

CLASSIFIED/10D DEATHS/3D COMICS/8D

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Scott guilty of killing girl, 12

Lawyer says defendant was railroaded



Bradley Scott: His lawyer says he has several avenues of appeal.

By LOUI ROZSA
Miami Herald Staff Writer

Convinced by a tiny smudge and a strand of hair, a Palm Beach jury Thursday found Bradley Phillip Scott guilty of murdering 12-year-old Linda Plakritz to death in 1978.

Scott fought back tears as the judge polled the six men and six women on the jury. His mother, Terry Scott, sat to the courtroom during a crowd of his people. She whispers about "Oh my God" when the verdict was read and begins to cry softly.

Linda Plakritz's family wept and hugged each other.

"After trying to cope with it for nine years, how can we finally let it lie," her father, Fred Plakritz, said, his hands shaking as he wiped tears from his eyes. "This night will be my last night after nine years, justice done prevail."

Plakritz said he will bring a lawsuit with the Charlotte County Sheriff's Department to investigate their daughter's murder after three investigators

failed to solve it.

They were in New York visiting a sick relative Oct. 12, 1978, when they were notified that their daughter's charred body was found in woods near their home. The medical examiner said because the body was so badly burned, it was impossible to tell if she was raped.

After school, Linda, 12, plans and a friend, Susan Campbell, called, from her bike in a conversation store to buy bubble gum and vitamins. Witnesses said they were talking to a man in a bag while car that evening, and that's the last time they saw her alive.

Prosecutors said Scott gave beer and cigarettes to young girls who hung out at the L'I General store.

The key pieces of physical evidence prosecutors had against Scott were a smudge on a strand of hair they said was Linda's. They said the smudge was from a molecule she wore the night her murder. Investigators found the

smudge and hair in the white Chevrolet Scott drove, but not until 10 months after the death.

Scott's mother testified that she worked with shells and could have dropped one in the car. Scott's attorney pointed out that hairs can not be positively linked to a certain person.

Leonard Johnson, Scott's attorney, said Scott was railroaded. He said McDiwaga was anxious to solve the murder because he was in a political race. McDiwaga is now running for sheriff in Lee County.

Johnson said Scott was "a convenient suspect" because of his past, which includes a battery conviction against a 15-year-old girl shortly after the Plakritz murder, and soliciting prostitution.

The jury will deliberate today on the sentence they'll recommend to Circuit Judge William McIvor. Scott faces the death penalty or life in prison without parole for 25 years.

Johnson said Scott has several grounds for an appeal. He said the verdict probably would have been different if he had been allowed to call Brian Kane, who allegedly told a cell mate in the Sarasota County jail in 1979 that he knew who killed Linda Plakritz.

Johnson said Kane implicated Paul Drake, a Punta Gorda resident, the said Kane claimed he and Drake were high on drugs when Drake killed the girl. Drake testified that he didn't take drugs.

"I just wonder what the jury will think when I go to trial and read about what Brian Kane said," Johnson said. Scott, 37, was arrested at the time of the murder in 1978, but he was not in jail when he worked in May 1986 — two years after the death of his son, and his wife, April, who said Thursday conversation from her home on the trial, also has a 3-year-old daughter.

Some Plakritz family members said they want Scott sentenced to death. Others said they are simply glad the trial is over.

"It's a comfort and a relief," Paul Plakritz said.

New sales tax is penny ante to most buyers

By BETH WHITEHOUSE
Miami Herald Staff Writer

The state sales tax will jump to 6 percent from 5 percent on Monday, but from Naples to Fort Pierce in Miami the increase seems hardly enough to spur consumers to buy before the deadline.

The increase goes up \$1 more on a \$100 jewelry purchase, \$15 on a \$1,000 stereo purchase and \$160 on a \$10,000 automobile. Even those who might save the most money — people shopping for a Mercedes, for example — don't seem to be hurrying to buy by Monday and avoid the tax increase.

Dick Tites of Prageroy Associates in Naples said that if someone can spring for a \$20,000 car, the additional tax — \$500 — "really doesn't matter."

On smaller items like home appliances, department stores also say they see few people rushing to the register.

"I don't see a big sign here in the window that says, 'Buy before the tax goes up,'" said Dick DeBorja, general manager. "Nobody seems to come right out and say they want to buy before 1 p.m., but it might be people's minds."

Greg Harris, new car sales manager at Fort Lauderdale's Bayview Cadillac, agreed.

"It's really not a big sign that it has increased our business, but it may be in the subconscious of these people that it just pushed them over the edge a reason to buy."

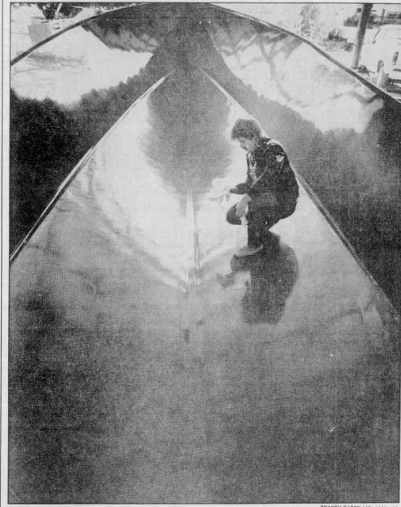
Some consumers who have ordered cars are volunteering to take less popular colors so they'll be able to close a deal before Feb. 1, said Gary Harris, sales manager at Bob Taylor Chevrolet in Naples.

Bob Drake says the tax increase hasn't meant a tidal wave of customers for them, either.

"I would like to tell you that people are rushing to buy boats because of this. That doesn't make much sense to me, but I can't," said Larry Lash, vice president of sales at the New Yorker Yacht Corp. in Fort Lauderdale.

Retail staff writers Lourdes Fernandez, Tracy Eakin, Lori Kuzin and Sallie Hughes contributed to this report.

Smooth operator



Bruce Thomas, 13, wipes clean a mold that will be in Naples. Each month, the company makes two or three boats, ranging in size from 17 feet to 31 feet.

County probes handling of body

By TRACEY EATON
Miami Herald Staff Writer

Lee County sheriff's deputies and medical examiners Thursday dissected another's account of the handling of a heart attack victim who collapsed on a Fort Myers golf course and died.

Edward Goggs, a 63-year-old Pennsylvania retiree vacationing in Fort Myers, said he and his last work mate, No. 2 at Golfview golf course, County officials are trying to unravel the details.

During a 2-hour and 17-minute episode marked by confusion and poor communication, medical attendants moved Goggs's body from the golf course to an ambulance and then back to the golf course — the place where he fell marked by a golf tee.

At one point, two physicians came on scene.

Goggs was alone when he went down at 11:30 a.m. After he fell, other golfers alerted golf course workers, who called 911.

Medical staff arrived at 5:29 p.m. and arrived at 6:47, said Terry Dillon, director of public safety.

According to the paramedic, Michael Proter, and emergency medical technicians, Kim Levey tried to revive Goggs as he lay on the ground. His heart was stopping — a sign they might be able to save him.

It began to get dark, and at 6:22, they decided to move the body into the ambulance.

At 6:35, a doctor monitoring the resuscitation from the hospital told the medical staff to give up.

At 6:46, medical called the sheriff's Department and reported a fatality. The sheriff's department routinely investigates deaths sustained by a doctor.

But deputies went to Cypress Lake Country Club, the wrong golf course. Lt. Rod Shoop said EMS gave the wrong location — a claim Dillon says he can't confirm or deny until he finishes a tape recording.

Dillon said medical gave a dispatcher directions to take No. 2 several times before deciding to drive the ambulance to the golf course entrance on Gladstone Drive.

Deputies found the ambulance at 7:14 p.m. Dillon said they told the paramedics, "We need to see the body back at the scene."

Shoop said the medical had other calls to answer. The deputy told the medical to wait for a medical examiner.

Shoop said the medical replied, "We're not on something with this body. How about the back field?"

The deputy refused to get the body in the back of his cruiser, so medical left in the golf course, covered it and left.

Linda Collins explains why Shoop said deputies aren't responsible. "No one used EMS to get that body on the golf course," he said. "They did it on their own."

The medical left, Dillon said, because it was a busy night. However, he reports that the medical didn't take another call until 6:25.

Shoop said the paramedics shouldn't have left because the medical examiner might have had questions for them. Dillon said the deputies told them they were no longer needed.

Dillon said he's looking into the episode.

"I suspect I'll find out it was just poor communication between the sheriff's department and my people," he said.

HAPPENINGS ALONG THE GULF COAST

30 groups salute Collier's women

More than 30 local organizations are celebrating the achievements of women in Collier County with a "Salute to Women" week, Feb. 1-5, featuring seminars, awards dinners and a dance. Events include:

Monday, a panel discussion on "Individual Liberties: Campaign Ethics, Prayer, Right to Privacy" at 7:30 p.m. at Lakewood Country Club. Cost is \$5.

Tuesday, Dr. Ellen Kimball, professor of psychology, speaks on "Sub-Zing of Multiple Zings and Stress" at 9 a.m. at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel. Cost is \$20.

Thursday, Lou Heckler speaks on "Managing For Excellence — Putting the Best You Forward" at 9 a.m. at the Regency Resort. Cost is \$40.

Friday, a workshop entitled "Market Your Assessments, Search and Promote" at 8:30 a.m. at the Collier County Youth Center. Cost is \$10.

Saturday, exhibits and entertainment celebrating "Salute to Women Week" from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Coastland Mall, followed by a dance at 8 p.m. at the Club in Naples. Cost of dance is \$15.

Reservations for each event can be made by calling 334-3112.

GREAT SALE — The Naples-Marco Philharmonic League holds a "Great Sale" fund raiser featuring household items, paintings and antiques, from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at Naples Depot, 1051 Fifth Ave. S.

HOME SHOWCASE — The residential community of Bonita Bay, between Naples and Fort Myers, holds a Super Showcase of Homes today through Feb. 6, featuring free boat rides and special events centered around the Five County Builders and Contractors Showcase Home.

OUTDOOR ART SHOW — The Naples Art Association holds a free art show from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on the corner of Third St. S. and Broad Avenue S. in Ocala Naples.

JAZZ IN THE PARKS — The Neapolitan Jazz Trio performs from 1 to 2 p.m. at the Neapolitan Building, 1300 Third St. S., in the jazz in the Parks festival in Ocala Naples.

MISS COLLIER — Twelve young women from 17 to 26 compete for the title of Miss Collier County at a scholarship pageant at 8 p.m. at Lily High School. The winner goes on to compete in the Miss America Scholarship Pageant. Tickets available at the door.

SUNDAY

OLD-TIME COWMAN — Matt Uzzell will bring back his trail-riding days detailing the cowpokes of Southwest Florida at 2 p.m. at the Fort Myers Historical Museum, 2302 Rock Hill, Ocala. 330-3555.

SUPER BOWL BANQUET — Business Dinners of Naples hold a public Super Bowl Banquet beginning at 3 p.m. in the Trolley Lounge at Grand Central Station. Cost is \$2 for members and \$3 for visitors.

MONDAY

ART ENCOUNTER — More than 200 paintings, sculptures and photographs by Southern Florida's finest artists are on display at Art Encounter '88, a regional art exhibition sponsored by the Naples Art Association today through Feb. 27 at Naples City Hall.

WATERCOLORS — William Lambert presents "Watercolor — Light & Color," a demonstration at 1:30 p.m. at the Art League of Marco Island, 1025 Whiteberry Dr., followed by a wine and cheese reception at 3:30 p.m.

SHUFFLEBOARD — Today is the last day to sign for the "Valentine Shuffleboard Cup" tournament held Wednesday and Thursday at the Chamber Park Shuffleboard Courts. To register, call 648-3450.

TUESDAY

POPULATION EXPLOSION — Werner Firmo, president of the Population Institute, speaks on the implications of a world of five billion people at a free lecture at 11 a.m. in Room 141 of the G.D. Building at Edison Community College in Fort Myers.

EUROPEAN TRAVEL — John Schlemmer, teacher, author and traveler, speaks on travel and study in Europe, today at 12:30 p.m. in Room 391 of the Humanities Building at Edison Community College. Admission is free.

WEDNESDAY

MAGICAL EVENING — The magic and illusion of David Copperfield are featured at 5:30 and 8:30 p.m. at the Barbara Mann Performing Arts Hall in Fort Myers. Fort Myers, call 468-2023.

BELLOWS COLLECTION — Lithographs from the Columbus Museum of Art of American painter George Wesley Bellows, are on display today through Feb. 29 at the Friends of Art Museum in the Bradley Gallery of Naples Depot.

TYKE VANDER ZEE

Happenings appear Friday in The Herald. If your organization would like to be in the public know about a Southern Florida event, write to Happenings, The Miami Herald, 1025 Fifth Ave. S., Naples 33940.