressful.

"I don't think people realize what a long haul it is," he said.

Schroeder said he and other jurors took the job seriously and could have been trusted to ignore certain discussions, instead of being ushered out of the courtroom, almost like children.

"I think if we've been selected to serve, we should be considered adults," he said. "We could have listened only to what's presented us and made a decision based on that only."

Other jurors declined to comment.

"We've been through a lot," said one. "I'd like some time to myself."

Not all condemn Ted: Some have seen emotional side

WAUKESHA — Diane Lutz said Wednesday that "only his mother" could have sympathy for Ted Oswald.

But Lutz, widow of the man Oswald murdered, was wrong. Two women volunteers who visit inmates at the Waukesha County Jail wept after Ted was found guilty Wednesday. They said Ted is misunderstood.

"We've gotten to know him very well," said Jane Babcock, who offered shelter to Ted's mother and sisters during the trial. Babcock has visited Ted dozens of times.

"Each of us couldn't love him more if he was our own kid," she said. "It's tragedy heaped

upon tragedy. I would trust him with my own life, with my children's lives."

A fellow volunteer jail minister said, "Ted is not a murderer. If he was, he would have killed his father. I don't believe he's dangerous."

Ted's attorney, Samuel Benedict, said he also saw a sensitive, emotional side to Ted.

"The more you look at this case and learn about him — there's a person deep down inside that never had the chance to grow. Ted has told me he can hardly forgive himself because he has blood on his hands."

Benedict said Ted dared not

show emotion in court because he was watched so closely and was wearing an electronic stun device.

Ted's staunchest supporters were his mother, Susan, and sisters, Jenevera, 15, and Hatie, 17.

"The jury did not realize how dangerous James Oswald was," said Susan Oswald. "I'm not exaggerating. I have no need to exaggerate. If Ted would have escaped, I would have been dead. Several family members would have been dead. No one understands what it's like to live under this kind of threat."

— Kay Murphy Nolan



Above, Ted Oswald, left, and social worker Kari Carlsen listen as the verdicts come in for Oswald. Below, Judge Lee S. Dreyfus Jr.'s courtroom was packed Wednesday afternoon when the jury returned 19 guilty verdicts against Oswald.

Quotes

■ "I did that to represent my husband. When you love someone, you love them through good times and bad. He would have been here for me."

Diane Lutz

On whether her decision to attend the trial daily helped her or caused more pain.

■ "To me, it appears to be exactly the same person I saw on Oak Street. I have no doubt that he is exactly what I saw then — a murderer."

Capt. Terry Martorano

On whether Ted Oswald seemed to be the same person in the courtroom as the robber he encountered on Oak Street on April 28, 1994.

■ "He (Ted) was a victim, yes, but he did the crime. He has to pay. I think he'll get full life imprisonment."

Kim Kouby

One of several courthouse employees who watched the trial after work and during breaks.

■ "I didn't buy his argument of coercion, not even remotely. We saw everything, he wrote and everything he did."

Prosecutor Lloyd Carter

■ "I thought the jury deliberations would go a lot quicker. There was so much evidence. His theory of coercion was interesting — but no way."

Prosecutor Pablo Galaviz



Andy Hinesen, FREEMAN STAFF