

State execution planned this week

HUNTSVILLE (AP) — An East laborer convicted of killing people during a shooting is scheduled this week for execution that's expected to generate a worldwide commotion that marked Karla Faye Tress's punishment. The condemned killer Steven Renfro, who has no appeals and is scheduled to receive a lethal injection Monday for the Aug. 25, 1996 ramming that left his live-in girlfriend, an acquaintance dead and another acquaintance wounded. Renfro, 38, convicted of a pickaxe killing in Houston in 1983 that left a woman dead, became the first person executed in Texas since the War and the first in the nation since 1984. Her attractive looks and again Christian beliefs made her a media darling in television appearances broadcast around the

world. Harrison County District Attorney Rick Berry said he watched news reports of the Tucker execution last week keeping in mind his case was six days away and next on the lethal injection schedule. In the history of crime scene investigations conducted by the Texas Department of Public Safety, only the Branch Davidian shootout at Waco and the Luby's massacre in Killeen rival the amount of gunfire, Berry said. After a night of what authorities called a drug-booze orgy, Renfro became angry, put on camouflage clothing, darkened his face with shoe polish and armed himself with assault weapons and large-caliber pistols. At home he shot his girlfriend, Rhena Fultner, 36, and his aunt, Rose Rutledge, 66. Then he went to the nearby trailer home of an acquaintance, George Counts, 40, against whom he had a grudge, and fatally shot him, firing more than 150 rounds at the mobile home. When police responding to reports of gunfire arrived at the scene, he opened fire again, wounding Marshall Officer Dominic Pondant in the shoulder and turning his patrol car "into Swiss cheese," according to Berry. Despite his wound, Pondant was able to shoot Renfro in the

ensuing battle in which police were outgunned by Renfro's .45- and .50-caliber handguns and an AR-15 rifle and some 500 rounds of ammunition, including 300 rounds loaded. "I killed them all," the wounded Renfro told officers who arrested him at the scene. Less than a year ago he was convicted of capital murder, ending his trial by telling the jury he should be put to death. "He felt he would kill people in the future, injure people," Berry said. "I argued the wishes of Mr. Renfro didn't matter. This case deserved the death penalty and that's what the jury agreed on by returning that verdict." Berry said after the trial, he and Renfro — high school classmates in Marshall — talked for a couple of hours about how fate had brought them back together. "He told me he wanted to go ahead and die, that he had done this horrible crime... that he wanted me to promise him to do whatever I could to make sure it moved as quickly and smoothly as I could," Berry continued. "And if I would do that, he wouldn't file any appeals and also would work toward hastening this process. "And so here we are."

Conflicting testimony casts doubt on Zamora

FORT WORTH (AP) — Unraveling a former Naval shipman's youthful, innocent image, prosecutors called a parade of witnesses to recount how she helped to kill a girl who had a fling with her boyfriend. Prosecutors even heard that, with a stone cold face, Diane Zamora told her academy roommate that Adrianne was a "tramp" who "deserved to die for taking something that did not belong to her." In every tale Zamora's friends retold was vastly different, raising the possibility that none of the eerie soap opera is the truth and casting doubt on a damning confession she gave police. "We're going to show that the confession Diane made to police did not have been accurate and given under duress," lead defense attorney John Lineberger said last week. "She did not commit capital murder." The confession is crucial for state prosecutors because they are prosecuting Zamora under the "law of parties" a Texas statute that makes any accomplice to a crime guilty of the worst offense committed in its commission. Both sides agree that David Graham allegedly fired two shots at Jones. But prosecutors have used a confession by Zamora and other evidence to show that she ordered the killing and helped by hitting her over the head. Ironically, Zamora's credibility may have been shattered because of the different stories her friends say she told. "You can tell the truth 100 times, but you can't tell the same lie twice," said Bill Lane, a Fort Worth attorney credited with creating the urban syndrome defense in a capital murder trial. The slaying was in retaliation for a sexual tryst Gra-

ham had with Jones while driving her home from a track meet. Based on Zamora's statement, prosecutors have alleged the girl hid in the back of a car while her boyfriend drove Jones to a remote lake on December 1995. Zamora allegedly hit Jones over the head with a dumbbell after jumping out of the back seat, then ordered Graham to shoot her when she tried to flee. But Jennifer McKearney, a roommate who offered details from a late-night dorm-room conversation, said Zamora told her she was driving the car the night of the slaying, with Graham in the front seat and Jones in the back. Jay Guild, who became a romantic interest of Zamora's at the academy, told jurors another version of the story. In Guild's version, Zamora never mentioned hitting Jones with weights and said they were all driving in Graham's truck. Besides a questionable confession, prosecution efforts may also be hindered by more testimony from Chief Tarrant County medical examiner Dr. Marc Krouse. Krouse said that, of the items admitted as evidence, the wound only could have been caused by the butt of the gun later used to shoot Jones. "That was a good day for the defense," Lane said. "They only have to show that there is reasonable doubt that she ordered the killing or participated in the crime, but the less she did physically to commit the crime, the easier that might be. That makes the confession even more important." But even if the jury decides Zamora told different stories in her confessions, Lane said the defense still has a tough road ahead. "The different stories and Krouse's testimony are the best things the defense has going for it," Lane said.

"You can tell the truth 100 times, but you can't tell the same lie twice."
Bill Lane
attorney

Oprah trial lawyers verbally reprimanded by judge

AMARILLO (AP) — Oprah Winfrey's trial continues into its fourth week on Monday with witnesses still on the stand for the cattleman, who accused the talk show host of slaying beef. The plaintiffs' attorneys expected to call several more witnesses to the stand during the next few days. The talk show host, her pro-

duction company and vegetarian activist Howard Lyman are being sued for more than \$10.3 million over an April 1996 show that suggested U.S. cattle could spread mad cow disease to people in the United States and make AIDS look like the common cold. The cattlemen contend Winfrey edited the show to eliminate pro-beef statements in favor of more alarming statements by Lyman, a former rancher who said that feeding ground-up cattle parts to cattle in America — a practice that now is banned — could spread mad cow disease. Winfrey de-

clared: "It's stopped me cold from eating another burger." Winfrey testified for most of three days, charming the jury and occasionally growing frustrated by redundant questions. She has been attending every day of the trial, which results in lines outside the courthouse from fans hoping to view the proceedings. The audience's behavior was complemented by the judge as court wrapped up Friday, but she scolded lawyers for both sides, telling them one thing they've got to do differently this week: Stop making faces in front of the jury during testimony.



Winfrey

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